

AA EXCHANGE BULLETIN

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE OF A. A.

February—March 1966

Vol. 11 No. 1

• 305 East 45th Street, New York 10017 • Mail address: Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York 10017 •

OVERSEAS NEWS

"The A.A. literature has to reach the Icelandic alcoholic in his own language..."

* * *

"The Twelfth Step states that 'we tried to carry this message to alcoholics.' Many of us regard this as a mandate and I do not know of any geographical limitations on this obligation..."

"I am extremely grateful that the fellows in Akron 30 years ago didn't keep what they had found to themselves. I think you should be, too, because if they had, a lot of the alcoholics we know wouldn't be living now and I'm sure the rest of us would be pretty sick..."

* * *

The two quotations above sum up a lot about A.A. overseas, and what we at G.S.O. try to do about it.

A.A. in Iceland

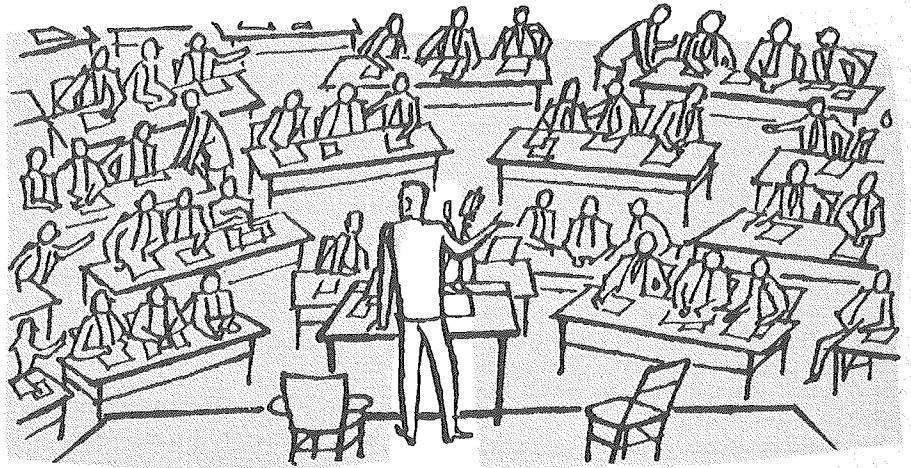
The first quote above is from a letter from Olav in Iceland.

Three A.A. Groups there are determined to help alcoholics, and we're encouraging them to translate any material they want.

The second quote is what one of our International Committee said on a panel.

It's thrilling to know that Literature Distribution Centers are going, or about to start, in San Salvador, Central America, in Colombia, South America, and in Germany.

(Turn to page 2)



WHY THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

The 16th Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference is coming up in April. You have every right to ask: *Why are these meetings necessary?*

You might also ask yourself these two questions: (1) What would happen to our beloved Fellowship—and you as a part of it—if the Conference meetings did *not* occur? and (2) What are G.S. Conference members going to do *in your name* in New York, April 18 to 23?

For Group Discussion?

Your Group deserves to know that if the Conference did not meet, the nearly 10,000 A.A. Groups in the U.S.A. and Canada would have absolutely no voice in such matters as...

1. How the General Service Board (Trustees) operates our world clearing house of A.A. information—G.S.O.
2. How the Board represents the Fellowship to the public (at the national and international levels).
3. How it manages the funds contributed by Groups and derived from sales of A.A. books and pamphlets.

(Much enlightenment on these matters can be found in "Third Legacy Manual.")

Theme of this year's Conference meeting is "Principles Before Personalities." Measuring themselves against this yardstick, your Delegate and the others this year are asked to guide the Board and G.S.O. on such matters as:

—Should the Board (which has always had both nonalcoholic and A.A. Trustees, with the "non's" in the majority by one) now slowly evolve into a 21-member body—14 A.A.'s and 7 distinguished nonalcoholics? (The Board itself recommends the change.)

—When A.A. is charged with being too secretive ("speak-easy Groups, hard to find," one member said in Toronto), should we look for new ways to attract alcoholics to A.A.?

—Should we keep letting sick alcoholics stumble onto knowledge about A.A. only accidentally? Just what does "attraction" really mean?

—What relationship does your local Central Office have with the local G.S.C. Committee, and with G.S.O.? Should some discount price structure on A.A. pamphlets from G.S.O. be established for local Central Offices that distribute them?

(Turn to page 4)



I am responsible...

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



DOES YOUR GROUP HAVE ITS COPY?

Silk-screened in two colors on heavy cardboard, the declaration of A.A.'s 30th Anniversary Year and Convention shown here is now available for A.A. meetings and regional conventions. It measures about 19 in. by 29 in., and may be either hung on the wall or displayed on a table.

Order from G.S.O. at \$5.00 for three, \$4.00 for two, \$2.50 for one (price includes postage).

Also available is a new two-tone blue wallet card with the "I am responsible" declaration on one side and "Greetings from G.S.O." on the reverse. \$3.00 per hundred.

OVERSEAS NEWS (from page 1)

First British Conference

In fact, Bob L. writes us that Britain's first General Service Conference is now scheduled for Oct. 29-30, 1966, at Manchester, with representatives from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Naturally, we're glad to share our experience if it helps.

Wiesbaden Roundup

We've a great letter from John B. about the 1965 Wiesbaden Roundup, the 13th, with over 170 people. Wish there were space to share all of it with you.

Language was no barrier, with members from U.S.A., Canada, Germany, Switzerland, France, Great Britain, Belgium, Holland, Libya, Norway, Austria, Sweden, Italy, Spain—you name it!

And each one a fabulous story...like the Belgian who sobered up through correspondence with G.S.O. and studied English so he could read A.A. literature!

It's becoming less a "roundup" of U.S. servicemen, more a native European A.A. get-together.



HAVE YOU LOOKED HERE FOR ANSWERS ON GROUP PROBLEMS?

"Dear C-----,

"The question of a person from another state having voting rights in your Assembly has come up many times. For example, Northwest Florida or the Pensacola area is a part of the Alabama Assembly because of geographic location.

"Suggestions concerning this problem are covered on Page 41 of the 'Third Legacy Manual'...

"That is what you get for having such an active Assembly. Everybody wants to be a part of it!...

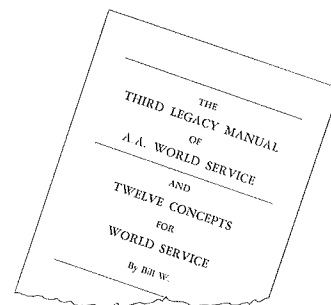
Sincerely,
Conference Secretary"

The above letter, answering one from a Midwestern border city, prompts us to remind members again of the wonderful help available in the carefully thought-out "Third Legacy Manual and Twelve Concepts for World Service" put together by Bill to help us prepare for A.A.'s future.

It is a marvelous, tested guide (suggestions only, of course) for all kinds of A.A. problems. It tells the suspenseful, beautiful story of how our Third Legacy came about.

And then it goes into detail on how we can keep "politicking" out of our beloved Fellowship.

(This year the Conference Delegates are to share



their experience on use of the "Manual.")

Also clearly spelled out are the Twelve Concepts developed by Bill and unanimously adopted by the Conference in 1962. Some Groups adapt them to help solve their own problems. They cover such principles as:

1. Ultimate A.A. responsibility and authority belong to the Groups.
2. Groups entrust day-to-day operations to the Conference arms.
3. Right of decision makes effective leadership possible.
4. Participation is the key to harmony.
5. "Appeal" and "Petition" protect minorities.
6. Conference acknowledges Trustees' responsibility.
7. Legal rights relate to traditional rights.
8. Trustees manage, and are custodians.
9. Good personal leadership absolutely necessary.
10. Authority should equal responsibility.
11. How to get and keep the people needed.
12. Where to find the spiritual basis for services.

They are all discussed in depth in clear language in the "Third Legacy Manual and Twelve Concepts" (Price 75¢).

GRATITUDE DINNERS?

"Dear Folks,

"Enclosed please find check for \$369.50 from A.A. members of Palm Beach County, Fla. This is not to be confused with our regular Group contributions.

"We raised this money by having a Gratitude Dinner...All food was donated by Groups and we charged \$1.50 per person. All the proceeds are enclosed. It was truly gratifying

and we hope to make this an annual affair. Hope the idea will catch on in other areas.

"Our sincere thanks to G.S.O. from all of us.

Yours,
Phyllis R.
Treas."

(Editor's note: The idea did spread. Gratitude Dinners were also held at Miami [Dade County] and in Broward County. Any others we don't know about?)

QUICK GLANCE THROUGH THE MAILBAG

"Send us 100 'I Am Responsible' cards as soon as possible. . . cause we all know we are responsible." —

Jim D., Twin City Group, Sault St. Marie.

"Ted was much impressed in New York when he saw 'A.A. Emergency Service' trucks downstairs at your office building. Then he learned they were American Airlines trucks." — Luella H., Ottawa Central Committee.

"Reduction in size 'Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions' contributes handsomely to the convenience of being carried. I carry it in my pocket throughout the day, a ready reference when needed. . .

"We've taped an entire 14-week series of Novalco beginners' classes (20 hours), and copies will be available." — Sandy S., Nor-Kel Group, Prince Albert, Sask.

A.A. Minds

"I fail to understand the minds of alcoholics. . . They say, 'I am extremely grateful to A.A.,' then drop a dime in the bucket. If every A.A. member would send the price of a crock of cheap whiskey to New York, Dennis would not know what to do with all the money. . . Particularly pleased with last 'Exchange Bulletin.' I have read it at every meeting I have been to and people are amazed and ask where I get all this good information!" —

Martin E., Edmonton, Alta.
(Ed. note—thanks for the kind words, Martin. We too are amazed how few people ever heard of the Bulletin. Any ideas? And oh yes, dear readers. For those of you who don't know, Dennis Manders is the nonalcoholic accountant in the office who has to pay bills for G.S.O.)

3 Sons in A.A.

"To whom I am writing this letter I don't know, but you can pass this along to help an alcoholic. I have three sons in A.A. I prayed for these boys a long time and Robert was the first to get interested in A.A. and 14 months ago Abram began to go through Robert talking to him and now Abram is sponsoring Dale. . . I enjoy going to meetings, too, and thank God many many times for A.A." — D.W., Ohio

GRAPEVINE NEWS

FEBRUARY ISSUE

"Don't Kid Yourself about Cures" by a doctor in A.A.; "Out of Insanity-Up to Love" about being a brat for 45 years; "I Was a Drunken Bum with Relatives"—a high-bottom story; "What Does Powerless Mean?"—or, can we raise the bottom to attract not-yet-ruined alcoholics?

"With the Strength of a Legion" "Letter from a Distraught Enzyme"—professional writer gets hilarious when she takes up the Liver's defense; "It's Not Necessary to Hate Your Job"; "I Can Keep My Head High," from Colombia, South America; "Return of King Kong" about slips; and much more.



How to book the film:

"BILL'S OWN STORY"

The 1966 schedule for Bill's film is being made up now. This 60-minute color movie is Bill's story of his last bout and the beginning of A.A. It is available for regional get-togethers, for city-wide meetings, and for group meetings.

Rental of \$35.00 weekly (plus some shipping cost) is charged to defray part of the cost of the production.

Write General Service Office and give a 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice of dates.

Help for G.S.R.'s

"We had a meeting of all G.S.R.'s last night. I found that four out of nine didn't have or hadn't read the 'Third Legacy Manual.' Please mail them the package of literature to help them understand their services and how important they are to A.A. in their Group and worldwide." — Bob H., Albuquerque, N.M.

World Directory Misuse

TO: Art A., Deerfield, Ill. "It looks as though they did use the World Directory for this mailing, and we have dropped them a note mentioning that the Directory

MARCH ISSUE

"Mental Depression—Unnecessary Evil"—especially to help the sober but unhappy member; "Do We Ever Truly Recover?" "Knock and It Shall Be Opened"; "Some Advice I Don't Take"—about suggestions at meetings;

"Basic Facts on Alcohol Education" by nonalcoholic guest author W.P. Shofstall, Ph.D., Dean of Students, Arizona State University; "Want Your Name Up in Lights?" about all those A.A. pins, tokens, rings, emblems, etc.;

"Am I Too Young?" "Self-indulgence vs. Self-destruction" by Percy M. Sessions, A.C.S.W.; "On a November Afternoon"—he went to his first meeting the day President Kennedy died; "Shore Leave"—a sailor reviews the costs, and many more.

is confidential and should not be used as a mailing list for any form of solicitation or any commercial venture.

"But at a recent General Service Conference it was suggested that individuals and Groups should write direct expressing their concern and feelings." — Staff Member, G.S.O.

NOT LONERS ANY MORE

About the happiest kind of news we get from Loners is that they are sober, then that they have been able to help others, a Group is started, and they are not alone any more. Next to that, we love hearing that everybody wants to help Loners. Four letters of this sort recently arrived.

Sybil, of Tobago, W.I., wants to be a Loner Sponsor now, because she now has a local Group.

"We had an excellent meeting on Sunday—in a funeral parlor. Three cof-fins, four East Indian men, four of African descent, and me. . . But I cling to the broader interest of worldwide A.A. while giving as much as I can right here."

When Tommy and Helen S. read "WANTED: A FRIEND" in the last Bulletin, they wrote at once from Sebelt, B.C., Canada, that they'd like to correspond with Loners. Anyone else?

J.J.H., of Surrey, England, writes, "fortunately I am no longer a Loner. I now belong to the Weston-super-Mare Group. . . about half a dozen regular attenders, most of us fairly new."

Good, Jim. As you've been in A.A. since 1952 we're sure you'll be able to help a lot.

SPECIAL GIFTS TO G.S.O.

October - December 1965

CANADA:	
Ont., Algoma District Area. . . \$	46.44
B.C. - Prince George, A.A. Northern Lights Roundup. . .	43.00
B.C. - Yukon Assembly Area. . .	200.00
N.B. - P.E.I. Conference.	50.00
Ontario	
Nipissing - Parcy Sound District Committee.	61.94
North-Northwestern Ontario Area Committee.	185.76
ARKANSAS:	
Little Rock, Arkansas State A.A. Assembly.	100.00
CALIFORNIA:	
(So.) A.A. Women's Dinner Committee.	50.00
FLORIDA:	
Broward Co. - Gratitude Dinner Group Districts 7.	661.59
Jupiter - Palm Beach Co. Gratitude Dinner Committee.	866.50
LOUISIANA:	
Shreveport, 20th Annual Tri- State Convention.	200.00
MICHIGAN:	
Whitmore Lake - 13th Michigan State Conference.	1,653.74
MINNESOTA:	
Fairbault.	20.00
MISSISSIPPI:	
Pass Christian - District 1 Groups of Mississippi.	150.00
NEBRASKA:	
6th Annual State Reunion.	125.00
NEW HAMPSHIRE:	
Durham, State Assembly of A.A.	50.00
NEW JERSEY:	
9th Annual No. New Jersey Convention.	300.00
OHIO:	
Youngstown, N.E. Ohio General Service Committee Group Sunday Meeting.	105.59
VIRGINIA:	
Danville, Blackstone Retreat.	100.00



DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS

MINNESOTA: Contribution of \$22.50 credited in error to Benson Group, Benson. Should be credited to Benson 64 Group.

NEW JERSEY: Contribution of \$27.00 credited in error to Young Peoples Group, Trenton. Should be credited to Delaware Valley Group.

OPEN HOUSE AT G.S.O.

On Saturday, February 19, 1966, G.S.O. is holding Open House for G.S.R.'s and any other interested A.A.'s.

The Place: 18th Floor, 305 East 45th Street

The Time: 9:30 A. M. to 1:00 P. M.

Remember that every weekday is Open House at G.S.O. A.A.'s from all over the U.S. and Canada and from overseas are welcome.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Here are some of the topics to be taken up at this year's G.S. Conference meeting:

1. Institutions Committees, and Groups in Prisons and Hospitals.
2. Area and Local Public Information Committees.
3. Area service meetings.
4. Groups in communities of 5,000 people or less. Conversion of Loners to Groups
5. Linkage between G.S.O. and Groups.
6. What does the wildfire popularity of "I Am Responsible" declaration mean?
...and others, listed in the Conference story beginning on page 1.

A.A. CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 11-13 - Annual Mid-Winter Stampede, Greeley, Colo. Write: Greeley Group, P. O. Box 209, 2608 Seventh Avenue, Greeley, Colo.
- 18-20 - 4th Annual Jamboree, Rodeway Inn, El Paso, Texas. Write: Sec., 1507 E. Nevada, El Paso, Texas.
- 18-20 - 15th Kentucky State A.A. Conference, Kentucky Hotel, Louisville, Ky. Write: Host Committee, P.O. Box 13124, Louisville, Ky.
- 19 - 26th Anniversary A.A. Dance & Dinner, Philadelphia, Pa. Write: Intergroup Sec., 2202 St. James St., Philadelphia, Pa.
- 19-20 - Second All Women's A.A. Conference, Executive Motor Inn, 13th & Washington, Kansas City, Mo.

WHY THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE? (from page 1)

-What's the difference between "mis-use" and "proper use" of the World Directory?

-What about personal anonymity within A.A.? Do we need it?

-Do Delegates adequately report to Groups what really goes on at G.S.O. in New York?

(For a list of other subjects on this year's agenda, see adjoining column.)

One More Question

While figuring out for yourself whether or not the Conference is necessary, you might also ask yourself one more question. Almost no one ever asks it out loud, yet it concerns the biggest job G.S.O. does in your name. It is:

When sick alcoholics, or A.A. Groups, write G.S.O. for help, should G.S.O. answer the letters at all, and if so, how, and who pays the postage?

Perhaps some A.A.'s take the answer for granted, assuming G.S.O. will do it.

But on the other hand, perhaps some of us answered it in Toronto, when we all clasped hands and said together, "I am responsible...."

FEBRUARY THOUGHT

"One score and ten years ago our co-founders brought forth a new plan, conceived in love and service, and dedicated to the proposition that the alcoholic can be restored by the grace of God and the help of his fellow alcoholics.

"Today we are engaged in a great humane effort to make this plan available to all who may be concerned.

"However, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot further this plan by mere word of mouth but rather by assuming our individual responsibility of personally carrying the message of A.A. to those who still suffer.

"The world will little note nor long remember who we are or what we are, but what we do here will never be forgotten. It is for us who are willing and able ever to increase our efforts in this great field of endeavor without hope of gain, reward, or recognition.

"It is ours to hold high the torch and to work with increased devotion to the unfinished task which lies before us. It is for us to resolve highly that this new way of life granted by God shall not have been given in vain and that this fellowship of alcoholics by alcoholics and for alcoholics shall not perish from this earth." - Anonymous, Calif.