

Toronto, Canada be the host city for the 2005 A.A. International Convention. The site-selection team presented a report to the trustees' International Conventions/A.A. Regional Forums Committee based on the following criteria: major facilities (convention center/stadiums); city desirability; transportation and financial considerations; average cost to attendee.

Requests for proposals were sent to members of the Institute of Association Management Companies and to current and past Southern Minnesota delegates to invite proposals from convention management firms for a convention management consultant for 2000. Don Meurer, G.S.O.'s controller, was contacted by 20 management firms throughout the U.S. and Canada and received proposals from four companies, one from Colorado, one from Nebraska and two from New Jersey. After extensive review, the committee accepted G.S.O. management's recommendation to hire the Talley Management Group, Inc., New Jersey, as the convention consultant management firm for the 2000 International Convention.

Starting July, and continuing through 1997, there was extensive correspondence and sharing regarding A.A.'s policy of accepting financial/cash incentives to offset expenses of International Conventions. At the request of this committee and with the agreement of the General Service Board, the following was the topic at the February 1997 Board Weekend Sharing Session: "Board policy regarding financial/cash incentives including monetary subsidies, in-kind subsidies, rebates, etc. in connection with bids to host International Conventions." Historical information and research about site-selection procedures and past financial/cash incentives was shared with committee members. At their February 1997 meeting, the committee referred consideration of A.A.'s policy of accepting financial/cash incentives to offset expenses of International Conventions to the February 1997 meeting of the trustees' Finance Committee and the 1997 Conference Finance Committee.

Because of the increasing complexity and size of International Conventions, the committee suggested that the trustees' Finance Committee consider describing in greater detail discounts, rebates and cash inducements of individual cost items of International Conventions in future financial statements.

A.A. Regional Forums—Three regions have held Forums since the last General Service Conference: Pacific, Eastern Canada and Southeast. All were lively and well-attended with substantive sharing on important A.A. topics. The committee recommended approval of a request for a Special Forum in Alaska to be held at four sites: Ketchikan, Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks. The following Forums and Special Forums are scheduled prior to the 1998 General Service Conference:

1997		
May 9—12	Special Forum	Ketchikan, Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks, AK
May 30—June 1	East Central	Moline IL
June 20—22	Northeast	Tarrytown, NY
August 22—23	Special Forum	Val D'Or, PQ
September 5—7	West Central	St. Paul, MN
December 5—7	Southwest	Houston TX

Elaine Johnson, Ph.D., chairperson

Sunday afternoon the Pacific Area delegates enjoyed a boat trip around Manhattan – oblivious to the fact that it was pouring rain!

Staff reports:

International Conventions—This assignment involves coordinating every aspect of the many processes and plans that go to make up A.A. International Conventions, held every five years. These Conventions provide a wonderful opportunity for individual A.A. members to serve, celebrate and share sobriety. Very preliminary plans are already underway for the International Convention in 2000 to be held June 29—July 2 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Preparations and logistics are being studied to plan for three stadium meetings, celebratory dances, accommodating approximately 250 workshops, panels, regional alkathons, topic meetings and marathons which will require about 1,000 speakers and moderators. Research has started regarding procedures for housing and registration. The advances in computer technology and access to the Internet worldwide will offer opportunities to incorporate the Internet as a communications tool.

In 1996, the International Convention coordinator was responsible for preparing reports on all site-selection trips, 2000 International Convention management selection, 2005 International Convention site-selection criteria and historical documentation and background information regarding financial/cash incentives for past International Conventions. Consistent planning and preparation continues so that future International Conventions, hopefully, will provide the same experience that A.A. members found in past International Conventions—a milestone A.A. event filled with gratitude and the language of the heart in a welcoming, friendly A.A. setting.

Valerie O'Neil

Regional Forums—The staff member handling Regional Forums is responsible for coordinating and following through on all arrangements necessary for holding Regional Forums in the U.S. and Canada. These sharing weekends help foster wider communication and understanding among A.A. service workers, the General Service Board, A.A. World Services, Inc., the Grapevine Corporate Board, the Grapevine staff and the General Service Office staff. Regional Forums are held at the invitation of a particular region every two years; there are four Forums annually.

The location and agenda for a Regional Forum are decided jointly by the regional trustee, area delegates and G.S.O. The responsibility for direct contact with the hotel is assumed by a local A.A. host contact working with the Regional Forums coordinator and regional trustee. The Regional Forums coordinator at G.S.O. distributes invitations and registration forms to groups and service workers throughout the region and, working with the host contact and regional trustee, coordinate the details of the Forum. The Regional Forums coordinator is also responsible for preparing and distributing a comprehensive report of the Forum to all who attend.

A region may request a Special Forum, which has fewer participants from the boards and staff over shorter time periods. Special Forums require the approval of the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums. They may be designed for remote, sparsely populated or urban areas. The Regional Forums coordinator works closely with the regional trustee and host contact tailoring each agenda to local needs. Two Special Forums are planned for 1997—one in Alaska in May and the other in Val D'Or, Quebec in August.

The staff member on Regional Forums also serves as secretary of the trustees' Nominating Committee, Conference Committee on Trustees and co-secretary of the trustees' and Conference International Conventions/A.A. Regional Forums Committees. Under the present structure the staff member on the Regional Forums assignment is also responsible for Group Services.

Lois Fisher