

## ■ Intergroup/Central Office: Then and Now

Established and supported by local groups to carry out the functions of a centralized office, intergroups have provided thousands of desperate alcoholics with their first contact with Alcoholics Anonymous, either over the phone, in person, or, increasingly, online. With 469 intergroups/central offices listed with G.S.O. in the U.S./Canada alone (and nearly 700 worldwide), A.A. is so easily “searchable” these days that we often forget that, at one time, it played a little hard to get. Back in the early days, “A.A. wasn’t that easy to find,” wrote one oldtimer. “A carefully selected group of priests, judges and policemen knew about A.A.; our phone number wasn’t listed, and it could be gotten only by dialing Information.” This was a deliberate attempt to ensure that anyone wanting to get sober was sincere enough to make a real effort. But gauging the level of someone else’s desire to quit drinking was an often subjective judgment that the Third Tradition fortunately did away with.

In the very beginning, there was the Central Committee in Cleveland, Ohio, where by October 1939 a group of seven members convened on a regular basis to coordinate efforts regarding hospitalizations and sponsorship, doing crucial work at a time when the slip of just one member or the dissolution of just one group seemed to threaten the very existence of A.A. itself.

What Bill W. called “A.A.’s first organized service center” — the forerunner of today’s intergroup — sprang up in the Chicago suburb of Evanston. Around 1940, an A.A. member named Sylvia used the proceeds of her monthly alimony check to rent an apartment and establish a phone line. In 1941, after publication of the Jack Alexander article about A.A. in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Sylvia’s apartment began to resemble, according to Bill, “a sort of Chicago Grand Central,” with so many phone calls that Sylvia had to enlist the aid of Grace Coultice, a non-alcoholic secretary. Eventually, Sylvia and Grace upgraded to an office in the Loop (only a few blocks from where the current Chicago Area Service Office now has its offices), where they welcomed, Bill wrote, “a stream of applicants for Twelfth Step attention, hospitalization, or other help.”

Most early intergroup offices were nowhere near as elaborate as this: they were simply phone lines listed as belonging to A.A. but that were in fact connected to members’ homes. But Sylvia’s office inspired the opening of numerous early intergroup/central offices all over the Midwest, notably ones in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and



Minneapolis, Minnesota.

On the East Coast, New York Inter-Group essentially started when the doors of the 24th Street Clubhouse at 334½ West 24th Street opened in June 1940 and began serving the members of Alcoholics Anonymous in the metropolitan area. By 1942, the Club, as it was called, began to serve as more than a meeting place and to function as a de facto central committee for over 20 A.A. groups, with two paid clubhouse secretaries who answered phones and manned the desk 12 to 14 hours a day. These were some of A.A.’s first “special workers,” as articulated in Tradition Eight, who were paid to make A.A. Twelfth Step work possible, as opposed to individual A.A. members who, on a voluntary basis, carry the message as part of their own Twelfth Step efforts. Eventually, in 1946, New York Inter-Group was established, moving away from the clubhouse (it was difficult to carry on the work of intergroup in a social atmosphere that included an endless poker game and, at one point, a restaurant) to a space on West 75th Street.

By the time of the first General Service Conference in April 1951, at least 16 intergroup/central offices were serving local groups. Since they predated the formation of the general service structure and performed a different A.A. function, they were not a part of the A.A. structure (except in Chicago, where the area service office and area committee are essentially one). At times over the years, there has been an overlapping of services, but, for the most part, intergroups and general service have come to work in harmony.

Matthew C., office manager of the Ventura County Central Office (VCCO), is the epitome of a contemporary

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intergroup/central office manager, dealing with all the rewards and challenges that this entails. The image of A.A. volunteers answering phone calls from suffering alcoholics, or A.A. members seeking a meeting or information, is still a relatively accurate one. “We rotate shifts of volunteers — we have at least one in the office at all times, and 60 to 70 willing to have calls forwarded to their homes after hours,” Matthew says. They get about 500 to 600 calls a month at VCCO, but this is down from previous years because of the Internet, which has proved, for better or worse, a game-changer for intergroup/central offices. Since so many people are bypassing phone calls and going to the VCCO website, the beta test site that Matthew is rolling out is geared heavily toward newcomers, opening with a banner that reads, “New to A.A.? Have Questions?” and a home page that addresses the most commonly occurring questions.

Matthew feels that there is a “certain comfort” about being able to explore the answers to questions individuals may have about their drinking without having to speak to someone, but there is also something that may be lost: “that one-on-one connection with another person. So, the website does encourage people to call, 24/7.” When they do call, miracles can occur. Like so many of the intergroup/central office workers, Matthew has war stories. Once, an alcoholic attempting to detox himself called VCCO, certain that he was having a heart attack. “He was in bad shape,” Matthew says, “and after a long conversation we convinced him to call EMS and get to an emergency room.” Several years later, that same alcoholic — sober now — walked into the office and thanked them.

In Chicago, office manager Katie M. describes a very successful web presence for the Chicago Area Service Office (CASO). The website averages over 100,000 visits per month, and, out of these, roughly 26 percent are coming to the site for the first time.

Katie describes CASO as “an anchor” for the greater Chicago area and Cook County. “We have a bookstore, and all of our standing committees — like corrections, H&I, Grapevine, etc. — meet here in the evening, and other districts come down here to participate, so we connect people to the service structure.”

CASO does receive roughly 700 phone calls a month,

Katie adds, but she senses that they are somewhat different from the intergroup calls of the past. “The majority of the calls are not necessarily people wanting to go to a first meeting, or to talk about their drinking problems. We get calls from social workers, for instance, who are trying to help alcoholics connect with a meeting, often a bridging-the-gap kind of thing.”

Like many intergroup/central office managers, Katie is concerned about the finances of the office. Like all intergroups, CASO acts as a clearinghouse for information about local groups and meetings and is directly responsible to the groups it serves. In turn, these groups provide volunteers for Twelfth Step work (i.e., answering the phones), supervise office policies and procedures via their intergroup reps, and offer financial support. CASO has a strong prudent reserve, but Katie is always looking for measures to cut costs, particularly since contributions from the groups have been declining. “Only 23 percent of the groups support the office,” Katie says, “and individual contributions [which can be up to \$3,000 annually] make up only 5 to 10 percent.” And e-commerce affects the way they can do business. “People can get the Big Book cheaper and faster from non-A.A. online stores than they can coming down here to the bookstore and purchasing it from us.”

One answer to this problem is outreach to the groups. Katie M. sends out an appeal letter every November, and intergroup reps discuss the need for financing at every area assembly. Pauline D., office manager of the Northern Virginia Intergroup (NVI), agrees on how crucial outreach is: “We had a terrible year a couple of years ago,” she says. So, we did a major outreach, letting people know just how intergroup works and how it is financed. We asked all of our intergroup reps to bring word back to their groups that intergroup needed their help. We really pushed Birthday Plans in November. And we had the intergroup chair visit each of the 14 districts we serve and talk about our mission. And that seemed to work very well for us.”

(Pauline and NVI are hosting the 32nd Annual Intergroup/Central Office/AAWS/AAGV Seminar, October 6-8 this year. This annual seminar provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and shared experience for those on A.A.'s front line. Attendees are intergroup/

## ■ Reminder: Résumés for Trustee Election due Jan. 1, 2018

Two new Class B (alcoholic) trustees from the Pacific and Eastern Canada regions will be elected at the General Service Conference in April 2018. Résumés must be received at G.S.O. no later than January 1, 2018, and must be submitted by delegates only.

The new Pacific regional trustee will succeed Joel C., of San Diego; the new Eastern Canada trustee will follow Richard B., of Terrebonne, Québec.

Please submit your candidate's résumé to the Secretary, trustees' Nominating Committee, General Service Office.

central office managers, intergroup representatives, G.S.O. and Grapevine staff, and members of the A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Boards.)

Jennifer R., office manager of Miami-Dade Intergroup — an office with a long history, dating back to the 1940s — has seen the number of groups in the area decline. Phone calls to the hotline average only two or three a day, perhaps as a result of the website or the Meeting Finder app that many people use today. With so many groups closed and others facing increased rent, contributions to Miami-Dade Intergroup are down. Both Jennifer and another employee are part-time; despite this, they are incredibly productive, producing and distributing meeting directories, managing the website, selling A.A. Conference-approved literature, providing service materials, preparing a monthly newsletter, and making sure the phones are answered 24/7 by A.A. volunteers. Jennifer speaks Spanish, and one of her many jobs is cooperation with the Spanish-speaking intergroups, which do not have a separate office, but pass the phone from one group to another, one month at a time.

Young people coming into A.A. need to be educated about intergroup, Jennifer says, and need to learn to volunteer. An A.A. without intergroup would not be A.A., really. “If we are not here, if someone calls for help and there is no one to pick up the phone, then A.A. has failed them.”

Coco T., executive secretary of New York Inter-Group (NYIG), agrees that a thriving intergroup is incredibly important to the A.A. community it serves — in the case of NYIG, a community that includes 1,438 active groups registered with the NYIG office and 3,642 meetings in the meeting book. It’s no wonder that NYIG’s Seventh Avenue offices are open 365 days a year from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., with phone volunteers available from 9 a.m. to 2 a.m. “We don’t miss any opportunity to share our experience, strength and hope with other alcoholics,” Coco says, especially since the web has changed the intergroup paradigm. Up until August 2016, when their new A.A. meeting finder appeared on the website, NYIG averaged 4,500 to 4,800 calls a month. At that point, the calls were almost immediately reduced to 3,000 to 3,200 per month.

It’s a mixed blessing, of course. More and more people are able to find meetings quickly and efficiently, but, says Coco, the loss of 20 to 30 phone calls a day “is physically very noticeable. When alcoholics actually call on the phone for help, they get the benefit of the A.A. volunteer who may have been taking phone calls for five years and can really connect with another alcoholic. Now we get hundreds of emails asking us to make contact with a person about their drinking. It’s a challenge to answer these, and also removes the value of that one-to-one connection, the immediate Twelfth Step element.”

To provide human connection, Coco helps ensure that the NYIG office is a welcoming place. “There’s a library and an archives area where people can and do come from all over for a cup of coffee and to read a book and look at some historic items. You can check out a book if you want. No one is ever turned away. Even in an electronic age, we are committed to providing hard copies of every flyer we produce — not everyone, particularly homeless people, has access to the Internet.”

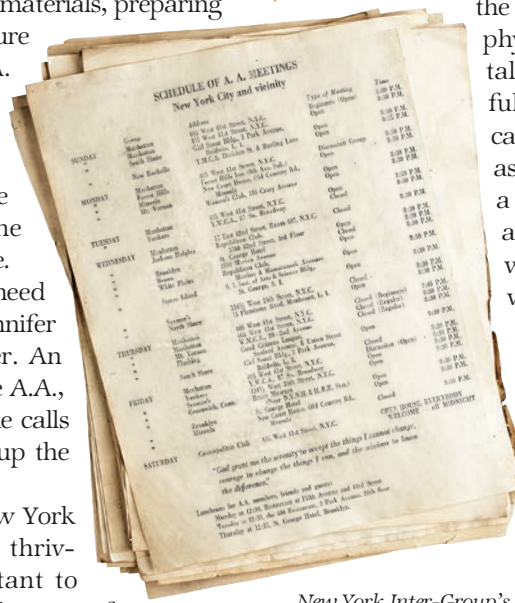
And the connection benefits not just the alcoholics reaching out to NYIG, but those 635 to 700 alcoholics with over one year of continuous sobriety who volunteer there. “You can’t stop these volunteers,” Coco says. “Even if there’s six feet of snow outside, they’ll be here.” She tells the story of one 90-year-old volunteer — a physician who knew Bill W., and used to talk about how he had tried, unsuccessfully, to get Bill to stop smoking — who came in once a week, year after year, even as his health failed, showing up dressed in a suit and tie. “He was a man of elegance and grace,” Coco says. “He used to tell his wife, ‘I have to go help people.’ His life’s work was to carry the message.”

The Area 87 Central Service Office in Montréal, Québec (which is hosting the 2018 Intergroup/Central Office/AAWS/AAGV Seminar), carries the message to both English- and French-speaking alcoholics. According to executive assistant Ginette W., their help line receives roughly 500 to 600 English-language calls monthly, with perhaps three times that many in French. “We are officially bilingual, but we also

have a Spanish-speaking presence,” Ginette adds. “There are about 12 Spanish-speaking groups locally that have their own intergroup, but we host them at our office and make literature available in Spanish.”

Like most intergroup/central offices, some of the phone calls the Area 87 Central Service Office receives are from alcoholics who are lonely and simply want to talk, which can be a drain on resources. “We never cut these calls off,” says Ginette, “but we work to direct these people to meetings, where real, face-to-face recovery can begin. We also have a group of volunteers who are willing to talk on the phone from their homes, which frees up our other workers.”

Replenishing the pool of volunteers is a constant concern. “We have to keep reminding groups that things don’t happen by magic in A.A.: there is hard work in carrying the message. Our area’s 27 districts have 550 groups, and we reach out to all of them via our newsletter and through intergroup reps going to meetings. We also make a point of educating groups about why we need money, not how much. We need to pay for literature, for phones, for the website. The A.A. message of recovery is free; for intergroup to pass it on costs money.”



New York Inter-Group’s first meeting schedule — 1946.

Area 87 Central Service Office has a brand new website that features a special portal dedicated to newcomers. Ginette puts it simply: “We need to be where the people are. And, these days, people are on their computers and smartphones. So that is where intergroup has to go.”

Many of those who have never had occasion to call intergroup (or who look up meetings on websites in strange towns without quite thinking of who is maintaining that website) wonder why they should support intergroup/central office with their financial donations. While cooperating closely with G.S.O. and local general service district and area committees, it is not unusual for intergroup/central offices to seem apart from the general service structure. However, as noted in *The A.A. Service Manual* (page S42), “Many areas find that a liaison between the intergroup/central office and the area committee is very helpful in maintaining good relations and communication. In some areas the liaison has a vote at the assembly; in others, a voice but no vote.” And further, the General Service Office publishes Guidelines and other service material that share the accumulated experience of intergroups and central offices in the United States/

Canada and worldwide. These define an intergroup as “an A.A. service office that involves partnership among groups in a community — just as A.A. groups themselves are partnerships of individuals. It is established to carry out functions which are best handled by a centralized office.... It exists to aid the groups in their common purpose of carrying the Alcoholics Anonymous message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

According to Coco T., the NYIG office pays \$10,000 a month in rent alone — a relatively modest fee, considering Manhattan real estate prices, but not a stroll in the park either. When asked what the future might hold for intergroups, she replies, “We answer to the Fellowship; we are responsible to the groups. Ultimately, our future depends on them. I owe my life to Alcoholics Anonymous, and I would hope intergroup is always there.”

As Matthew C. at VCCO sees it, the idea of intergroup is the idea of A.A. itself: “A suffering alcoholic talks to someone who is feeling the way they are feeling, who understands and has been through the humiliation they have experienced, who helps them know that they are not alone after all.”

## ■ Living Cyber

At A.A.’s 10th International Convention in San Diego in 1995, a group of people who called themselves the Living Cyber Committee gathered in a hospitality suite. They knew each other, but many of them had never met, since their only encounters had been in early forms of online A.A. groups. Those unable to travel to San Diego were able to “virtually” attend the convention through the suite. Two major email groups, several groups from the major online services, and an Internet Relay Chat channel participated in uniting alcoholics from all over the world with the online members and visitors in the suite.

The Living Cyber suite was a great success, and the committee realized that, with the rapidly expanding Internet, alcoholics around the world would need an online version of a brick-and-mortar intergroup/central office. They formed the Online Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous (OIAA), which was registered in New Jersey in 1996. According to OIAA chair Vicki E., online intergroup provides “a centralized location where groups can come online and people can find the groups they need.” Crucial to OIAA’s function is a rigorous vetting policy. “Our policy and admission committee is very strict in vetting our groups before we register them — we need to make sure they are true A.A. groups, operating within our Twelve Traditions.”

At any given time, OIAA may have more than 100 groups listed. They represent all types of meetings — email, chat, telephone, audio, video — for all different groups, including general discussion meetings (both open and closed); men’s and women’s meetings; meetings for those who for one reason or another can’t leave home; meetings for those who are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing; and meetings for atheists/agnostics, military and LGBTQ members. “All types of people come to online meetings,” Vicki says. When she was training as a nurse and had to travel 50 miles to work, she was unable to get to her regular meetings and so went online. Now she mixes brick-and-mortar meetings with cyber meetings, depending on her schedule.

With meetings in 13 different languages besides English, OIAA is essentially an intergroup/central office for the online world. It functions along the lines of a regular intergroup, depending on Seventh Tradition contributions from its listed groups for expenses, with the usual number



of committees liaising with general service structures in the countries OIAA reaches. And, of course, the Twelfth Step function is central to OIAA’s mission. OIAA’s Twelfth Step Help Committee (known informally as “the Steppers”) responds directly by email — 24 hours a day, in numerous languages — to anyone who clicks on the “Get Help” button on the OIAA site or the meeting sites it links with. According to Vicki, the Steppers answer some 300 to 500 emails a month from all over the world.

This Twelfth Step work, like any other, is crucial. “You are sometimes dealing with alcoholics who are feeling hopeless and you want to connect with them, get them help,” says Vicki. “Even though you are on the Internet, you are working side by side with them.” And, occasionally, there is that validating moment when the virtual world meets the physical one.

“I was at the San Antonio International Convention [in 2010], in our hospitality suite, when we had a man come in from Peru,” Vicki relates. “Where he lived, he said, there were only three A.A. members, all 50 miles apart, and they could only meet once every three months, traveling by boat. Aside from that, his lifeline to A.A. was online meetings. So, people do stay sober, all over the world, against the odds. And that is what OIAA is there to help them with.”

## ■ A Very Different Saturday Night



*THE PREAMBLE:* Originated in 1975, A.A. Regional Forums were designed to keep the General Service Office and Grapevine staffs — as well as A.A. World Services, Inc., the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and the General Service Board — in touch with A.A. members, trusted servants and newcomers throughout the Fellowship through workshops, presentations, and sharing informational sessions. In a practical sense, since most members cannot visit G.S.O. in New York, the Forums provide a way for G.S.O. to go to the members in an abbreviated form to disseminate information and gather feedback. And so, in December of 2016, 433 members gathered at the Southeast Regional Forum in Orlando, Florida — more than half of them first-time attendees.

*WHAT IT WAS LIKE:* A two-car caravan set off from Montgomery, Alabama, carrying four rookies and two seasoned veterans. The rookies were a group of friends who had decided to broaden the scope of their A.A. service work — John (D.C.M.), Oni (G.S.R.), David (alternate D.C.M.), and Rachel (G.S.R. for a young people's group.) The fresh-faced sojourners had no idea what to expect, only that it would be a departure from the service work they had all been doing at the group level. As they embarked on the eight-hour drive to Orlando, John noticed that everyone was excited and amped, that “there was a fun atmosphere in the car” as the group tried to imagine the kind of experience the Forum might provide. Oni loved that she was taking a trip with people who were service-minded — “service junkies,” as she liked to call them. She had heard great things about the Forum held two years prior and had encouraged her group to start their plans well in advance and to book a hotel as soon as possible. Oni was also looking forward to enjoying some Cuban food — a cuisine difficult for her to find in

Alabama — in Orlando. The only disharmony in the car was an ongoing “discussion” of which road to take: The vets, Tommy (area finance chair) and Cushing (a past delegate), who did their best to fill the rookies in on how the event would unfold, suggested what they thought to be the best route to Orlando — a route upon which everyone did not agree.

Whether to take I-10 or US 82 to I-75 or I-75 from the get-go... a consensus had still not been reached when one of the rookies insisted they take Florida's Turnpike the entire way. Much to the chagrin of the more experienced travelers, the backers of the turnpike route prevailed. A few hours later, faces reddened and eyes rolled as the group traveled through smaller and smaller towns, with many a twist and turn, past retirement villages and landscaped communities where the driver dodged golf carts and fruit stands and even a giant rooster. It was quite a detour, but, ultimately, the circuitous route did not hinder their arriving in time for the official start of the Forum — and an amazing weekend.

*WHAT HAPPENED:* After warm welcomes and introductions, the Forum went into full swing. Many reports and presentations were given on A.A. topics ranging from *The Future of La Viña* to *Safety in A.A.* to *A Daily Reprieve Based on One's Spiritual Condition*. Presenter Jim S. struck a chord with the assembly when he observed that as his spiritual connection strengthened, his sponsorship activities increased and he began to do more A.A.-related service work at the group, district and area level. He shared his belief that “as Bill suggests in his personal story, I can lose my sobriety if I don't continue to be willing to perfect and enlarge my spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others.”

John and Oni had assumed that the Forum would

be interesting and informative, but they never imagined that it would exceed their expectations. Neither anticipated what a powerful experience it would be — emotionally. Oni said that, for her, sitting in the front row that first night was “a tearjerker.” She said she felt like Alice in Wonderland as the *A.A. Service Manual* came to life, “in color and real.” She did not expect such a personal experience; her secret fear was that the Forum might end up being nothing more than an arid business meeting. She cried with gratitude as she felt more and more a part of a global movement whose primary purpose was to help oneself and others. John, too, was overwhelmed with emotion; the stakes for him were even higher. That Saturday night, at the first-timers meeting, John would acknowledge his five-year sober anniversary. He had only planned to celebrate privately with close friends, but was touched that his regional trustee, Chet P., announced John’s and several other celebrants’ anniversaries from the mic, thanks to the prompting of one of those close friends. As the universal power of the program washed over him, especially on that celebratory day, John observed humbly and with deep gratitude (plus a few tears) that it was a very different Saturday night from the kind he’d known five years before.

Glenn W.’s presentation on *General Service: The Basics* was informative and enlightening. At first, Glenn pointed out simple facts, like how the “G” in G.S.R. does not stand for “group” but rather “general,” as a G.S.R. is asked to look at service from a different point of view — to go beyond what’s best for the member or the group and consider what’s best for A.A. as a worldwide organization. Another practical note was a reminder of how unusual and radical is A.A.’s upside-down triangle of

service, where membership is at the top level and trusted servants are below.

As the weekend progressed, John began to feel “a part of” A.A. in a much larger and far-more reaching way — well beyond what he had experienced in his group or immediate area. Oni felt her A.A. world get bigger and bigger, while at the same time she became more intimate with the program. When John met some Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees from the General Service Board, he was impressed when they shared how and why they served in their positions: many had alcoholism in their families, and their service was a way of helping the still sick and suffering in their own lives. John found the Class A trustees to be “just genuinely nice people” who were very open about how much they had learned from alcoholics. “They felt that we had enriched their lives and that their service was their way of giving back.” Oni was also taken by meeting the Class As. It further enhanced her sense of the A.A. service structure becoming 3D in that she could *hear* — live and in person — from someone she had always considered to be *them*. She was awed that the Class As really did understand to a remarkable degree what alcoholics go through. Now Oni affectionately calls her nonalcoholic friends who are likewise empathetic “Class A.”

Perhaps the one shadow cast on an otherwise light-filled weekend was Glenn W.’s observation that less than 50 percent of the Fellowship does service at this vibrant and extraordinary level, where one can truly lend his or her voice to a global A.A. conscience. Glenn mused as to whether it was a lack of understanding about the purpose of general service, apathy, or simply bad experiences, but averred with care and concern that, regardless of their reasons, those members were A.A.’s silent majority. He went on to encourage those open to serving the Fellowship in a more vital way to step up — specifically, those who “are able to see *spirited debate* instead of *arguing*; who have the patience to foster an informed group conscience; and who can set aside personal goals.” He closed with his own experience: “At each level of service, I have been both humbled and spiritually fulfilled, and these experiences have truly enhanced my sobriety and way of life.”

**WHAT IT’S LIKE NOW:** The road trip back from Orlando was markedly different. John said it was a lot “quieter,” though he wasn’t sure if that was the right word. There *was* less idle chatter, but there was certainly more talk about what everyone could do with what they had learned — especially how they could apply it to their service work. Oni was impressed that everybody seemed to have had their own spiritual experience, and she loved how eager and enthusiastic each one was to share their unique impressions of moments that had affected them. Cuban food notwithstanding, Oni was happy to have met so many Latino delegates and attendees. She was grateful to be able to speak Spanish, connect with La Viña staff, and find ways to help the Spanish community at home.

What stayed with John most was the feeling of belonging — that getting sober and participating in A.A. is a

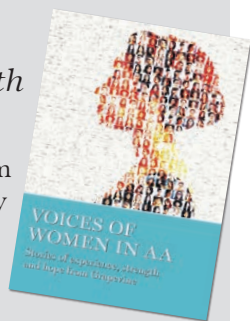
## ■ New Grapevine Publication

### ***Voices of Women in AA:*** *Stories of experience, strength and hope from Grapevine*

This collection of 61 stories from Grapevine begins with articles by or about women who contributed to A.A. early in its history, followed by stories from some of the program’s earliest female members.

Sections are devoted to spirituality, sponsorship, life changes, relationships, family, careers and friendships. The collection concludes with a chapter devoted to women’s meetings.

To order this book or any other Grapevine product, go to [aagrapevine.org](http://aagrapevine.org) and click on “Store.” or call (800) 631-6025 U.S./Canada, (818) 487-2091 International, or by fax at (818) 487-4550. Price: \$11.50, \$10.99 for five or more copies. (GV 37)



much bigger deal than he had ever realized before. John is now often deeply moved when he visits an A.A. website and realizes the magnitude of people clicking on the button I HAVE A PROBLEM DRINKING. “It’s a profound reminder of why we do what we do.”

The Forum also empowered John to share with those at home what was going on regionally and to lead his district in a more unified way. All in all, he left feeling much better prepared for his current service work. Oni concurred. The Forum changed her way of handling how she comports herself at business meetings, and it really clarified the concept of the inverted triangle. She is now able to compare her group’s issues to the larger picture of A.A. and take *everyone* into consideration. She realizes, “It is no longer me and them – it’s *us* – the Regional Forum humanized New York for me.”

Returning to Alabama, John, Oni, David, Rachel, Tommy and Cushing *did* use Florida’s Turnpike for part of the trip but put their heads together to find a more direct route for the rest of the way home. In true A.A. fashion, they listened to each other’s suggestions and let go of their individual wills. There was a lot of laughter along the way, especially about their roundabout journey down to Orlando (that giant rooster!). And as they motored along their very own road to happy destiny, they continued practicing the principles after a most moving and powerful affair — the 2016 Southeast Regional Forum.

## Retired — But Still Ready to Answer Questions

A nonalcoholic, Don Meurer had his first exposure to Alcoholics Anonymous back in 1972. Fresh out of college and newly married, he had just started out as a junior accountant with the Manhattan certified accounting firm of Owen Flanagan & Co. when one day they told him that he was going to the Grapevine. And he thought, “I am going where?”

He soon learned. Don retired as CFO of the General Service Office in February 2017 after a distinguished career spanning 35 years. After working for almost 10 years with Owen Flanagan as the chief auditor for Grapevine, he came on board as Grapevine controller in late 1981 and by 1989 had become G.S.O. controller (later CFO). Along the way, he served under seven general managers; moved with G.S.O. from the offices at 468 Park Avenue South to 475 Riverside Drive; attended over 30 General Service Conferences; and watched carefully over the finances of the Fellowship. Greg T., current general manager, says, “Don represents the best of what the General Service Office is: a dedicated, long-term, nonalcoholic employee and servant of the Fellowship. He was appreciated as someone who provided answers and information and was always guided by the principles of A.A.”

Don remembers his early days at Grapevine fondly. “The first Grapevine executive I worked with, while I was still an independent auditor, was [14-year managing editor] Paula C., whom I would often see in her office smoking little cigars and reading the *Wall Street Journal*. A few years after I arrived at Grapevine, I worked closely with Ames S. and Anne W. to keep Grapevine going after there was a change in management.” Ames S. later became Grapevine executive editor, left in 2001 after 15 years to work as a freelancer, and returned as G.S.O.’s managing editor in 2017 to find Don still there. “It is an amazing span of continuity,” Ames says, “and a testament to Don’s ability to work with a broad range of personalities.”

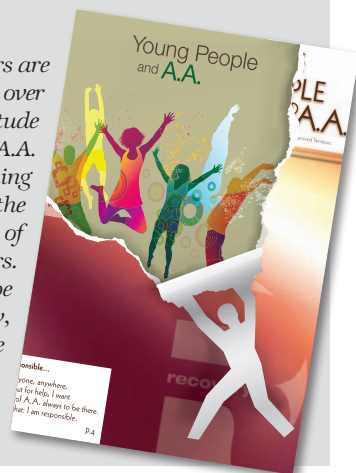
Part of Don’s job was answering questions. He enumerates some of them: “Usually, I wouldn’t go a week without someone asking a question about quarterly reports or financial statements, or a question from a group treasurer or G.S.R. about bank accounts or tax ID numbers. Is it a violation of the Traditions to earn interest? What about our anonymity if we file tax returns? Often there was some information needed for a presentation to an assembly, conference or similar event.” Don “always gave you his attention,” former Publishing Department managing editor Eleanor W. remembers, “even when you interrupted him!”

Certain changes that Don saw during his tenure were substantial. When he first started out, G.S.O. did all of its shipping out of 468 Park Avenue South rather than the current Kansas City warehouse, and communicated with A.A. members via letter rather than email. But, he says, the commitment of A.A.s to service and to spreading the word about Alcoholics Anonymous remains the same.

What’s next for Don? Since most of his traveling in recent years has been business trips for A.A., he’d like to visit Ireland and perhaps take a road trip across the United States. He is also busy fixing up the home he and his wife own on Captree Island, off the coast of Long Island, and babysitting for grandchildren. And he’s still ready to answer questions. “There’s so much stuff left in my head after over 30 years that I couldn’t put it all down on paper before I left,” Don says.

### New Look

A.A.’s pamphlet covers are getting a makeover. With over 80 pamphlets on a multitude of topics directly related to A.A. and recovery, G.S.O.’s Publishing Department has begun the process of redesigning many of our pamphlet and book covers. Reflecting the breadth, scope and diversity of A.A. today, these dynamic, attractive covers will help carry the message both inside and outside the Fellowship.



## ■ New Service Material Available

The General Service Office has developed a new service piece that is now available to the Fellowship upon request.

Service material differs from Conference-approved literature in that it has not come about through Conference Advisory Action. Service material reflects A.A. group experience as well as specific and timely information that is subject to change.

The new item (F-211) is titled “Safety Card for A.A. Groups” and offers statements that can be used at the group level regarding the safety of the group and its members. As noted on the card, “Alcoholics Anonymous is a microcosm of the larger society we exist in. As such, problems found in the outside world can also make their way into the rooms. For this reason, groups and members discuss the topic of safety — to raise awareness in the Fellowship and to seek through sponsorship, workshops and meetings, to create as safe an environment as possible to carry A.A.’s message of hope and recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic.”

Printed on yellow paper, the six-by-four-inch card has been made available as an optional service piece for those groups who wish to use it, and is available in English, French and Spanish. To obtain service material, including this item, please contact the General Service Office.

## ■ Self-Support: A Unique Approach

In recent months, G.S.O. has noticed a groundswell of Seventh Tradition contributions, each for \$7.27 — the dollar amount noted by the General Service Board treasurer as the average cost per member for G.S.O. to provide A.A. services to the Fellowship. Each year the treasurer comes up with an average number based on that year’s financial position. Recently, members of the Fellowship have latched on to this number, sending contributions to G.S.O. in that exact amount. The practice got started in the Pacific Northwest and has swept across the eight regions and 93 areas of the U.S. and Canada, reflecting the commitment of individual members to supporting the services that G.S.O. provides. For this, G.S.O. would like to say, “Thanks!” And to acknowledge the unique surge of contributions for \$7.27 that were sent to G.S.O. — on July 27 (7/27)!

## ■ Two New Arrivals at G.S.O.

This past spring, the General Service Office welcomed two new staff members to serve on the Corrections and Treatment/Accessibilities assignments. Coincidentally, both are transplants to New York from other regions (Pacific and Southwest) and both are former “military brats.”

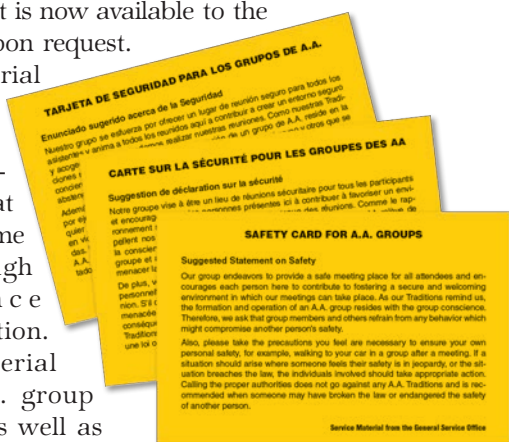
“I was actually a ‘Coast Guard brat,’” notes **Diana L.**, currently serving on the Corrections assignment. She arrived at G.S.O. on March 13, having moved from San Diego. Diana’s father (African-American) was in the Coast Guard and her mother (Scottish-Canadian) was a graphic artist. When she was young, Diana lived on Guam and “bounced back and forth” in various towns along the California coast. She got sober in 1982 at the age of 15, having started to drink when she was eight. In the meetings she attended, no one could believe she was there to quit drinking: “They thought I was there doing a school report,” Diana says. When she found out she was pregnant after 35 days of sobriety, she was faced with a “spiritual dilemma,” and made a decision to stick with A.A., which she has, for 35 years.

Staying sober, Diana finished high school, working jobs that ranged from bank janitor to fast food cashier. She backpacked around Europe, touching base with the global fellowship of A.A. in places like Denmark and Greece. She returned to California, and got her B.S. in Chemistry from U.C. San Diego and her M.S. in Chemistry from U.S.C. Los Angeles. After a career as a biotech researcher (co-authoring 10 patents) and years of A.A. service work, she heard there was a staff position open at G.S.O. in New York. She interviewed for that job and didn’t get it, but when the next opening came up, she took a second chance, applied again, and was hired.

Her early experience in A.A. has helped her on the Corrections assignment. “When I think of the Responsibility Pledge, I’m really moved by the hands that reach back from behind the walls. When I was new, I would go on H&I panels to jails and I was in such bad shape that a lot of the inmates who had sobriety would tell me to hang in there, saying, ‘You have nothing to lose. Sobriety is worth it.’ They were in prison, but had experienced a new freedom.”

Now, corresponding with prisoners and working with local Corrections committees, Diana says, “I love giving back to members of the Fellowship who are on the ‘inside’ and learning more about how they pass it on. People who are blind, people who speak other languages.... One woman reads A.A. literature to those with different reading levels. The local committees who bring meetings in, who correspond with inmates and coordinate prerelease contacts — they are great examples of love and service.”

**Patrick C.** started at G.S.O. on April 3 on the Treatment and Accessibilities assignment. He was born in Japan and grew up all over the world as the family moved from one military base to another in Rome, Turkey, Germany and the United States. They finally settled in Houston, Texas, and it was there, at the age of 17, that Patrick discovered that “drinking was the answer to





all my problems and my fear-based living. So I got on the alcohol train and rode it.” Although he never attended college, he began to work in the banking industry and continued to do so for his entire career. But the progression of alcohol caused his jobs to be of shorter and shorter duration — five years, three years, six months.

Finally, his boss guided him to an EAP program and suggested try A.A. “In my desperate state, those words were important for me to hear,” Patrick says. He went to a meeting in 1992 and has not had a drink since. “I was drawn to service in early sobriety,” Patrick says, beginning with group G.S.R. and D.C.M. and moving on to P.I. on the area level for six years. He ultimately served as Area 67 chair and Panel 63 (2013-2014) delegate to the General Service Conference.

Married and still living in Houston, Patrick found that his banking job was not challenging him and wondered if working remotely for G.S.O. was a possibility. It was not, but in September of 2016, when a staff job became open, Patrick interviewed for it, and in January 2017, he was offered the position. He and his husband moved from a 2,700-square-foot house in Houston to a 350-square-foot apartment on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, and he began training for his Treatment and Accessibilities job. “It was wonderful to come into G.S.O. and be trained by experienced staff members. To have these professionals share with you the history of G.S.O. and how to respond in various situations really brings *The A.A. Service Manual* to life.”

## ■ Appointed Committee Member for Literature

The trustees’ Literature Committee has an opening for an appointed committee member (ACM). We are searching for an appropriate individual to fill this position and would appreciate any recommendations.

Some of the qualities most desirable for this appointed committee member opening are:

- Expertise in and familiarity with the use of current technology and communications tools.
- Availability for meetings of this trustees’ committee held during General Service Board weekends (usually the last weekend in January, July and October), as well as one meeting during the General Service Conference in April. Available time for participation in subcommittees of the trustees’ committee, as appointed.
- At least five years of continuous sobriety.
- The ability to work within the committee structure.
- Experience in A.A. service, and in carrying the message to young people.

In seeking applications for all vacancies in Alcoholics Anonymous, the Fellowship is committed to creating a large applicant file of qualified persons that reflects the inclusiveness and diversity of A.A. itself. To obtain a résumé form for this opening, please call the Literature desk at G.S.O. (212) 870-3019, or email [literature@aa.org](mailto:literature@aa.org). Résumés should be returned to the General Service Office by October 27, 2017.

## ■ Five New Class B Trustees Join the General Service Board

Following their selection in April at the 67th General Service Conference, the General Service Board of A.A. welcomed five new Class B (alcoholic) trustees: Ginger R.B. and David N., general service trustees; Newton P., trustee-at-large/U.S.; Mark E., East Central regional trustee; and Cathy B., Southeast regional trustee. While all trustees represent the Fellowship as a whole and no trustee can be said to “represent” a geographical section, these newly elected A.A. members will bring extensive service experience to the board’s deliberations and an invaluable regional A.A. point of view.

**Ginger R.B.**, newly elected general service trustee on the Grapevine board, lives in Mesa, Arizona, and is supposedly retired, but she cares for 15 dogs as well as two birds. She also has her own jewelry business and works part-time as a C.P.A. She has always been hard-working, drunk or sober. After attending high school in Everett, Washington, she skipped college to become an EEG tech; married and moved to Hawaii; came back to Washington to get her B.A.; divorced; and received her M.B.A.

In 1987, she found herself driving to work with a cup of coffee in one cup holder and a cup of whiskey in the other — and thought she was doing just fine. Her boss thought otherwise and convinced her to enter a rehab. She hasn’t had a drink since the day he spoke to her, March 4, 1987. Thirty years of A.A. service ensued, including stints as alternate treasurer, treasurer, and chair of Area 72. A job as CFO of a rural hospital took her to eastern Washington, where she met and married her second husband, whom she met in the program. After eastern Washington became Area 92, she was selected as a Panel 48 (2007-2008) delegate to the General Service Conference.

A Grapevine subscriber for decades, Ginger served as a nontrustee director on the Grapevine Board (2007-2011). In her current role, she foresees providing advice based on her skills as a C.P.A. and former financial officer, but she also wants to focus on cooperation between the A.A.W.S. Board and Grapevine. Further, she would like “to reach out to the Fellowship, to help ensure that people understand that Grapevine is part of them.”

Ginger’s husband died two years ago, with 33 years sober. Her stepson was killed fighting in Iraq in 2007. All of this helps put her life in sobriety into perspective: “I have been so blessed to have had these people in my life; that never would have happened if I hadn’t gotten sober. And today, I know I can stay sober, no matter what.”

**David N.**, elected general service trustee on the A.A. World Services Board, has been sober since 1995. Originally from the Midwest, he currently lives in Sunnyvale, California, and has spent his career in health care technology. He worked for 15 years at a major California university, becoming promotion director of business and financial systems planning before leaving to start a new career with a health care company. Over the course of 12 years, David has served as CNCA Area 6 treasurer, alternate delegate

and Panel 59 (2009-2010) delegate to the General Service Conference. For the last of those four years, he has been a nontrustee director on the A.A. World Services Board.

“When I share, I don’t say that I got my life back through A.A.,” David says. “I was a high-bottom drunk. But A.A. has given me a life that is light-years beyond what I ever imagined. I’ve found through the program, and specifically through service, a purpose for my life that was lacking for a long time. I am thrilled to be of service to the Fellowship as a trustee.”

Because of his extensive experience in the tech industry, David feels he can provide “guidance and knowledge” to an Alcoholics Anonymous grappling with how best to take advantage of the benefits of the Internet and social media while avoiding the pitfalls. “When I worked at the university, I was responsible for \$24 million in software, hardware and professional services contracts. One thing I can help with as A.A. enters into new agreements is that we make sure we are protecting ourselves and entering into beneficial relationships with vendors.”

**Newton P.** got sober at the age of 26. Back in 1981, in Raleigh, North Carolina, that was considered pretty young. It didn’t get him any special consideration, though — for his first service job, he was told to wash out the meeting’s beanbag ashtrays. “How do you wash out the beanbag?” he asked. He was gently told to take a wet rag and simply wipe out the ashtray part, and he has been advancing in service ever since. Over 36 years, Newton has served as G.S.R., district treasurer, Grapevine chair and, in 2000, D.C.M. After that, he became involved in Area 51 level service, eventually becoming an alternate delegate, then a Panel 57 (2007-2008) delegate to the General Service Conference, where he served on the Conference Committee on Trustees.

He was “astounded and in shock” when he was informed that his name had been selected as trustee-at-large/U.S. “I didn’t expect to be chosen, and I am thrilled. I take it as a great responsibility and hope I can live up to it.”

Now living in Cary, North Carolina, Newton has been retired for five years from a 30-year career as a lawyer with the state attorney general’s office, where he was able to exercise his fascination with public policy, which began with a B.A. in Public Policy and History. He figures this may stand him in good stead in his new service position when it comes to dealing with other countries and developing relationships with public health authorities. He’d also like to devote time as trustee-at-large to working with A.A.’s young people. Getting sober at a young age himself, Newton has a special empathy for both the joys and difficulties of young sobriety. “If it can happen to me, it can happen to anyone, he says.”

Sober since 1980, **Mark E.**, of Lebanon, Ohio, had an unconventional start in A.A. service. As he recounts in a May 2016 Grapevine article “Slow Grower,” he was encouraged by his sponsor to become his group’s G.S.R. in 1982. One visit to an area assembly was all it took to convince him service was not for him: he not only quit the job, he fired his sponsor.

Fast-forward 35 years. Mark was riding on a New York subway when he got the call from the Area 56 delegate that he had been selected as regional trustee and he found himself moved to tears. “It made me realize that I want to do whatever I can to ensure the continuation of this wonderful Fellowship,” he says.

Mark’s life of service in A.A. is proof of that. After his “slow” start, he has served A.A. in Washington D.C.; in eastern Pennsylvania; and near his current home in Lebanon, Ohio. He has worked at the district level as archivist, treasurer and alternate D.C.M. In Ohio, he helped reenergize an inactive district in Area 56, ultimately becoming a Panel 62 (2012-2013) delegate and serving as chair of the Report and Charter Committee at the 63rd General Service Conference.

Mark has been retired for 12 years from a career working on the technical side of the television industry. He has received a couple of patents and won a technical Emmy for a product he helped design that accurately measures color intensity, luminosity, sound levels and picture integrity. “I was born with a gift for electronics, and sobriety helped that blossom,” Mark says. “My success in my career came from the Fellowship, which is where I learned flexibility and the willingness to listen. I think that will carry over well in my role as trustee.”

**Cathy B.** got sober in 2004, but she was not a first-time A.A. winner. “I started coming around in 1984,” she says, “but I would get sober, get better, get busy and then stop going to meetings. I’d put together six months, two years, five years, six years, and then go out. The problem was, I never did any service. This last time, I got into service early, and I’ve never stopped.” Cathy served as both treasurer and G.S.R. on the group level before moving on to district corrections chair and D.C.M. After that she was elected Area 73 alternate chair and then took over as chair after the original chair became ill. She was then elected as a Panel 63 (2013-2014) delegate.

Cathy was gardening in back of her Morgantown, West Virginia, home when Area 73 delegate Pat T. called her and said, “Good morning, Madame Trustee!” Cathy says, “I couldn’t believe it — I thought she was joking. I feel stunned and incredibly privileged. When I got to meet the trustees [at the board meeting following the April Conference] I was gratified to see the quality of the people on the board, as well as the G.S.O. staffers. They have great passion and concern for the Fellowship. My job as trustee is going to be to follow that lead, to keep lines of communication open.”

By profession, Cathy is a tech support customer service person — acting variously as writer, programmer and graphics person — helping to develop computer-based training for companies. “Service at this level has expanded my life in total,” she says. “I’ve been a computer person through most of my life, content to sit behind the screen and let someone else give the presentations. Service has allowed me not only to give back to the Fellowship, but to grow in all areas.”

A.A.’s five new Class B trustees, plus the other nine already on the board, each serve one four-year term; the seven Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees serve for six years.

# box 459 BULLETIN BOARD

Items and Ideas on Area Gatherings for A.A.s—Via G.S.O.

Fall 2017

## Calendar of Events

Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers, not as an endorsement by the General Service Office. For any additional information, please use the addresses provided. **Please note that we cannot attest to the accuracy, relevancy, timeliness, or completeness of information provided by any linked site.**

### September 2017

- 1-3—*Monterey, California.* Monterey Bay Area Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 51777, Pacific Grove, CA 93950; [www.montereybayarearoundup.org](http://www.montereybayarearoundup.org)
- 1-3—*Loveland, Colorado.* CO State Conv. Write: Box 452, Golden, CO 80402; [www.convention.coloradoaa.org](http://www.convention.coloradoaa.org)
- 1-3—*Baltimore, Maryland.* XIV Conv. Nacional Hispana de Estados Unidos y Canada. Escribir: Box 8485, Silver Spring, MD 20907; [xlconvencionhispanadeaasaycanada.com](http://xlconvencionhispanadeaasaycanada.com)
- 1-3—*Saint Louis, Missouri.* 34th Annual Fall Classic Conf. Write: Ch., Box 16872, Clayton, MO 63105; [www.fall-classic.com](http://www.fall-classic.com)
- 1-3—*Jonquière, Québec, Canada.* Congrès du Saguenay. Info: [www.aa89.org](http://www.aa89.org)
- 1-3—*Ayacucho, Peru.* VI Conv. Nacional. Escribir: Jr. Quinua N° 469 – 2do. Piso, Ayacucho, Peru 05000; [convencionnacionalaaperu2017@gmail.com](mailto:convencionnacionalaaperu2017@gmail.com)
- 1-4—*Tampa, Florida.* 31st Tampa Bay Fall Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 262545, Tampa, FL 33685; [tbfr1987@verizon.net](mailto:tbfr1987@verizon.net)
- 8-9—*Bishop, Texas.* SWTA 68 PI/CPC Conf. Write: Ch. P.O. Box 1945, Bastrop, TX 78602; [picpc@district29aa.org](mailto:picpc@district29aa.org)
- 8-10—*Sacramento, California.* Nat'l Tech Workshop. Write: Ch. P.O. Box 161712, Sacramento, CA 95816-1712; [www.naatw2017.org](http://www.naatw2017.org)
- 8-10—*Bloomington, Minnesota.* Bridging The Gap Workshop Wknd. Info: [www.btgww.org](http://www.btgww.org)
- 8-10—*Minot, North Dakota.* ND State Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 182, Minot, ND 58702
- 8-10—*Sioux Falls, South Dakota.* West Central Reg. Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; [Regionalforums@aa.org](mailto:Regionalforums@aa.org)
- 8-10—*Houston, Texas.* Area 67 Correctional Facilities Conf. Write: Ch., Box 925241, Houston, TX 77292-5241; [cfc@aa-seta.org](mailto:cfc@aa-seta.org)
- 8-10—*Dunnville, Ontario, Canada.* 51st Annual Dunnville A.A. Conv. & Campout. Write: Ch., Box 76, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0; [dunnvilleconvention2017@outlook.com](mailto:dunnvilleconvention2017@outlook.com)
- 8-10—*Kenora, Ontario, Canada.* Courage to

- Change.* Write: Ch., Box 781, Keewatin, ON P0X 1C0;
- 8-10—*Last Mountain Lake, Saskatchewan, Canada.* Women to Women Conf. Write: Ch., Box 210., Christopher Lake, SK S0J 0N0
- 14-17—*Van Nuys, California.* 11th Seniors in Sobriety Internat'l Conf. Write: Ch., Box 17, Agoura Hills, CA 91367; [sisregistrar2017@gmail.com](mailto:sisregistrar2017@gmail.com)
- 15-16—*Sainte-Ursule, Quebec, Canada.* 37ième Congrès. Write: Ch., 215 Lessard, Ste-Ursule, QC J0K 3M0; [www.aa-quebec.org/region89](http://www.aa-quebec.org/region89)
- 15-17—*Ft. Walton Beach, Florida.* Area 1 AL/NW FL Conv. Info: [www.aaarea1.org](http://www.aaarea1.org)
- 15-17—*Taos, New Mexico.* 34th Taos Mtn Fiesta. Write: Ch., Box 750, El Prado, NM 87529; [www.taosmountainfiesta.org](http://www.taosmountainfiesta.org)
- 15-17—*Saratoga Springs, New York.* ESYPA Campout. Write: Ch., Box 66281, Albany, NY 12206; [www.escypaa4.org](http://www.escypaa4.org)
- 15-17—*Edgewood, Texas.* Edge of the Woods Conf. Write: Ch., Box 233, Willis Point, TX 75169; [www.edgewoodaaconference.org](http://www.edgewoodaaconference.org)
- 15-17—*Eau Claire, Wisconsin.* Area 74 Fall Conf. Write: Ch., Box 1824, Eau Claire, WI 54702; [www.2017fallconference@gmail.com](http://www.2017fallconference@gmail.com)
- 15-17—*Gatineau, Quebec, Canada.* 19e Congrès du Dist. 90-22. Info: [district22@aa90.org](mailto:district22@aa90.org)
- 22-23—*Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.* Autumn Leaf Roundup. Write: Ch., 627 Main St. East Ste 205, Hamilton, ON L8M 1J5; [aahamilton.org](http://aahamilton.org)
- 22-24—*Sioux City, Iowa.* Sioux City Tri-State Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 1823., Sioux City, IA 51102
- 22-24—*Somerset, New Jersey.* 61st Area 44 Conv. Write: Ch., 2325 Plainfield Ave. South Plainfield, NJ 07080; [nrjaa.org](http://nrjaa.org)

- 22-24—*Wakefield, Rhode Island.* Rhody Recovery. Write: Ch., 10 High Street, Wakefield, RI 02879; [www.rhodyrecovery.com](http://www.rhodyrecovery.com)
- 22-24—*Harrisonburg, Virginia.* Shenandoah Valley Roundup. Write: Ch., 118C Pennie Layne, Bridgewater, VA 22812; [shenandoahvalleyroundup@comcast.net](mailto:shenandoahvalleyroundup@comcast.net)
- 22-24—*Wenatchee, Washington.* Wenatchee Valley Roundup. Write: Ch., 4135 W. Eagle Rock Pl., Wenatchee, WA 98801; [www.wenatcheevalleyroundup.org](http://www.wenatcheevalleyroundup.org)
- 22-24—*Weirton, West Virginia.* Area 73 Fall Assembly. Info: [www.aawv.org](http://www.aawv.org)
- 23-24—*Kingman, Arizona.* Hualapai Mtn Round-up. Write: Ch., 212 N. First St., Kingman, AZ 86401
- 28-1—*Honolulu, Hawaii.* 56th Annual Hawaii Conv. Write: Ch., Box 23434, Honolulu, HI 96823; [www.annualhawaiiiconvention.com](http://www.annualhawaiiiconvention.com)
- 29-1—*Prescott, Arizona.* 67th AZ State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 27804, Prescott Valley, AZ 86312; [conventionchair@area03.org](mailto:conventionchair@area03.org)
- 29-1—*Crescent City, California.* Sobriety by the Sea Conf. Write: Ch., Box 871, Crescent City, CA 95531; [www.sobrietybythesea.com](http://www.sobrietybythesea.com)
- 29-1—*San Diego, California.* Woman to Woman San Diego Conf. Info: [www.womantowomansandiego.com](http://www.womantowomansandiego.com)
- 29-1—*Santa Maria, California.* Central Coast Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 1892, Santa Maria, CA 93456; [www.centralcoastroundup.org](http://www.centralcoastroundup.org)
- 29-1—*Sterling Heights, Michigan.* Tri-County Conf. Info: [tri.countyconference@gmail.com](mailto:tri.countyconference@gmail.com)

### October

- 6-7—*Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada.* 47e Congrès de Sherbrooke. Écrire: Prés., 2365 Galt Ouest Sherbrooke, QC J1K 1L1

## Planning a Future Event?

To be included in the Box 4-5-9 Calendar, information must be received at G.S.O. four months prior to the event. We list events of two or more days.

For your convenience and ours — please type or print the information to be listed on the Bulletin Board page, and mail to Editor: Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 or [literature@aa.org](mailto:literature@aa.org)

Date of event: from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_

Name of event: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE OR PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_

Address to list: \_\_\_\_\_ P.O. BOX (OR NUMBER AND STREET) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE OR PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

Website or email: \_\_\_\_\_ (NO PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESSES)

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE # AND EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

6-8—*Jacksonville, Florida*. Florida Unity Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 24267, Jacksonville, FL 32241; [www.floridaunityroundup.com](http://www.floridaunityroundup.com)

6-8—*Shelton, Washington*. Area 72 Assembly. Info: [assembly-chair@aadistrict8.org](mailto:assembly-chair@aadistrict8.org)

6-8—*Sudbury, Ontario, Canada*. Area 84 Conv. Write: Ch., Box 2251 Stn. A, Sudbury, ON P3A 4S1; [conventionregistration@area84.org](mailto:conventionregistration@area84.org)

12-15—*Petit Jean Mountain, Arkansas*. AR Conf. of YPAA. Write: Box 250765, Little Rock, AR 72225; [www.arkypaa.org](http://www.arkypaa.org)

12-15—*Macon, Georgia*. 64th GA Prepaid Conv. Write: Ch., Box 5713, Macon, GA 31208; [www.aageorgia.org](http://www.aageorgia.org)

13-15—*Sioux, Iowa*. Area 24 Fall Conf. Write: Ch., 5006 Sergeant Rd #334, Sioux City, IA 51106

13-15—*Anaconda, Montana*. Area 40 Fall Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 216, Butte, MT 59701; [joyinrecovery2017@gmail.com](mailto:joyinrecovery2017@gmail.com)

13-15—*Chamberlin, South Dakota*. Area 63 Fall Conf. Write: Ch., Box 533, Platte, SD 57369

13-15—*Seguin, Texas*. Area 68 Fall Voting Assembly. Write: Ch., 1142 Eikel St., New Braunfels, TX 78130; [fallassemblyarea68@gmail.com](mailto:fallassemblyarea68@gmail.com)

13-15—*Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada*. Area 81 Assembly and Elections. Write: Ch., 139 Cowperthwaite St., Fredericton, NB E3A 9W6; [fallassembly@area81.aa.ca](mailto:fallassembly@area81.aa.ca)

13-15—*Biarritz, France*. First Annual Internat'l English-Speaking Conv. Info: [www.aaconventionbiarritz.com](http://www.aaconventionbiarritz.com)

13-15—*Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines*. 22nd Angeles City Fall Roundup. Write: Ch., PSC 517 Box RC, FPO, AP 96517; [roundupangelescity.blogspot.com](http://roundupangelescity.blogspot.com)

18-22—*Tossa de Mar, Catalonia, Spain*. Costa Brava Internat'l English-Speaking Conv. Info: [www.costabravaconvention.com](http://www.costabravaconvention.com)

20-22—*Greensburg, Pennsylvania*. 77th Laurel Highlands Conf. Write: Ch., Box 6, Bovard, PA 15619

20-22—*San Antonio, Texas*. Southwest Reg. Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; [Regionalforums@aa.org](mailto:Regionalforums@aa.org)

20-22—*Barboursville, West Virginia*. WV Conf. of YPAA. Write: Box 584, Huntington, WV 25710; [www.wvcypaa.org](http://www.wvcypaa.org)

20-22—*Montreal, Quebec, Canada*. Area 87 Trilingual Conv. Write: Ch., 3920 rue Rachel Est, Montreal, QC H1X 1Z3

20-22—*London, United Kingdom*. London Calling. Write: Ch., Church House, Lancing St. London, UK NW1 1NA

27-28—*St. Cloud, Minnesota*. 35th St. Cloud Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 125, St. Cloud, MN 56302; [scr@cybermationinc.com](mailto:scr@cybermationinc.com)

27-28—*Trois-Rivières, Québec, Canada*. 44e Congrès de Trois-Rivières. Écrire: [congres.troisrivieres@gmail.com](mailto:congres.troisrivieres@gmail.com)

27-29—*Bossier City, Louisiana*. 72nd Tri-State Conv. Write: Ch., 2800 Youree Dr., Ste 362, Shreveport, LA 71104; [www.aa-shreveport.org](http://www.aa-shreveport.org)

27-29—*Annapolis, Maryland*. Bill and Bob's

Halloween. Write: Ch., Box 112 Crownsville, MD 21032; [wearenotsaints@verizon.net](mailto:wearenotsaints@verizon.net)

27-29—*Pughtown, Pennsylvania*. Downingtown Young People's Conf. Write: Ch., 37 North White Horse Rd, Phoenixville, PA 19460;

27-29—*Houston, Texas*. TXSCYPAA 37. Write: Ch., P.O. Box 10228, Houston, TX 77206; [www.txscypaahouston.org](http://www.txscypaahouston.org)

27-29—*Green Lake, Wisconsin*. Area 75 Conf. Write: Ch., Box 307, Rio, WI 53960; [www.area75.org](http://www.area75.org)

27-29—*San Antonio de Pormany, Islas Baleares, Spain*. VII Convencions Area 14. Write Ch., Mercado clot mares, 3 planta, San Antonio de Portmany, Baleares, Spain 07820; [convencionsarea14@hotmail.es](mailto:convencionsarea14@hotmail.es)

## November

2-5—*Nairobi, Kenya*. Kenya Conv. Info: [www.aakenyaconvention.co.ke/wordpress](http://www.aakenyaconvention.co.ke/wordpress)

3-5—*Fort Smith, Arkansas*. Border City Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 5800, Ft. Smith, AR 72902

3-5—*Branson, Missouri*. Colors of Fall. Write: Ch., 527 E. Catalpa, Springfield, MO 65807; [registration@wamo-aa.org](mailto:registration@wamo-aa.org)

3-5—*Buffalo, New York*. Buffalo Fall Conv. Write: Ch., Box 143, Getzville, NY 14068; [buffalofallconvention@gmail.com](mailto:buffalofallconvention@gmail.com)

9-12—*Albany, New York*. Empire State Conv. of YPAA. Write: Ch., Box 66281 Albany, NY 12206; [www.escypaa4.org](http://www.escypaa4.org)

10-12—*Atlanta, Georgia*. 4th Southern States Svc Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 831, Satsuma, AL 36572; [www.aaarea1.org](http://www.aaarea1.org)

10-12—*Framingham, Massachusetts*. 54th MA State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 344, Monson, MA 01057; [mastateconvention@aaemass.org](mailto:mastateconvention@aaemass.org)

10-12—*St. Louis, Missouri*. Nat'l Corrections Conf. Write: Box 510355, St. Louis, MO 63151; [nationalcorrectionsconference.org](http://nationalcorrectionsconference.org)

10-11—*Cornwall, Ontario, Canada*. 70th Cornwall & Area Dist. 50 Conf. Write: Ch., 1380 Lochiel St., Cornwall, ON K6H 6N2; [cornwallaaconference@yahoo.com](mailto:cornwallaaconference@yahoo.com)

10-12—*Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia*. XXIII Convención Nacional de Bolivia. Para Inf.: Com. Org., Calle Vallegrande Nro 562, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, BO; [convencionnacional2017bolivia@gmail.com](mailto:convencionnacional2017bolivia@gmail.com)

17-18—*Houma, Louisiana*. 37th Bayouland Jamboree. Write: Box 2251, Houma, LA 70361; [www.thebayoulandjamboree.org](http://www.thebayoulandjamboree.org)

17-19—*Springfield, Illinois*. East Central Reg. Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; [Regionalforums@aa.org](mailto:Regionalforums@aa.org)

24-25—*Miami, Florida*. XXI Conv. Hispana del Estado de la FL. Inf.: Com. Org., 1770 W. Flagler St., Miami, FL 33172; [cocehaaflorida@gmail.com](mailto:cocehaaflorida@gmail.com)

24-26—*Bloomington, Minnesota*. Founder's Day Wknd. Write: Ch., Box 8327, Minneapolis, MN 55408; [www.foundersdaymn.org](http://www.foundersdaymn.org)

24-26—*Charlotte, North Carolina*. XII Conv. Estatal Hispana de NC. Escribir: 3551 Sharon Amity Rd. Suite 102, Charlotte, NC 28205;

[convencionaaacharlotte@gmail.com](mailto:convencionaaacharlotte@gmail.com)

## December

28-31—*Edmonton, Alberta, Canada*. WACYCAA. Info: [wacypaaxi.weebly.com](http://wacypaaxi.weebly.com)

## January 2018

19-21—*Wellington, New Zealand*. 55<sup>th</sup> New Zealand Conv. Write: Ch., Box 2036, Wellington, NZ 6140

26-28—*Hilton Head Island, SC*. 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Hilton Head Mid-Winter Conf. Write: Ch., Box 6256, Hilton Head Island, SC 29938; [www.hiltonheadmidwinterconference.com](http://www.hiltonheadmidwinterconference.com)

## February

2-4—*Corpus Christi, Texas*. Coastal Bend Jamboree. Write: Ch., Box 6889, Corpus Christi, TX 78466-1000; [www.coastalbendjamboree.org](http://www.coastalbendjamboree.org)

9-11—*Syracuse, New York*. Salt City Mid-Winter Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 367, Syracuse, NY 13209; [www.saltcityroundup.com](http://www.saltcityroundup.com)

15-18—*Phoenix, Arizona*. Internat'l Women's Conf. Info: [www.internationalwomensconference.org](http://www.internationalwomensconference.org)