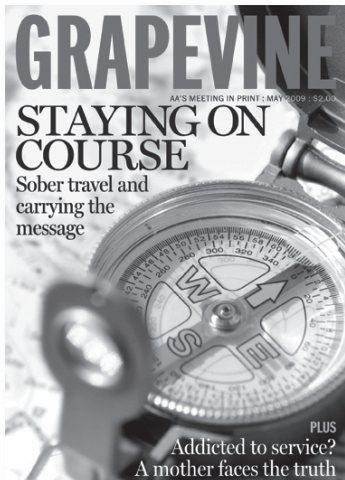


# GRAPEVINE REPRESENTATIVE HANDBOOK





**W**hat's portable,  
colorful, historic,  
life-saving,  
inspiring,  
humorous, international,  
original, up-to-date,  
packed with stories and  
staple-free?

*Yes, it's the Grapevine.  
And if that's all you know  
about AA's "meeting in  
print," you've made a  
great start toward being a  
Grapevine representative  
(GoR). Everything else you  
need to know you'll find in  
this handbook.*





## FIRST, SOME BASICS:

- The Grapevine is the international monthly journal of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- It's entirely self-supporting through the sale of the magazine and its related items.
- It does not receive any contributions made to the General Service Office.
- *The AA Service Manual* explains Grapevine's position in AA's service structure: "The AA Grapevine, Inc. is one of the two operating entities of the General Service Board, with its own corporate board, staff, and financial operation separate from that of the General Service Office."
- The magazine was the brainchild of six AA members in the New York area who put together the first issue in June 1944, with AA co-founder Bill W.'s support.
- Today, about one out of every 12 AA members in the U.S. and Canada subscribes to the Grapevine—in print or audio.
- Almost every article ever published in Grapevine is available online in the Digital Archive at [AAGrapevine.org](http://AAGrapevine.org). That's over 12,000 articles, jokes, and letters about our program.
- AA members welcome the Grapevine every month because it's a lively way to enhance their sobriety. As one Grapevine fan put it, "It's never the wrong time for a meeting."





## Welcome to the GvR network

**A**s a GvR, you join thousands of other Grapevine representatives in the U.S. and Canada who are the link between the magazine and the group. Service is the heart of your position. As GvR, you perform a service for AA members, making sure the magazine is available to them and your group. You also perform a service for the Grapevine, linking the magazine to members of the Fellowship who, without you, might not read it or even know that AA has a magazine.

In 1977, the General Service Conference recommended that delegates establish area Grapevine committees and work toward the goal of having a GvR in every group. The GvR program now includes more than 6,000 Grapevine representatives; all of the 93 service areas have an active area Grapevine chairperson.

## RESPONSIBILITY DECLARATION

**I** am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.





## The group GvR's job

**G**vRs are engaged in practical, hands-on work. Your basic job is to make the magazine available to the group, and to encourage AAs to read it, subscribe to it, write for it, and use it in Twelfth Step work. And, if you read and enjoy the magazine yourself, it's likely that you'll communicate your enthusiasm to others.

Always remembering to "Keep It Simple," most GvRs do the following:

- **GvRS MAKE SURE THAT THE GROUP HAS A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE GRAPEVINE.** Group subscriptions can go to the GvR, the literature person, or the group chairperson. You may order one subscription or many, depending on the size of your group and your budget. For subscription options, please see page 15.
- **GvRS SEE TO IT THAT THE MAGAZINE IS CLEARLY DISPLAYED AND AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT MEETINGS.** In the interest of making it easy for individuals to subscribe, GvRs usually have subscription order forms on hand.
- **GvRS LET THE GROUP KNOW WHEN THE LATEST ISSUE HAS ARRIVED.** Some GvRs have found it helpful to describe the issue in a few sentences. They may read the opening paragraph of an article, a joke from *At Wit's End*, the previous issue's *Keep Coming Back*, or two or three titles from the *Table of Contents* (mentioning any special features or special sections).

### IN ADDITION:

- **GvRS MAY SUGGEST WAYS IN WHICH GRAPEVINE AND LA VIÑA CAN BE USED FOR TWELFTH STEP ACTIVITIES.** Some groups sponsor subscriptions to newcomers or anniversary celebrants, or to





community centers, libraries, hospitals, treatment centers, prisons or doctor's offices. Group members may bring the magazine into jails, rehabs, detoxes, and treatment centers.

- **GvRS CAN ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN GRAPEVINE.** Articles, letters, anecdotes, and jokes are always needed by the magazine, as are photos, and the GvR can be helpful in getting members to submit original work.
- **SOME GvRS HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN STARTING UP GRAPEVINE AA MEETINGS, WHICH BUILD THEIR DISCUSSIONS AROUND GRAPEVINE ARTICLES.**

In addition to group activities, some GvRs get active in their district or attend area assemblies. The level of participation is up to individual GvRs and depends in part on what's going on in their locale. Some examples of district and area service include organizing a local Grapevine "Grape-a-thon" or "Grape Jam," attending committee meetings, helping the area chair set up a display at an AA event, or working with a district GvR to visit groups and get the word out about the magazine and the GvR program. The Grapevine office will be glad to put you in touch with your district GvR or area chairperson.

## COMPLIMENTARY MATERIALS

When you register with the Grapevine office as a GvR, you will receive a GvR kit and other complimentary materials:

- Writers' guidelines
- The full-color Grapevine catalog
- Subscription order forms
- Information about current Grapevine and La Viña items
- Order form for complimentary materials

Any of these items may be requested singly or in bulk from the Grapevine office.





## More about the Grapevine

The Grapevine's articles, most of which are written by AA members, cover many aspects of our program: getting and living sober, spirituality, group experience, and service. Stories about working the Steps and using the Traditions are regular features, along with such departments as: Emotional Sobriety; Our Personal Stories; Spiritual Awakenings; Newcomers; Sponsorship; and Into Action.

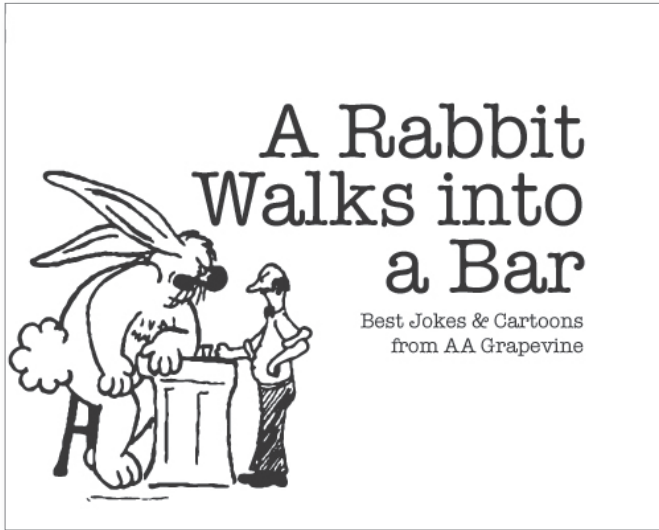
### IN ADDITION THERE ARE REGULAR FEATURES SUCH AS:

- Dear Grapevine (letters)
- AA News
- If Walls Could Talk
- At Wit's End
- Old-Timers
- Youth Enjoying Sobriety
- Calendar of Events

The Steps, the Traditions, the Preamble, and the Serenity Prayer appear in every issue.

The magazine was completely redesigned in March 2009 for the Grapevine's 65th anniversary. It's now in full color to reflect the energy and vitality of our program to newcomers and younger AAs. And it is staple-free in response to AAs who take the Grapevine into correctional facilities and have seen what a lifeline the magazine is to alcoholics inside. They wanted the magazine to be available in all institutions, including those where stapled materials are prohibited.





## Additional Grapevine Publications

Since 1951, AA Grapevine, Inc. has produced several collections of articles from the magazine: *The Language of the Heart* (a collection of 150 articles by AA co-founder Bill W.), *The Home Group*, *Voices of Long-Term Sobriety*, *Beginners Book*, *Emotional Sobriety*, *Spiritual Awakenings*, and most recently *A Rabbit Walks Into a Bar*, a collection of Grapevine cartoons and jokes. There are also more than 15 CDs; reproductions of the Preamble, Serenity Prayer, and the Slogans; facsimiles of the 1951 and 1971 Grapevine magazines honoring Dr. Bob and Bill W.; a Grapevine wall calendar and pocket planner; and a copy of the first issue. Some groups offer these materials for sale at their meetings. For a complete description, please see the Grapevine catalog.





GRAPEVINE online:

# AAGRAPEVINE.org

A treasure trove of information, the Grapevine website includes:

- **DIGITAL ARCHIVE**, where you can find every article, letter, editorial, special feature, joke, and cartoon published in the Grapevine magazine starting from our first issue in June 1944 to one year ago.
- **AUDIOGRAPEVINE** Grapevine magazine in audio format. Download and listen to the current issue, including the Editor's note and all the stories.
- **HEARD IT FROM THE GRAPEVINE** Sign up online to receive this free monthly newsletter with the latest on what is happening at the Grapevine delivered straight to your inbox.
- **THE STORY OF THE DAY**, where you get a different story every day, and the Table of Contents and sample stories from the current issue to read and listen to.
- **JOKE** A different joke every time you click.

## GvRs online: AAGRAPEVINE.org/reps

This special section of the website is devoted to resources just for the GvR network. You'll find:

- **THE GRAPENET FORUM** For all registered GvR/RLVs, the GrapeNet Forum is a place where you can share your questions and ideas with other GvRs throughout the U.S. and Canada on how to represent the magazine in your sober community.
- **GRAPEVINE REPRESENTATIVE NEWS** Read GvR reports about events in different areas. And send us your report.
- **DOWNLOADABLE COMPLIMENTARY MATERIALS**, as well as the Grapevine catalog.
- **PRESENTATIONS AND FLYERS FROM OTHER GvRS.**
- **GRAPEVINE DISPLAY GALLERY** Photos from GvRs of events held in their areas.
- **A GUIDE TO THE GRAPEVINE AND LA VIÑA**, a 72-page workbook on the magazines and AA Grapevine, Inc.





## LA VIÑA

Spanish-speaking members of your group or in the institutions that your group visits will welcome the Grapevine's Spanish-language materials, especially La Viña, the bimonthly Spanish-language edition of the International Journal of AA. La Viña was begun at the request of the 1996 General Service Conference to serve the growing community of Spanish-speaking AA members. Many English-speaking groups give gift subscriptions of La Viña to new Spanish-language groups and take La Viña into prisons and hospitals. For complete information on Spanish publications, please see the catalog or the website: [WWW.AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](http://WWW.AAGRAPEVINE.ORG).





## New GvRs

WHEN A GROUP CHOOSES A NEW GVR, WE NEED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- Full name, mailing address, and email address (if available) of the new GvR
- Full name of the group and its location (including city and state
- or province)
- The area and district numbers for the group
- Full name and address of previous GvR, if there was one

Please let us know if you move or if your group selects a new GvR. Having accurate information for the GvR roster saves us time and money, and keeps the magazine coming to your group in a timely fashion.

Sign up online at [WWW.AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](http://WWW.AAGRAPEVINE.ORG), or call (212) 870-3018, or write to GVRC, AA Grapevine, Inc., 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1040, New York, NY 10115.

## Problems?

IF THERE'S A PROBLEM WITH YOUR SUBSCRIPTION OR ANY OTHER ORDER For fast resolution of any difficulty with subscriptions or any order, please call our customer service representatives toll free: 1-800-631-6025. We can't fix a problem if we don't know about it. If the problem's not immediately resolved or if you or a member of your group needs additional assistance, please call 212-870-3457 or email [CUSTOMERSERVICE@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](mailto:CUSTOMERSERVICE@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG).

**MISSING ISSUES** Occasionally, a monthly issue gets lost in the mail or delayed in transit. If you miss an issue, notify us. We are happy to replace it, or to extend the subscription—tell us which.

**A WORD ABOUT RENEWAL NOTICES** The first notice goes out far enough in advance of the expiration date so that subscribers who send a payment promptly won't miss any issues. A total of four notices are sent, if necessary, to give the lapsed subscriber a chance to renew.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS** To keep the magazine coming without interruption of service, please let us know in advance if your address changes. Send your subscription label (or your old address) to: Grapevine, PO Box 422487, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2487, or call 1-800-631-6025.





# Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** Who writes Grapevine?

**A:** AA members—like you and those in your home group—write the articles that appear in the magazine. To encourage prospective writers, some GvRs make the Writers' Guidelines available at meetings. They are also available online at [AAGrapevine.org](http://AAGrapevine.org) on the GvR/RLV Reps page, or by requesting them from the GVRC.

GvRs can tell AA members that there are at least four good reasons to write for the magazine:

First, since the magazine can't commission paid articles, its continued existence depends on contributions from its readers and from AA as a whole. Second, as a meeting in print and a "forum for debate," Grapevine needs to hear from as broad a spectrum of AAs as possible. Third, it isn't necessary to be a professional writer, or even to have written anything before, in order to submit to the magazine. Personal AA experience, strength and hope and a desire to help others are all that is needed.

And fourth, writing a Grapevine article is a form of Twelfth Step work: its purpose is to carry the message. An article written today and published next year may end up in a packet of back issues sent to a prison or hospital or school library, and in this way will reach out from today to a still-suffering alcoholic in the future. Grapevine articles carry the message, but they don't do it only once; they do it every time the magazine is opened and read.

**Q:** What kinds of articles are chosen for Grapevine?

**A:** Grapevine articles are usually first-person accounts of experience, strength and hope which describe those drinking days or focus on recovery through the AA program.

The magazine seeks to reflect all the joys and sorrows of living sober in AA, and it doesn't shrink from looking at the hard questions of a changing Fellowship—without, however, presenting them in a contentious manner. Anything that actually happens in AA can be considered for publication. Every AA member has an individual way of working the





# About GRAPEVINE

program, so articles may be published that appear to contradict each other—because what works for one person may not work for another.

Photographs and illustrations for the covers and the interior are contributed by AA members who are professionals or talented amateurs. The editors welcome such submissions; please put your name and address on the back of each illustration or photograph (and note the location of the photograph).

Grapevine accepts original black and white or color photographs, slides, and art, in any size. Art sent via e-mail must be in a JPEG or TIFF format, no larger than 90K. Photographs must be scanned using a very high resolution (at least 600 dpi). Please see back cover for contact information.

The magazine doesn't publish poetry, personal prayers, or tributes to individual members. No payment can be made for articles accepted for publication nor can material be returned. For further information, see the Writers' Guidelines.

**Q:** Is Grapevine magazine Conference-approved?

**A:** Grapevine is published 12 times a year and the Conference meets annually, so it would be impossible to approve every issue, but Grapevine is Conference-approved as a publication. As GvR, however, you can assure AAs that Grapevine is most assuredly AA literature. The groups voted to adopt it as AA's international magazine back in 1945. And in 1986, the Conference reaffirmed this when they passed the following Advisory Action:

“Since each issue of the Grapevine cannot go through the Conference-approval process, the Conference recognizes the AA Grapevine as the international journal of AA.”

There has been a Conference Committee on the Grapevine since 1954, and matters of importance to the Fellowship as a whole are brought to the Conference through that Committee. Three members of the AA Grapevine staff and all directors of the Grapevine Corporate Board are members of the Conference, and many Conference Actions past and





present have encouraged use of the Grapevine in service and for personal sobriety.

It's important to note, however, that the magazine's articles "are not intended as statements of AA policy, not does publication imply endorsement by either AA or the AA Grapevine," as our editorial policy states. When you read Grapevine, you're connecting to the wide variety of members—male and female, young people and older folks, believers and agnostics, beginners and old-timers. It is, as Bill W. often said, a "mirror of the Fellowship."

**Q:** How is Grapevine supported financially?

**A:** *The AA Service Manual* explains that "financially, the Grapevine is supported entirely by revenues from sales of the magazine and special items." The Grapevine does not solicit contributions; any that are received are put aside in a special fund, which provides subscriptions for inmates or other AAs who can't afford the cost. The Manual goes on to say that "Grapevine finances are reviewed by the trustee's Finance Committee, and on an annual basis cash in excess of current operating needs is transferred to and invested with the General Service Board Reserve Fund."

## Additional resources

**A** General Service Conference-approved pamphlet about Grapevine and its place in the AA service structure is available online at [aa.org](http://aa.org) or from the General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. *The AA Service Manual* contains helpful information about the Grapevine, as well.

Recently, many "GvR friendly" enhancements have been added to the Grapevine website, [AAGrapevine.org](http://AAGrapevine.org). Some of these include contact information, updated excerpts from the *AA Grapevine Workbook* originally published in 1994, and GvR rotation forms. You can also read about the current issue of Grapevine there and access an up-to-date online catalog.





# Subscription Options

## Subscription Information\*

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR GRAPEVINE (ALL IN US FUNDS):

US	1 year...\$27;	2 years...\$51;	3 years...\$75
CANADA	1 year...\$31;	2 years...\$59;	3 years...\$87
INTERNATIONAL	1 year...\$39;	2 years...\$75;	3 years...\$111

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR LA VIÑA

US	1 year...\$12;	2 years...\$22
INTERNATIONAL	1 year...\$14;	2 years...\$26

FOR BULK (MULTIPLE COPY SUBSCRIPTIONS GOING TO A SINGLE ADDRESS) SUBSCRIPTION RATES, PLEASE WRITE: [CUSTOMERSERVICE@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](mailto:CUSTOMERSERVICE@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG) or call 1-800-631-6025.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS: Available at the same price as regular subscriptions.

BY-THE-MONTH ISSUES: Groups that do not have money to pay for a yearly bulk subscription may order 10 or more copies on a month-to-month basis. Prices are the same as back issues, listed below.

BACK ISSUES: A back issue can be purchased if copies of the desired issue are still available. \$2.50 each for 1 – 9 copies; \$2.25 each for 10 copies or more, plus shipping.

BACK ISSUE 50-PACKS: Because Grapevine articles are timeless, AA members often use back issues as sample copies for new members, hospitals, institutions, and the military; or they place them in reading rooms of correction and treatment facilities. The price of a 50-pack (a random assortment of 5 or 6 back issues) is \$55 plus shipping.

*\*All prices as of July 1, 2009.*





## Contact Information

### OUR LOCATION:

AA Grapevine, Inc.  
475 Riverside Drive  
Suite 1040  
New York, NY 10115  
212-870-3400 Phone  
212-870-3301 Fax

### FOR VISITORS:

The AA Grapevine office is located at 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1040, New York, NY 10115, one floor below the General Service Office. Visitors are always welcome during business hours.

## E-mail Addresses & Phone Numbers

**GVR COORDINATOR** For more information, to register, or to request GvR materials: [GVRC@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](mailto:GVRC@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG) or 212-870-3018

**EDITORIAL CONTENT** For questions about magazine content or editorial policy: [MANAGINGEDITOR@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](mailto:MANAGINGEDITOR@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG)

**TO OBTAIN REPRINT PERMISSION** Reprint permissions and copyright inquiries: [CONTROLLER@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](mailto:CONTROLLER@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG)

**TO SUBMIT A STORY, PHOTO, OR ART** Please see our [Submission Guidelines](#) for details on submitting your work, or go to [AAGrapevine.org](http://AAGrapevine.org). If your work is fairly short, the simplest way to submit it is within the body of your e-mail. However, if you do wish to attach a file to your e-mail, please save the document in word or simple text format. Send manuscripts, calendar events and humor submissions to: [GVEDITORIAL@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](mailto:GVEDITORIAL@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG). Send photos and artwork (TIFF or JPEG) to: [GVEDITORIAL@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](mailto:GVEDITORIAL@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG)

**CUSTOMER SERVICE:** For all inquiries related to Grapevine items and subscriptions, including new subscriptions, issues not received, address changes, and other related circulation problems or inquiries: [CUSTOMERSERVICE@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG](mailto:CUSTOMERSERVICE@AAGRAPEVINE.ORG) or 1-800-631-6025

