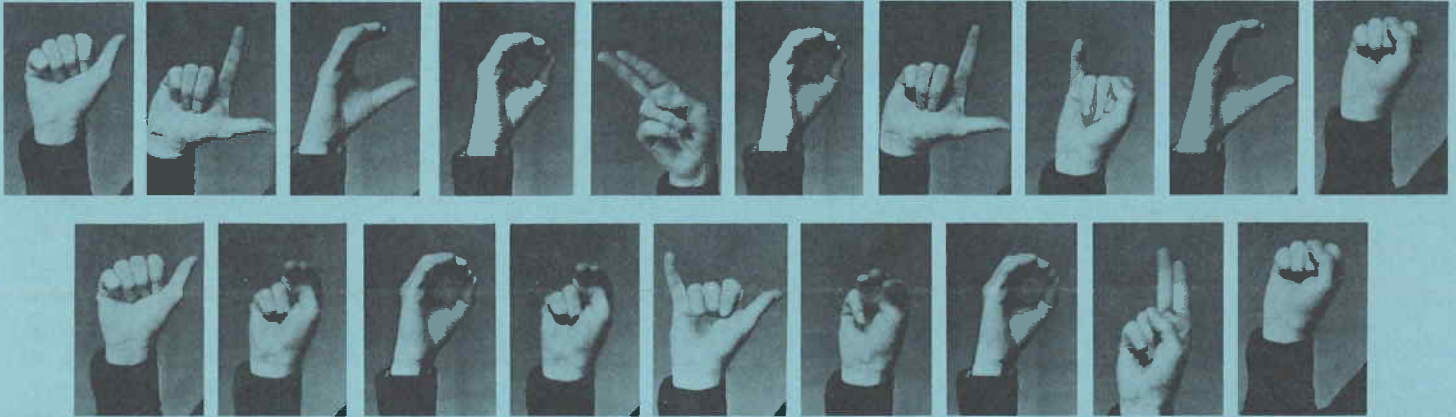


BOX 4-5-9

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

Vol. 21 No. 1

February-March 1976



Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony Opens A.A. Archives

"A minimum of myth about A.A. and its co-founders" was called for at the "official" opening of the A.A. archives here at G.S.O. recently.

Following a regular quarterly meeting of the General Service Board, George G., chairman of the trustees' Archives Committee, presided at the short but moving ceremony held at noon in the packed conference meeting room adjacent to the archives on the eighth floor at 468 Park Avenue South, New York City.

Lois W., widow of A.A.'s late co-founder Bill, spoke briefly, as did John L. ("Dr. Jack") Norris, M.D., nonalcoholic chairman of the board, and Tom S., Jacksonville, Fla., former trustee who chairs the archives at-large committee. A blue ribbon was cut to symbolize the availability of the archival library; Lois and Tom did the honors.

The event was like many other A.A. gatherings, with inspiration, tears, refreshments, and a good laugh at the end. Board members,

(continued on p. 5)

More Deaf Seek A.A. Help

Even those who cannot hear the sound of A.A. can now see our language of the heart — as the hands spelling out "Alcoholics Anonymous" show.

G.S.O. has now learned of A.A. meetings for deaf alcoholics in California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, and New York.

There may be more. At the last Conference, we heard of deaf A.A.'s in Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nova Scotia, Oregon, South Dakota, and Vermont. If you know of any others, please send us complete in-

formation, so we can refer inquirers to local meetings for deaf A.A.'s.

(A.A. literature for the blind is also available, both in Braille and on cassettes — but that's a different story.)

Instead of spelling out words letter by letter, as shown above, another sign language has a movement or gesture for almost every word. (Since these also involve the face, we can't show them.) The Reverend Richard Russo, New York, nonalcoholic expert on teach-

(continued on p. 6)

'76 CONFERENCE THEME, PRELIMINARY AGENDA SET

"Sponsorship—Our Privilege and Responsibility" is the theme of the 1976 General Service Conference meeting, to be held at the Roosevelt Hotel, New York, April 19-24.

The tentative agenda for the annual gathering was scheduled for mailing to Conference members in January. It calls for presentations on sponsorship, literature, and public information (P.I.); one unstructured workshop; and workshops on A.A. in hospitals, sponsorship,

and P.I. Also scheduled are elections of regional trustees for West Central U.S. and Western Canada.

Discussion topics slated include: "Back to Basics" (are we getting away from A.A. basics at meetings?); the Twelve Concepts (can they help solve area problems?); and the delegates' job of carrying the service message.

The A.A.W.S. presentation on literature will include a report on the feasibility of the Big Book in paperback. Also discussed will be distribution by G.S.O. of "Bill W.,"

(continued on p. 6)

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20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 'BOX 4-5-9'?

We now start, with our new masthead, the 21st year of this newsletter, as you see by the volume and number indication on the left side of page 1. Or do we?

(Anyhow, no 20th-anniversary celebration is planned. Instead, we'll just keep trying to do better, one issue at a time.)

In the A.A. archives (see p. 1), there is a microfilm of a mimeographed sheet dated Nov. 14, 1940, headed *A.A. Bulletin*. It was issued by the old Alcoholic Foundation, predecessor of today's General Service Board. So this is the 36th year of issuing *some* bulletin.

The name was changed to *The Group Secretary* in 1952; in 1955, it became *General Service Bulletin*; and in 1956, *The A.A. Exchange Bulletin*. The name *Box 4-5-9* (suggested by a Michigan A.A. during a G.S.O. staff member's visit to that area) was adopted in 1967.

So this is our eighth, 35th, or 20th anniversary. Take your pick.

The 1940 bulletin was written mostly by Bill W., our late co-founder. It said, "This bulletin is an effort to develop a mutual idea-exchange sheet to establish a closer feeling of friendship between A.A. groups from the east coast to the west, and we hope it will prevent the secession from the A.A. ranks of a group who threatened to call themselves 'Dipsomaniacs Incognito' unless they heard from us more frequently!"

A big stream of message-carrying ink and paper has flowed over the printing presses and mimeograph machines since those days of A.A.'s childhood. As A.A. has become larger, the channels of communication have multiplied and become even more important to our Fellowship.

To symbolize growth and change, five other bulletins issued by G.S.O. start this year with new title designs and other modifications. *Public Information Bulletin* becomes *P.I.-C.P.C. Bulletin*, also covering activities of committees on cooperation with the professional community.

As we noted in the last issue, *Loners Meeting* and *Internationalists Round Robin* have been merged, becoming *Loners-Internationalists Meeting*.

Changes in colors of paper and ink will accentuate the new look. But we hope our old friends recognize we're still all of the same family—just in different dress. And we hope you'll keep letting us hear what *you* think about these publications.

FOURTH WORLD SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULED

Delegates from A.A. general service organizations in at least 17 countries are expected in New York for the fourth A.A. World Service Meeting, Oct. 6-9, 1976.

Held biennially since 1972, the global conclaves began in 1969 at the instigation of our late co-founder Bill W. The third, in London in 1974, was the first held outside the U.S.A.

REPORT FROM G.S.O.'S GENERAL MANAGER

The many friends of Niles P. will be interested to know that he has resigned from the G.S.O. staff to devote his time to traveling and writing. Niles came on board in

January 1973 as assistant general manager, with the understanding that he would serve three years. During this time, his talent in communications, his sound judgment, and especially his broad experience in the Fellowship have been of enormous value. He continues to serve when called upon for special projects, but we miss him around the office.

Also, Bob H., chairman of General Services, went on reduced time on January 1 of this year (with a proportionate reduction in salary). Now that I have been able to relieve him of the responsibility for day-to-day operations of G.S.O., Bob is devoting most of his time to matters pertaining to the A.A.W.S. board and the General Service Board; special projects and studies; legal matters (with the help of our outside counsel); and Fellowship-wide problems, as well as many of A.A.'s relations with the outside world. Needless to say, I continue to draw heavily on his G.S.O. experience, as well as on his remarkable knowledge of the A.A. Fellowship, gained from nearly 34 years of sobriety (!) and service in almost any capacity you can name.

Putting aside my personal feelings for these two fine associates: These moves will mean that, despite the continued growth of A.A. and a record level of G.S.O. operations, the budget for "management" will be substantially reduced in 1976.

—Bob P.

FIRST G.S.O. CATALOG NOW AVAILABLE

The first catalog of Conference-approved literature and other service material is now ready. In the format of most A.A. pamphlets, the 16-page leaflet describes 83 separate literature pieces and service items distributed by A.A.W.S., Inc., through G.S.O.

For a free copy of the catalog, write G.S.O.

G.S.R. Corner

NEW D.C.M. CHAPTER IN MANUAL

A brand-new chapter on functions of the district committee member (D.C.M.) is a feature of the newest (1975) edition of "The A.A. Service Manual," just published.

The 116 pages of this paperback booklet (\$1.50) are a treasure chest of information for any A.A. interested in how A.A. manages to operate so well without a rigid organizational structure, minus laws, and without human executives.

The latest Manual has an index, too, and reflects a few procedural changes authorized by recent Conference actions.

It also tells absorbing stories on how A.A. got where it is today, some funny, some sad, and offers a wealth of Third Legacy experiences to enrich any A.A. life.

ABOUT SELLING NON-A.A. MATERIALS

Occasionally, an upset member writes us that a local central (intergroup) office—or an A.A. group—is selling literature or mementos that are not Conference-approved.

Let it be made plain right away: *No A.A. service entity—the General Service Board, G.S.O., or the Conference—has any power whatsoever to make any central office (or any member) do anything, or stop doing anything.*

G.S.O. can only share experience with the Fellowship. About non-A.A. literature, for example, we can only repeat what our Conferences—the voice of A.A.—have been saying for years: A.A. neither approves nor disapproves *any* literature not published by A.A. World Services, Inc. Groups and central offices are strongly urged, however, to display all Conference-approved literature quite separately from other materials. This is to make it clear that A.A. is not allied with any organization.

Repeatedly, the Conference and the board have declined to adopt any "official A.A." jewelry, lighters, ashtrays, pens, bumper stickers, or the like. Therefore, we do not sell or distribute any such items, although we can tell folks where such materials are available. Our primary purpose is to further the carrying of the message, as it is expressed in A.A. Conference-approved literature.

Central Office Corner

Delegate Corner

DO YOU NEED A SERVICE SPONSOR?

It seems to me many members enter some areas of service with little knowledge of service structure. We say, "Read your 'A.A. Service Manual.'" That, of course, is mandatory.

I think we fail to provide a type of sponsorship that is vital to A.A. I had great sponsors in becoming sober and becoming familiar with the living of the Twelve Steps. But when I was ready to enter a world of A.A. outside my group, I was without guidance. My sponsors had not involved themselves in this aspect of A.A. I was bewildered and confused.

By accident, or rather by divine providence, I sought the aid of three A.A. members who were knowledgeable and wise. I never called them my service sponsors, but that's what they were. I am deeply grateful to them. Without their care and concern for my growth, perhaps I might not have continued. In turn, I have sponsored a woman in service. It has been rewarding to share what knowledge I have, that she may pass it on.

A qualified service sponsor might be a past delegate, or any member who has been active at length in all areas of service. Choose your service sponsor as carefully as your original sponsor.

—Natalie S. (Washington)

HOW A NEW TRUSTEE FEELS

Preparing to start service as A.A. trustees, five men recently spent a day at G.S.O. for orientation before their first weekend of G.S. Board business. Here is one new trustee's story of what it felt like.

I was greeted by different people on October 31, 1975. When I was a delegate in April 1962, the location was different, too, but the spirit is still the same at G.S.O. I wondered how it could take a whole day to orient a new trustee. But the day flew by, and we spent only a few minutes on each area of service. The day had been planned down to the minute in order to cover some 16 separate and distinct parts of our total service operation.

How can so few people accomplish so much and serve our Fellowship so well? That feeling dominates one's thoughts. One can only feel inadequate, and thankful that he is a part of the service structure of our great Fellowship. —Mac C. (Western Canada)

Trustee Corner

LATEST NEWSLETTER SENT TO 3,500 PROFESSIONALS

The fourth edition of *About A.A.*, our newsletter issued by the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community, was mailed in December to 3,500 professional men and women who have asked for up-to-date information on A.A.

If you know anyone employed in the field of alcoholism who would like to receive the newsletter (it is free), please be sure we get the person's complete name, professional affiliation, and correct address (with Zip).

The new printing of "How A.A. Members Cooperate" is also available. In its first few months, this pamphlet proved enormously successful (over 63,000 circulated); but the new printing incorporates several clarifications and other improvements suggested by experience.

NEW DIRECTORIES READY

The 1975 A.A. directories are now a reality. The international (outside U.S. and Canada) section appeared early last year; Canadian, Eastern U.S., and Western U.S. arrived in succession later.

Each A.A. group has received a free copy for its region, and the others are available at 75¢ each.

All the A.A. directories are, of course, strictly confidential, for use only to enable A.A. members to locate groups, and only for A.A. purposes (not, for example, to peddle products of any sort).

For the first time in years, group contributions to G.S.O. were omitted from the North American 1975 editions to speed up production, but will be included hereafter.

G.S.O. will not supply a directory to anyone but an A.A. member, except under rare and carefully screened conditions set up by the General Service Conference.

They are clearly spelled out in Guidelines for Members Employed in the Alcoholism Field (p. 5). In effect, they say any member can order one if he or she orders it through an A.A. group, or writes G.S.O. as an A.A. member.

When professional alcoholism agencies or institutions try to get a copy, they are referred to the Conference delegate of their area. The delegate then determines whether the agency will use the directory appropriately — that is, only to refer alcoholics to A.A.

This occasionally irks an alcoholism-program director, so we try to explain carefully that we have to protect the confidentiality of members who permit their names to be used. We are grateful that we get nearly 100% understanding and cooperation, which make the directories a richly useful tool for getting more alcoholics to A.A.

DO THE TRUSTEES RUN THE FELLOWSHIP?

One important reason we need our trustees is the legal aspect. Years ago, we thought A.A. itself should be incorporated, but the idea was rejected as inappropriate for a spiritual program.

Yet the General Service Board's full name includes "of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc." The Seventh Concept points out that the board's Charter and Bylaws are *legal* instruments, giving the trustees the necessary legal power to conduct A.A.'s world service affairs.

Does that sound as if the board has the upper hand in A.A.? Wait! The Concept says that the *Conference* Charter is *not* a legal document; "it relies instead upon the force of tradition and the power of the A.A. purse."

A spiritual force — and money. Quite a clout! If the board ever took off on any course the Conference disapproved of, the Conference could cut off the flow of funds from group contributions.

Our world services have never been thus torn apart. For that, we can thank our Twelve Traditions. They apply to every part of our world services, as to all the rest of A.A., and keep all these different powers in such beautiful balance that they work together without clashing.

'SUGGESTED' STEPS?

How should the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous be referred to? Simply as "the Twelve Steps" — as the heading appears on the wall plaque and wallet card, in the Grapevine and the "Twelve and Twelve"?

Or "Twelve Suggested Steps" — as in some of the A.A. pamphlets and on wall charts produced by outside vendors? Or "the Suggested Twelve Steps" or "the Twelve Steps, as Suggested" or other variations in use?

Should we continue to refer to the Steps in various ways in our pamphlet headings? Or should the headings be consistent?

These questions have been discussed around the Fellowship these past few months, and perhaps we need more group conscience expressed before the 1976 General Service Conference convenes.

Here is some of the background:

In 1974, a past delegate wrote to point out that the literature was not consistent in style. He also expressed his view that the Twelve Steps make up the program of recovery, and that it is the program that is suggested, rather than the Steps. He cited the statement in Chapter 5 (p. 59) of "Alcoholics Anonymous": "Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery."

The actions of the trustees' Literature Committee, as reported in the *Final Report* of the 1975 General Service Conference, contain this notation: "The view of a past delegate that the 'program of

(continued on p. 5)

'SUGGESTED' STEPS?

(continued from p. 4)

recovery' is 'suggested,' not the Steps, was noted with appreciation."

The sense of the committee was that the pamphlets that differed should be consistent in style with the Big Book, the "Twelve and Twelve," and other A.A. literature. As pamphlets are reprinted, this editing of the headings is being done.

A misunderstanding seems to have arisen in one area of the country, where some members think the trustees' Literature Committee and/or the General Service Office is trying to change the A.A. literature, or is in some way trying to do away with the idea that the Steps (or the recovery program) are "suggested." The fact is, we are simply dealing with the *exceptions*, so that they are made consistent with the basic style of the books, the Grapevine, the wall plaques, and the wallet cards — which has always been "the Twelve Steps."

In the "Twelve and Twelve," Bill W. writes approvingly of the sponsor who says to the newcomer that the Twelve Steps "are but suggestions," as most of us have. Any individual or group is, of course, free to describe the Steps as "suggested" — or in any other way they wish, as a matter of individual preference.

Your group may want to discuss this and convey its group conscience, through the G.S.R., to your delegate.

OUR LATEST PRINTED 'ATTRACTION'

The most recent leaflet about A.A. published for public distribution is "Alcoholics Anonymous — a Community Resource for Coping With a National Health Problem." It is illustrated and in two colors.

It answers clearly questions

about who goes to A.A. (sex, age, occupation, and length of sobriety). It also tells how nonalcoholics can help alcoholics, and how to get in touch with A.A. The answers are based on the 1974 survey of U.S. and Canadian groups.

The folder is priced at 10¢, with reduced rates for bulk purchases (see Literature Order Form), so it can be passed out freely by A.A.'s who carry the message via public information and cooperation with the professional community.

The layout, colors, and content match the fold-out table-top display on A.A. and the large A.A. exhibit shown by invitation at national gatherings of professional societies.

A.A. ARCHIVES OPEN

(continued from p. 1)

the G.S.O. and Grapevine staffs, and a few overseas guests (see p. 6) attended.

Dr. Jack pointed out that A.A. can continually renew itself by going back to its source. He recalled Bill W.'s frequent admonition that the board and G.S.O. should put everything they do on the record.

George G. paid special tribute to Nell Wing, our nonalcoholic archivist, who was Bill's secretary for many years and who is a one-woman walking encyclopedia of A.A. lore. She was a strong force for preserving important A.A. records long before she took her present job. "I'll never again hear the words 'labor of love' without thinking of Nell," said George.

And Lois said, "With Nell, it never seems to be work." Lois recalled early A.A. days on Clinton St. in Brooklyn, N.Y., in the 1930's. Much early correspondence and other records were simply not saved, she said, partly because their importance wasn't realized, but mostly because "we were just too busy trying to help alcoholics and

their families." Bill always appreciated the theoretical importance of records, Lois said, "but he wasn't very good at doing anything about it."

Tom S. told of being in Bill's office in the 1940's while Bill tried to locate something in his files. "It was a mess," Tom said. Right then, he got the idea for organization of the archives.

The board established its Archives Committee in 1973. Besides George, it consists of: the Rev. Lee A. Belford, Ph.D., of New York University; Milton Maxwell, Ph.D., nonalcoholic trustee and formerly director of the Rutgers Summer School of Alcohol Studies; and Midge M., assistant to the chairman of General Services and secretary of the committee.

The new archives suite was set up in the spring of 1975. Amid pale blue walls, pumpkin-colored chairs, and beige drapes and carpeting, Nell and her assistant, Harriet G., keep a profusion of green plants flourishing at the windows.

Most valuable papers which could not be replaced (such as the original manuscript of the Big Book and early correspondence of members in New York and Akron) have been stored in a bank vault for safekeeping; but microfilms of the originals and many priceless mementos can be viewed in the archives.

They are open to reputable scientists and scholars at the discretion of the Archives Committee, as well as to A.A. members who visit G.S.O. Among the most valued items are many photos, plus A.A.

(continued on p. 6)



Nell—microfilm viewer—visitor

A.A. ARCHIVES OPEN

(continued from p. 5)

oldtimers' taped reminiscences, collected in recent months by George G.

Photographs, for the archives, were made at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. After the "usual closing" (the Lord's Prayer), food and coffee were served. And then came the big laugh of the day. It was realized that no one had taped for posterity the remarks at the ceremonial opening of our archives!

OTHER A.A. OFFICES URGED TO START OWN ARCHIVES

A.A. service offices in other lands will eventually set up their own historical archives on A.A. in their own countries, the board Archives Committee hopes.

This was stressed informally at the opening ceremony of our archives in conversations with John J. (New Zealand), Ronald and Sheila L. (England), and Jack M. (Scotland) — all of whom happened to be in New York that day.

In the U.S. and Canada, many area general service committees and other local A.A. units are already preserving their own original materials and compiling their own histories. The board Archives Committee hopes to receive copies of all such material, so the whole Fellowship may benefit.

'76 CONFERENCE

(continued from p. 1)

the biography of our co-founder, by Robert Thomsen, published by Harper and Row.

For Panel 26 delegates, committee assignments will be decided by lot in February, and special orientation sessions led by regional trustees will be held Sunday afternoon, April 18.

Utilizing suggestions from previous delegates, several new features

will mark the April conclave of U.S. and Canadian delegates, trustees, A.A.W.S. and Grapevine directors, and G.S.O. and Grapevine staff. A chart explaining clearly how the Conference system works will be used; all committees reports will be available Thursday evening; and trustees and staff personnel will attend workshops.

These decisions emerged from the November meeting of the trustees' Conference Committee.

DEAF A.A.'S

(continued from p. 1)

ing the deaf, says most can read lips, but miss about 40% of what is said; so sign language is a must.

Attendance at special meetings for the deaf has brought special rewards to some nondeaf A.A.'s; "I think we 'helpers' are *getting* more help. After 14 years, I really feel useful and am even getting pretty good at sign language," writes Jack G., San Francisco.

From Silver Spring, Md., Charles H. tells us of "at least ten individuals who have gone to sign-language classes just so they can better talk with the deaf. I don't know who gets the most help, the deaf or the hearing." (Jim M., Amherst, N.Y., told us that four Western New York A.A.'s are also learning sign language.)

Jack G. continues, "A big plus has been the number of professionals from a variety of fields who have come to our meeting. Many of them had never been to an A.A. meeting before, and I'm sure this will be meaningful as time passes." Everyone interviewed had high praise for the nonalcoholic professionals: "Without them, we would not have this A.A. group."

A.A.'s who work with deaf alcoholics find it necessary, of course, to spend time explaining A.A. to professionals who work with deaf people. Meetings for the deaf began at least seven years ago at local levels, when a few A.A.'s wanted

to try to help some deaf alcoholics, and a few professionals were distressed at the drunkenness of some deaf clients or patients.

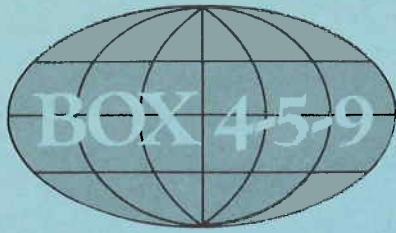
It took a lot of going to hospitals, deaf associations and clubs, jails, and social and other agencies, plus mailing out lots of notices and bulletins and placing advertisements in publications for the deaf. First results were discouraging, and it took patience, especially when someone slipped. That sounds very much like the way A.A. has often started locally, doesn't it?

Problems came up, naturally. Should interpreters be paid? By whom? If interpreters go with deaf A.A.'s to A.A. meetings, does anonymity get broken? Do meetings have a tendency to focus on problems of deafness, not on A.A.? What is the line dividing "cooperation" from "affiliation" between A.A. and professional agencies? Should the Twelve Steps be rewritten especially for deaf alcoholics with low verbal skills?

Recent letters tell us of the inevitable payoffs, however. The Washington, D.C., Deaf Group had its fifth anniversary last year, and the New York City group its first. As many as 16 attend the New York meeting.

One correspondent said that, at a meeting about a year ago, this group had one A.A. learning sign language, one A.A. who already knows how, one deaf male 14 days sober, one sober four days, a deaf female sober five years, one spare non-A.A. interpreter, and himself (nondeaf, sober 14 years.) One deaf A.A., formerly a skid-row incorrigible, has now returned to his home state sober.

Charles H. says, "The main thing to remember is that the deaf have the same problem with alcohol as any other person. While the deaf will come up with 1,000 reasons why they are different, one sentence gets emphasized over and over: 'Don't drink and keep coming back. When all else seems to have failed, they do come back.'"



THE BULLETIN BOARD

February-March 1976

ITEMS AND IDEAS ON AREA A.A. GATHERINGS - VIA G.S.O.

IT STILL HAPPENS

A.A. is still not so well known today as many of us would like to think. There are U.S. towns in which alcoholics cannot find A.A.

G.S.O. recently got a letter from H. C., a businessman in a Southwestern state unable to find A.A. in his hometown. We sent him some pamphlets and referred him to a local group registered with G.S.O. Within a week, a local member visited H. C. and arranged

for him to attend a nearby meeting. Naturally, we are happy to be given that kind of chance to carry the message. We get hundreds of such letters.

They make us wonder whether all A.A. groups do as much as they can to make sure each alcoholic in the community knows the hand of A.A. is right there when wanted. Or do many of us too often assume that all sick drunks know where we are, what we do, that we care, and how to reach A.A. quickly?

A.A. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

- 23-25 - Greensboro, North Carolina. Ninth Tar Heel Midwinter Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., P.O. Box 16266, Greensboro, N.C. 27406
- 30-31 - Blytheville, Arkansas. 19th Annual Tri-State Coon Supper. Write: Chm., P.O. Box 401, Blytheville, Ark. 72315
- 30-31 - Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. 25th Annual Victoria Rally. Write: Chm., Victoria Rally, P.O. Box 71, Victoria, B.C., Canada
- 30-Feb. 1 - North Hollywood, California. First San Fernando Valley Conv. Write: Conv. Chm., P.O. Box 8474, Van Nuys, Calif. 91409
- 31 - Manchester, New Hampshire. Ninth Annual Midwinter Banquet. Write: Function Comm., P.O. Box 500, Derry, N.H. 03038
- 31-Feb. 1 - Kindersley, Saskatchewan, Canada. First A.A. Roundup. Write: First Roundup, P.O. Box 764, Kindersley, Sask., Canada S0L 1S0

FEBRUARY

- 13-15 - Greeley, Colorado. 26th Annual Midwinter Stampede. Write: Stampede Chm., P.O. Box 209, Greeley, Colo. 80631
- 13-15 - Louisville, Kentucky. 25th Annual State Conf. Write: Host Comm., P.O. Box 2188, Louisville, Ky. 40220
- 13-15 - El Paso, Texas. 14th Annual Jamboree. Write: Jamboree Secty., P.O. Box 1405, El Paso, Tex. 79948
- 13-15 - Bellevue, Washington. Winter Holiday. Write: Winter Holiday, P.O. Box 4073, Seattle, Wash. 98104

- 13-15 - Wellington, New Zealand. 30th Anniversary of A.A. in New Zealand. Write: Secty., N.Z.G.S.B., P.O. Box 6458, Wellington 1, New Zealand
- 14-15 - Kenosha, Wisconsin. E. Cent. Region Conf. of Past & Present Delegates. Write: Secty., 1202 60th St., Kenosha, Wis. 53140
- 20-22 - San Antonio, Texas. 12th Annual Women's Conf. Write: Chm., Women's Conf., P.O. Box 6454, San Antonio, Tex. 78209
- 21 - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Intergroup's 36th Anniversary Dinner & Dance. Write: Intergroup Office, 2202 St. James St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103

MARCH

- 5-7 - Tucson, Arizona. Ninth Annual Pacific Region Serv. Assembly. Write: Tucson Area Intergroup Assoc., 840 S. Campbell Ave., Tucson, Ariz. 85719
- 5-7 - Darien, Connecticut. First Spring S. New England Conf. of Young People in A.A. Write: Chm., 24 Drumlin Rd., Westport, Conn. 06880
- 12-14 - Fresno, California. Spring Conf., N. Calif. Council of A.A. Write: Chm., Spring Conf., 166 Geary St., Rm. 804, San Francisco, Calif. 94108
- 12-14 - Corpus Christi, Texas. Coastal Bend Jamboree. Write: Reserv. Chm., P.O. Box 3201, Corpus Christi, Tex. 78404
- 19-21 - Sterling, Colorado. Spring Conf. Write: Conf. Secty., 1440 Detroit #2, Denver, Colo. 80206
- 21 - Osterville, Massachusetts. Cape Cod's First Roundup. Write: Cape Cod Roundup, P.O. Box 281, Osterville, Mass. 02655
- 26-28 - New Orleans, Louisiana. Big Deep South Conv. Write: Conv. Comm., 707 Gravier Bldg., 535 Gravier St., New Orleans, La. 70135

CLOSED MEETING TOPICS FROM THE GRAPEVINE

February: Have we ever clung to favorite resentments because we had *good* reasons? Read "Justified Resentments"; discuss fears, denials, and excuses involved in this emotion. How can we overcome so-called justified resentments? "The Incandescent Ego" tells of one member's efforts to polish up his image through A.A. activity. In such work, do we ever focus on getting results and taking credit for them? How can we resist this temptation? "Stay Sober and Carry the Message" can start a useful discussion on attitudes toward A.A. newcomers. Do we sometimes forget their real needs? Expect too much of them?

March: Four S's—slips, Steps, sponsorship, and sex—highlight the issue. Articles on slips cover reservations, pill problems, "slip insurance," and what we can learn from "slippers." Two A.A.'s contrast their sober lives before and after seriously working the Steps; a third suggests Step groups as a valuable aid. On sponsorship: Is it only for newcomers? And an amusing story on sex proves the subject can be treated with tact.

THANK YOU SO MUCH

To all of you who sent us holiday wishes, our deep-felt thanks. There were so many, we cannot acknowledge each one. But we love all of you for the sentiments expressed, and wish you a good 1976 one day at a time.