



**Delegate's  
World Service  
Conference Report**

**2019 Spring Assembly**

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Area 52, Tennessee**



## GREETINGS!

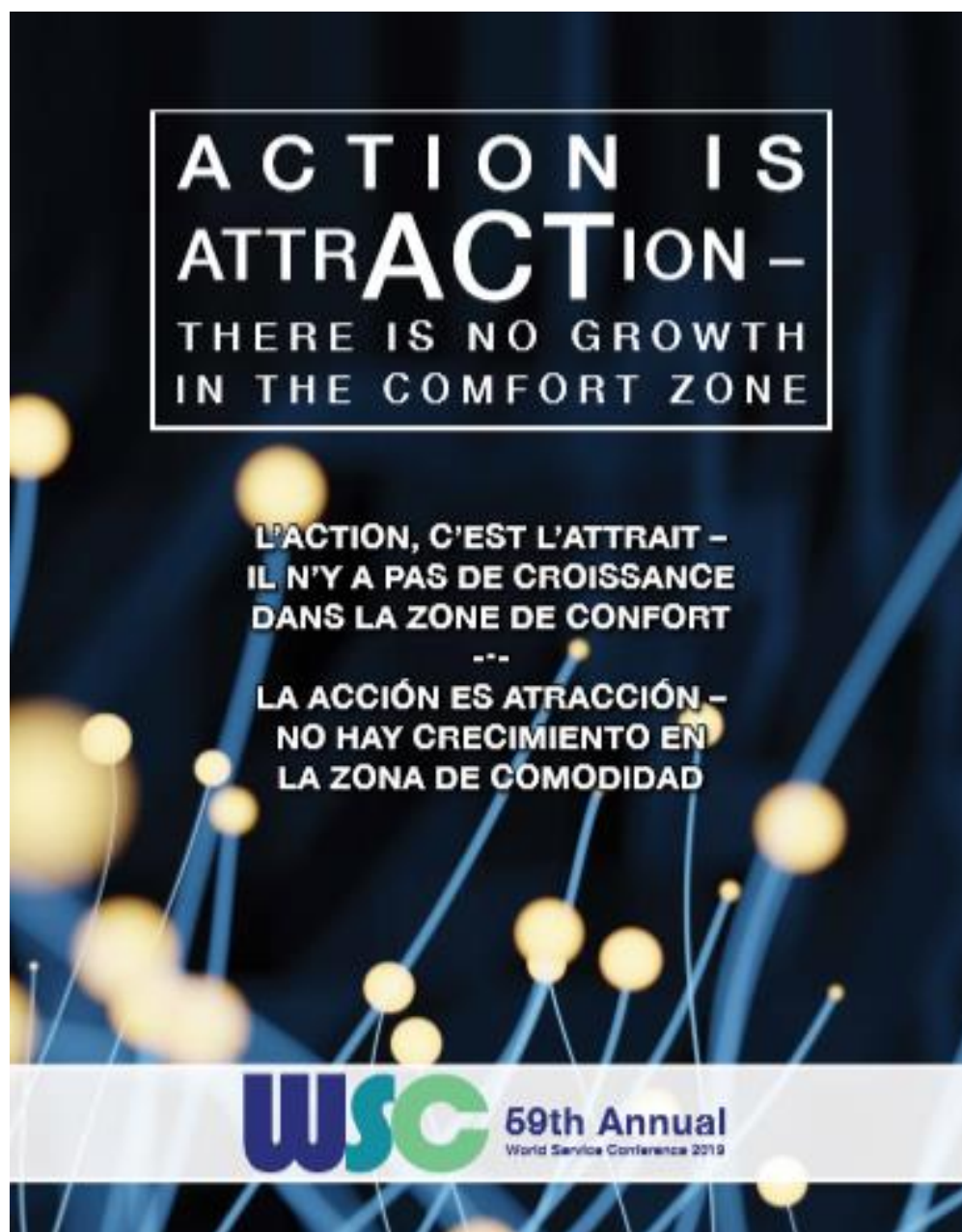
The 2019 World Service Conference was truly a spiritual experience. It was amazing to see our spiritual principles in action. The Conference theme this year is:

**Action is Attraction: There is no growth in the comfort zone**

**L'Action, c'est L'attrait: Il n'y a pas de croissance dans la zone de confort**

**La Accion es Atraccion – No ha crecimiento en la zona de comodidad**

Al-Anon is truly a trilingual organization, but this is the first World Service Conference where everyone in attendance was able to speak and listen in their native language – English, French and Spanish. The WSO provided interpreters for those who needed it in order to fully participate in the Conference. There were a few hiccups but all in all it was well received and served its purpose. Everyone felt included.



## WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

World Service Conference Roles & Responsibilities are:

- a. Our Charter tells us that the World Service Conference (WSC) acts as the guardian of both AI-Anon's world services and its Twelve Traditions, and that the WSC is a service body, not a government. The WSC makes the group conscience available and effective for all AI-Anon. It is the practical means by which the group conscience can speak; it is the voice of world AI-Anon and a guarantee that our world services shall continue to carry on under all conditions. On page 12 of the *2016 World Service Conference Summary*, Concept Four reminds us, "In our service as Delegates, we are able to participate constructively in a harmonious working partnership with all Conference members. To do this, I need to read the essential information provided to contribute to the Conference discussion and to vote responsibly. I am being trusted, not only to do the work, but to decide what work is important and how to go about doing it. Respect for ourselves as equal Conference members, combined with full participation at the Conference, helps us to serve our worldwide AI-Anon family as trusted servants and assure harmony."
- b. The Conference includes state, provincial and territorial Delegates from the United States (including Puerto Rico), Canada and Bermuda, WSO Volunteers and Staff, the Chairman of the Executive Committee on Real Property Management (ECRPM), and representatives from other countries. In addition to listening, participating and voting on matters affecting AI-Anon as a whole, Delegates bring the viewpoint of their Areas on matters affecting all of AI-Anon and return to Areas to share a broader perspective of AI-Anon worldwide. Delegates are the bridge of understanding that links the groups to world AI-Anon. The Board of Trustees also listens, participates and votes on matters affecting AI-Anon as a whole. They have a legal responsibility for the funds and services provided by the AI-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. They protect our principles from distortion and dilution. The Board of Trustees is the chief arm of the Conference. The Executive Committee, made up of WSO Volunteers, also participates and votes on matters affecting AI-Anon as a whole. There are WSO Staff members who listen, participate, and vote on matters affecting AI-Anon as a whole. There are also WSO Staff members who listen and participate within the scope of their position but do not vote. The Chairman of the ECRPM listens, has voice regarding the Committee report, and often serves as the Timekeeper. Service Representatives and international guests listen, and many share a prepared statement with the Conference. They participate with the Conference members throughout the week in social and small-group gatherings.
- c. The Conference meets once a year for a few days. It is impossible for everyone to have firsthand knowledge of the many issues on which they are expected to vote. The makeup of the Conference allows for shared knowledge of Trustees and WSO Staff and Volunteers to be discussed and considered as a full body. We need the input from everyone in their various positions of service and work to make informed group conscience decisions on behalf of AI-Anon as a whole. The Conference protects AI-Anon and Alateen against a service breakdown. It provides for unity and enables our fellowship to act as a whole on important matters. The Conference is the principal guarantor of AI-Anon and Alateen's harmony and survival.
- d. Spiritual principles underlie all our service work, as expressed in the Concepts and Warranties:
  - a. **Unity** – we observe the spirit of the Traditions.
  - b. **Respect** – no conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members, and all decisions are reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by unanimity
  - c. **Participation and Harmony** – the fellowship shall always remain democratic in thought and action; this allows our fellowship to act as a whole on important matters
  - d. **Mutual Trust** – the Conference does not mandate, govern or rule; it represents the membership in a mutual relationship with the other service structures
  - e. **Service** – the Structure of the Conference includes members of AI-Anon who are volunteers in service through their personal recovery. The Conference gives Delegates, Volunteers and Staff the opportunity to be of service to the fellowship in a variety of ways.
  - f. **Responsibility** – the World Service Conference Structure relies on all the Concepts, and service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority

Each Delegate, Trustee and Staff Member participated in a thought force, a task force, or a committee, with work prior to and during Conference. These included:

Task Force: Conference Purpose, Makeup & Roles for the 2019 WSC

Task Force: Reaching and Unifying Rural and Large Geographic Populations

Thought Force: Welcoming Potential Members

Thought Force: Fear of Change

Thought Force: Identify Ways to Look at Service in Relation to Roles, Terms and Possible Roadblocks

Public Outreach Committee

Literature Committee

CCT/Nominating Committee

## BOARD'S GOALS FOR THE CONFERENCE

The Conference, like our Assembly, acts in the spirit of unity and goodwill to assure that AI-Anon's world services are continually available to the AI-Anon fellowship:

- a. **Goal 1** – The spiritual tone of the Conference will prevail by the demonstration of AI-Anon's core principles in action.

These spiritual principles include:

Trust

Faith

Gratitude

Respect

Unity

Participation

Goodwill

Equality

- b. **Goal 2** – The Conference will provide guidance to AI-Anon's Board of Trustees and the World Service Office (WSO) on services to the fellowship and guardianship of AI-Anon's Twelve Traditions.

Conference members are the voice of AI-Anon Family Groups. By applying the principles found in the Legacies, the Conference members reach decisions and provide guidance for the Board.

- c. **Goal 3** – Conference members will understand the purpose of the Conference, relationships within the Structure, and be able to articulate Conference discussions and decisions.

(i) Ask questions

(ii) Ask for help

(iii) "Listen and Learn"

(iv) Communicate

## LOVE GIFTS AND REMEMBRANCES

Thank you SO much to all of the East Tennessee and Middle Tennessee groups and members who sent cards and Love Gifts, as well as my home group, Serenity Rocks! You guys are all the best. You will never know how much it meant to me to receive your cards and gifts before, during and after Conference. I brought back lots of gifts to share.

## WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT AS A TRUSTEE?

The Trustees shared 3-minute presentations on the following topics:

Mentors and Roommates

Trustee Travel

What are the “costs” of being a Trustee (emotional, physical, financial, spiritual)?

How do roles change on the Board?

All members of the Board of Trustees are members of the Policy Committee.

Serving as Chairperson of the Board

## THOUGHT FORCE: WELCOMING POTENTIAL MEMBERS

The Thought Force tackled several questions:

1. What are some ways to encourage discussion and clarify the idea of “welcoming newcomers to our group” for our members, many of whom are of the belief that allowing families and friends of drug addicts to attend Al-Anon meetings violates our Traditions?
2. How do we gracefully and gently let those newcomers, potential members and members from other programs know that it is not necessary to let the group know (or talk about) the drug-addiction experience?
3. What might a group do to ensure newcomers feel welcomed while maintaining our primary purpose?

I'll address these and share a skit from the Thought Force at our Fall Assembly.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2018 AUDIT

At December 31, 2018, our World Service Office had total assets of \$9,833,940 and liabilities of \$1,387,695, leaving net assets of \$8,446,245 among three funds: General, Reserve and Building.

Last year, income from operations totaled \$5,556,987 in the General Fund, and expenses for the year were \$5,416,985. As a result, the General Fund net assets increased by \$140,002. Literature sales yielded a gross profit of \$3,194,194, and contributions for the year were \$1,953,460. *Forum* subscription income totaled \$257,685.

In October, 2007, the Board of Trustees approved annual transfers to the General Fund; these transfers could total up to 4% of the average fair value of the Reserve Fund for the 36 months leading up to December 31 of the prior year. The Finance Committee determined that a transfer to the General Fund was not needed to fund operations for 2018.

A net decrease of \$340,591 was recorded in the Reserve Fund net assets. The Reserve Fund included realized and unrealized losses totaling \$362,649.

Building Fund expenses are charged to the General Fund as occupancy costs. A transfer of \$109,886 represents the occupancy costs for 2018.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

2018 WSC Structure Contributions totaled \$1,953,460, compared to \$1,972,931 in 2017. It is important to note that the amount of the contributions is getting closer to the share of income received from literature sales. This is not due to a decrease in literature sales, which was a concern when electronic literature was introduced. Rather, we are seeing an increase in contributions. There were a total of 14,551 groups in 2018, and 9,328 of those groups made donations to WSO in 2018.

The average contribution for Tennessee groups was \$156.47, with 56.9% of the groups in our Area contributing. I am proud to say that our Area's total contributions increased from \$16,272 in 2017 to \$17,838 in 2018. Thank you

to all of the Tennessee Area groups who met the challenge to increase their 2018 contributions by \$100 or more over their 2017 contribution amount.

The WSO has issued a challenge to groups for 2019 contributions: If EVERY group increased their donations by \$8 we would be able to balance our budget. That means that groups who did not make any donation last year are asked to donate \$8 this year, and groups to made donations last year are asked to contribute the same amount this year, PLUS an additional \$8. I believe EVERY group can meet that challenge.

The estimated cost of services provided to groups is \$4,254,541. The average cost of services per group is \$292.39.

Highlights of the 2019 Operating Budget:

1. Income –
  - a. Literature sales are expected to be less than 2018 by about \$250,000 since we do not have any new books in production at this time
  - b. Contributions are expected to increase approximately \$100,000 over 2018
  - c. *Forum* subscriptions are expected to hold steady
  - d. There is no Convention income projection
  - e. Investment income/transfer from the Reserve Fund is \$232,600, compared to a negative \$90,787 in 2018
2. Expenses –
  - a. Total labor costs are projected to increase approximately \$100,000 over 2018
  - b. Travel and meetings expense is increased about \$40,000 over 2018 expenses (6 TEAM events are scheduled in 2019)
  - c. Direct Conference costs are anticipated to be about \$20,000 less than expenses in 2018
  - d. Conference interpretation is budgeted at \$20,000; there was no interpretation expense in 2018
3. Total estimated Revenue is \$5,387,600, with total estimated expenses of \$5,511,969. This results in a deficit budget of -\$124,369. Strategic Plan Initiatives are estimated at \$54,587, for a total deficit expected to be \$178,956.
4. The Strategic Plan Initiatives include the development of a mobile App, translation software, hiring a part-time Spanish editor, new PSA's are being developed with tracking ability to measure their impact, online store is being redesigned, meeting search is being upgraded

## NEW, EXCITING PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AVAILABLE

WSO has developed three new public service announcements – one in each language – English, Spanish and French. These will be available to television stations for airplay in August. But, you can begin to gather information now for stations in your District or city/county that are interested. I have the PSA's available for general viewing, and am happy to send them to anyone who wants to reach out to a radio station or tv station about the idea.

## 2020 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE SITE ANNOUNCEMENT

The dates for the 2020 World Service Conference are Monday, April 20 through Friday, April 24, 2020. The Conference will be held at the Sheraton Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel again. In searching for a site to hold the Conference, the availability of adequate meeting space, hotel room costs, meal costs and dates of religious holidays were factors in the selection of the dates and location.

## REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON TRUSTEES

WSO did not select a Regional Trustee from among the applicants. So, we formed a new Committee for the selection of a Southeast Regional Trustee at Conference. All resumes are due to the WSO by August 15<sup>th</sup>. The Tennessee Area is not able to put forth a candidate at this time because we do not have a guideline for processing an off-cycle resume. This is something I would like our Area to address during this Panel.

The Southeast Region includes Alabama/Northwest Florida, Florida North, Florida South, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina/Bermuda, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

## TEAM EVENTS

The first TEAM event was held on May 1-2, 2010, in New Mexico/El Paso. There have been a total of 60 TEAM events since that time, including the 6 TEAM events scheduled in 2019.

- a. 25 Areas have hosted one TEAM event
- b. 14 Areas have hosted two TEAM events
- c. 3 Areas have hosted three TEAM events
- d. 1 Area has hosted four TEAM events
- e. 43 of the 67 total Areas have hosted TEAM events

These events were memorable and fun. Together we have helped each other to better understand AI-Anon, one another and ourselves. TEAM events have confirmed for us that we do not have to do anything alone and help is just a phone call, e-mail or text away. We have truly been empowered by the interactions of members, staff and volunteers.

In 2018 a Board Task Force was formed to look at restructuring TEAM events. The Task Force included WSO Staff and Volunteers, and they were looking at ways to more efficiently use AI-Anon's resources. Among the ideas they suggested was not to have a staff member participate in TEAM events any longer. Given that there are up to 9 TEAM events per year, and Staff participates in all of them, this would free up staff time for other valuable AI-Anon work.

The Board discussed the idea of hosting TEAM events without Staff participation, and decided that it would involve a lot more time from the Board members and take away from other Board work. In the end, the Board decided to discontinue TEAM events and begin to look at options to work on a new way of interacting with members, Staff and Volunteers.

After the evaluation of the overall impact of TEAM events within our service structure, the Board decided that TEAM events would end in 2019. The last scheduled TEAM event will be held on September 28, 2019, in Pennsylvania.

In making a decision regarding next steps, the Board and Staff will consider the experience gleaned from the regional Service Seminars (RSS) and the TEAM Events, as well as information gathered from "Road Trip: You and Your Board Connect" events. Today we have access to technology that was not available when RSS and TEAM Events were originally launched. New platforms now provide an opportunity to consider an idea or a redesign for similar events that could reach/or be accessible to wider audiences.

The WSO Staff and WSO Volunteers will unveil the plan for the future at the 2020 World Service Conference.

## ROAD TRIP: YOU AND YOUR BOARD CONNECT

WSO began Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect in St. John's, Newfoundland on July 19, 2014. It was called "Meet the Board" at that time. This is an opportunity for the entire Board and Executive Committee to interact with the fellowship, and for the fellowship to learn what many of the Board and Executive Committee members are doing. Typically, new Trustees attend their first Board meeting in July, and planning for an event so soon after Conference was difficult. So, it was moved to October. The name was changed in 2016 to Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect.

Road Trip! has visited Newfoundland, Alberta, Arkansas, Colorado and Texas. This year they will visit Seattle, Washington. This will be the 6th Road Trip! Each year they create an evaluation for the attendees to gather information to assist them in planning the next year's event. The Road Trip! has been evolving, with great success.

Each year the Board of Trustees and members of the Executive Committee host their October Board meeting in a selected city, and stay an extra day to host an event called Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect. It usually lasts from 9 am to 4:30 pm The Road Trip! includes a full, fast-moving agenda, packed with presentations on how the different committees on the Board and Executive Committee work. Staff not only works behind the scenes in

helping the Board put the event together, they plan an important role in supporting the committees, as you will hear at the event.

Local members get a first hand look at the business of our fellowship. A roundtable breakout discussion with topics submitted by the hosting Area is always a hit. Examples of topics might include reaching out to rural areas or discussions about our legacies or spiritual principles. Also, brief shares from the Board and Executive Committee members are always a popular segment.

The Goal of Road Trip! is for all participants to realize that we are all AI-Anon members, working in different capacities, for the good of the fellowship.

2018 Road Trip! was held in Houston, Texas. Registration was available online, and was handled by WSO directly. Members also had the option to submit their surveys online. Members from Arizona, Kentucky, Louisiana, Manitoba, Minnesota, Missouri and Nevada made the trip to Houston for this event.

2019 Road Trip! will be held in Seattle, Washington, on October 20, 2019. Information about this event will be available on AFG Connects.

The Board voted in January to continue Road Trip! for an additional three-year trial period, 2020 through 2022. 19 Areas submitted bids last year.

2020 Road Trip! The invitation is available now. Areas can submit their bids up until September 13, 2019 for consideration for the 2020 Road Trip! event. WSO is not considering Areas that have previously hosted a Road Trip! event in the past.

## TASK FORCE REPORTS

Reports on the Alateen Policy changes to the Service Manual, changes to the Bylaws of AI-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. and AI-Anon Family Group Headquarters, (Canada) Inc., and Concept Five Text Revisions were presented.

I will share the information from the Electronic Meeting Work Group: Policy Committee this fall. You can read a little more about it in the April 2019 Chairman of the Board letter we received recently. It is quite interesting.

## CHOSEN AGENDA ITEMS

This year the Conference considered three Chosen Agenda Items; two that were chosen by the Delegates, and one chosen by the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees Chosen Agenda Item #1:

**Topic:** Whether or not a group that has a period of meditation or quiet time as part of its format is following the Legacies.

Does a group violate the Traditions when it includes meditation as part of its meeting format? Is holding a period of meditation as part of the meeting format an appropriate exercise of group autonomy through its group conscience? What can a group do to assist and advise newcomers should a group use meditation during their meeting?

Chosen Agenda Item #2:

**Topic:** Electronic/virtual meetings – how can we step out of our comfort zone – this case face to face District and Area business meetings – and incorporate electronic participation?

Why these “Electronic/virtual meetings” CAIs are important:

Currently we have face to face District and Area business meetings. Allowing for participation through electronic media might increase participation in District and Area meetings and bring large geographical or rural areas together. Should we establish protocols for handling business meetings (e.g., roll call, voting procedures) that include GRs that participate by voice call or other electronic media?



### Chosen Agenda Item #3:

#### **Topic:** Encouraging service:

- a. Back to Basics – Supporting Group Growth: The growth is fundamental; it is the basic unit of our fellowship. What are some ways we can support group growth?
- b. How to encourage service in your Area. How can we encourage older and newer members in our Areas to participate in service?
- c. What are some ways we can increase new member participation?
- d. How can we address the issue of gaps in the links of service?

Why these “Encouraging Service” CAIs are important:

The group is the basic unit of our fellowship. Sometimes, there is a disconnect in the link from the group to the District, which might account for some dark (inactive) Districts throughout the WSC structure. This might affect AI-Anon as a whole. What can we do as a Conference to support these disconnected groups?

In my Area, there is a growing number of open District Representative positions as some people move from District Representative to positions in the Area. Why is this? I wonder why some people say “no” when asked to consider a new role in service.

How can we encourage new generations (younger members) to participate in service in the group, District, and Area, and on service boards? The volunteering or commitment to participate seems strong in those older than 60. Is it a generational issue? How do we get more participation, even a small amount, from younger members?

There are some Districts without District Representatives. We are looking for constructive ways to meet the needs of the groups and members when there are gaps in the links of service structure. What responsibility does the Area/WSO have in these situations? Are there ways to fill these gaps?

### **MEGA ISSUE: HYBRID CONFERENCE**

Like last year, the Board of Trustees presented a Mega Issue for an idea-generating discussion at Conference. The Mega Issue was the topic of a Hybrid Conference. You can find more information about this topic in the April 2019 Chairman of the Board letter as well.

### **WARRANTY THREE HOUSEKEEPING CHANGES**

Probably no one but me, my Sponsor and my friend Melinda will even care about this latest development, but, wait for it ... drum roll ... the comma is returning to Warranty Three! There will no longer be a “discussion vote” to discuss. The correction will be made in the next on-line version of the Service Manual this fall, and in the next print version at some point (when it’s time for WSO to order more Service Manuals). I have the report presented at Conference if you are interested in the history and other information about this decision.

### **INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION UPDATES**

A.A.’s International Convention with AI-Anon Participation will be held July 2 – 5, 2020 in Detroit, Michigan. Online registration opens September 9, 2019. Early bird registration is \$115 (USD) through April 15, 2020. Registration is \$140.00 (USD) after April 15, 2020. The theme for next year’s Convention is a celebration of A.A.’s 85th anniversary – “Love and Tolerance is our Code.”

AI-Anon’s International Convention with A.A. Participation will be held June 29 – July 2, 2023 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Start your savings campaign now and you’ll have more than enough for this wonderful adventure in 2023. If you start putting back \$5 a week now, you’ll have over \$1,000 by the time the Convention rolls around in 2023. I’ve already started my jar, and hope to see you all there.

Thank you for affording me the privilege of serving the Tennessee Area as Delegate for this Panel.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah L., Delegate

Area 52 – Tennessee, Panel 58