

BOX 4|5|9

News and Notes From the General Service Office of A.A.®

VOL. 31, NO. 1 / FEBRUARY/MARCH 1986

Record Crowd, Happy Time, at G.S.O. Open House

Normally, your General Service and Grapevine Offices are open from nine to five, Monday through Friday. But one Saturday a year we open our doors to all members who want to pay us a visit. On November 16, 1985, more than 761 people took us up on our invitation!

The day dawned chilly and gloomy. By 9:30 a.m. the first snow flurries of the season were obscuring the windshields of buses bringing their loads of people from as far north as Quebec City, Canada, as far south as Virginia, as far east as Boston and as far west as Pittsburgh. The weather couldn't dampen their spirits as they piled out to stand in line on Park Avenue South to take their turn in the elevators going up to G.S.O.

There, the members of the A.A. staff stood at the doorways of their offices, greeting the lines of fellow A.A.s filing past. The visitors saw the supporting departments as well: stenographic, accounting, data processing, files, mail. They learned there is now a separate Publishing Department and a new services director. In the Records Department they wanted to see their home groups on computer terminal screens. In Shipping, they purchased a record amount of literature. They saw where the *Grapevine* is produced. Many said that the A.A. Archives was the highlight of their day.

The crowd came from 13 states, in all — plus individual tourists/visitors from California, Texas, Georgia,

Ireland and Australia! Nearly 200 were Spanish speaking, and G.S.O. provided them with bilingual tour guides as well as their own program in the afternoon. Another 150 were French speaking — two busloads from Quebec and one from Montreal; and French-speaking tour guides were provided for them. One hearing-impaired A.A. member was profoundly moved on discovering that a signer for the deaf was provided for the first time.

After a lunch, provided for purchase by the Southeast New York Area Committee in the cafeteria of the nearby Norman Thomas High School, the visitors repaired to the school auditorium to hear the general manager and the G.S.O. and Grapevine staff members give brief descriptions of the service functions of the office, and answer questions from the audience. Some preferred to write Ask-It-Basket questions, which were answered by mail in the appropriate language.

It was an exciting day for the 90 employees and friends of G.S.O. and the Grapevine who volunteered to help out. Thirty-five were required as tour guides; others staffed their departments, answering questions, demonstrating equipment, selling literature, etc.; still others were at the high school to help with coffee, hang up coats, handle the crowds and generally make the visitors feel welcome. The first-timers among the volunteers couldn't get over how warm and grateful the vis-



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iting A.A.s were. "I never saw so many people at one time," one of them confessed. "It was fun. Everybody was happy and I heard a lot of great compliments."

The volunteers had to answer a multitude of questions — questions about groups and contributions and finances, questions about the computer and what it's like to work at G.S.O. "I told them I am proud to be an employee," reported one new tour guide.

Everyone had his own special memory of Open House Day. One staff member observed a Quebecois in the hall, trailing a bit behind his tour group, alone. He stopped to peer at a photo on the wall, his face beaming as he recognized it was Sister Ignatia. Slowly he tipped his hat to the photo and murmured, "Bon jour."

Later, in the same area, there was a surge of excitement around a mammoth, 1½' x 2' world atlas used for reference. What had attracted them was a wit exclaiming, "Lookit here! The biggest meeting directory I ever saw!"

As the staff gathered afterward, exhausted, to compare impressions, they were delighted with two comments that had been heard consistently: "The offices are so attractive . . ." and "It's so nice to meet the faces behind the names on the letters"

The Literature Rack

The Spanish version of the pamphlet "The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs" ("El Miembro de A.A. — Los Medicamentos y Otras Drogas"), is fresh off the

press. This translation has been reviewed by the Ibero American Commission on Translations and Adaptations of A.A. Literature (C.I.A.T.A.L.). Order from G.S.O., 15¢, (SS-11).

There is now a limited supply of *50 Years With Gratitude*, the A.A. Family Album and Souvenir of the 1985 A.A. International Convention. So, if you were not able to obtain a copy in Montreal, or have not already ordered from G.S.O., there is still time. \$4.50; no charge orders or quantity discounts.

Other new items: *Treatment Facilities Workbook* (see page 8), and the 1985-86 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* (see page 6).

G.S.O. Staff Gains Services Director

Tom J., a former Class B (alcoholic) trustee and a director of A.A. World Services (A.A.W.S.), has stepped into the newly created position of services director of the General Service Office. Well before his title became effective, on January 1, 1986, he was a familiar figure around the G.S.O. corridors, familiarizing himself with the many-faceted aspects of his job, which include supervision of the Archives and the General Service staff.

In shouldering these and other administrative responsibilities, Tom will work closely with John B., president of A.A.W.S. and general manager of G.S.O. Tom resigned from his A.A. service positions in order to assume his senior staff position; he had served as an A.A.W.S. director since 1983, and as an "in-town trustee" since April 1984, working for several years as a member of several trustees' committees.

A native New Yorker, Tom started his "serious drinking" in college and did not neglect the fast-growing habit throughout his years as an officer in the peacetime Army, as a New York State claims examiner, and as a member of the New York City Police Department, where he was a plainclothesman on the vice squad and later a detective.

"As a cop," he remembers, "I hung out in bars and liquor didn't noticeably alter my performance on the job. My buddies, mostly products of the early sixties, were into drugs as well as booze, but I was a purist. For all of us, the saloon was our focus." During this time, Tom managed to complete his studies toward a law degree at Brooklyn College Law School.

"For about eight months after I left the Police Department in 1971," Tom says, "I didn't drink because lack of funds prevented me from maintaining the drinking style I was accustomed to. However, my alcoholism

progressed anyway, just as we hear about so often at meetings. By 1972 when I started practicing law, as counsel for a drug rehabilitation group, my fear and anxiety were so great, I couldn't even ride the subway. So I got a job close to home as a bartender."

Some time later, Tom resumed work with the drug rehab group, and alert colleagues confronted him about his alcoholism. "I didn't know I was an alcoholic," he notes, "because my denial was so great. But I went to Smithers, a rehab center in New York, and said 'yes' out loud to 90 days of A.A. meetings. To myself, I said, 'Why would anybody want to do that?'"

Tom has stayed continuously sober since July 1975, but the going wasn't easy at first. "I got out of the habit of going to meetings," he explains, "and after three years, the old anxieties resurfaced. Only, this time, I didn't try to escape them through the bottle; I got close to the meetings and the people in the program." He also became absorbed in his work as legal counsel for Wildcat Service Corporation, a federally funded organization that helps ex-offenders adapt to the American work ethic, respond to authority and obtain jobs in the private sector.

In 1983, Tom married a fellow A.A., Jan. "We have a lot of A.A. romances in my Brooklyn Heights Group," he reports with a smile. "Last year alone, we celebrated the births of at least four wonderful A.A. babies."

In assuming his new post as G.S.O. services director, Tom says, "This is the most fulfilling thing I've done professionally. I feel competent, sober and whole. I couldn't ask for anything more."

Young People Define Their Role as the Future of A.A.

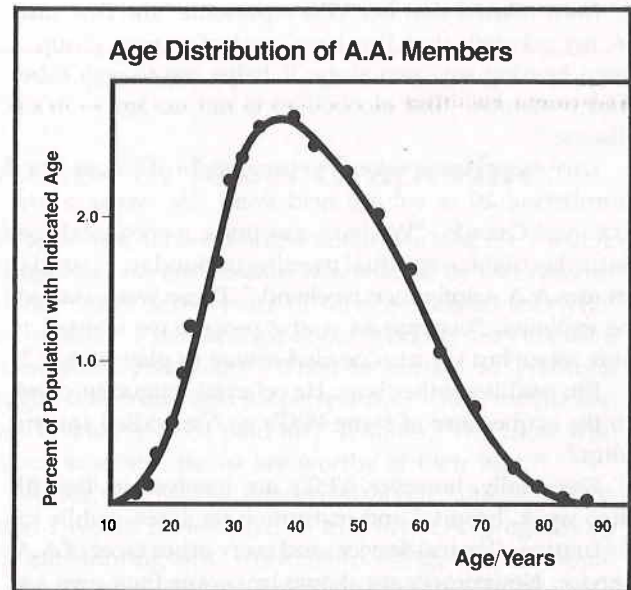
"As members of A.A.'s young people's groups, we're different from other special interest groups," Larry Y. told a sharing session of the General Service Board. "Women tend to remain women, doctors to remain doctors, and so on. But young people have a peculiar habit: they grow up and become regular A.A.s, even oldtimers."

One of three members of the young people's groups (YPG's) invited to address the board at its November sharing session in the Hotel Roosevelt, New York City, Larry sobered up in A.A. in 1974 at age 27 and has been active at the service level ever since. He is the current chairperson of the Advisory Council of the International

Conference of Young People in A.A. (ICYPAA).

Noting that more than 2,000 members are expected to attend ICYPAA's 1986 conference in Miami next May, Larry said that "no city has been awarded the conference if its committee did not have lots of young GSRs. We encourage young people to become part of the A.A. service structure."

He was echoed by Jim M., who was "Too young to be a drunk when I came to A.A. at age 24" and became a member in 1979 after turning 31. He reiterated the fact that YPG's work wholly within the framework of A.A., hewing closely to its singular purpose.



Newcomers under age 31 are no longer an unusual A.A. phenomenon, they pointed out. According to results of the 1983 survey of members in the U.S. and Canada, their numbers have reached a new high of 20%, a marked increase over the 15% noted in 1980 and nearly triple the constant 7% recorded between 1968 and 1977 (see graph).

The survey further revealed that, among members under 31, the incidence of addiction to drugs in addition to alcohol was 58% for men and 64% for women in 1983 (as compared to the overall figure of 31% for the general membership). Statistics for those under 21 — examined for the first time — showed 74% of men and 78% of women to be dually addicted.

Commented Jim at the sharing session: "With regard to A.A.'s attitude toward young people, and their literature in particular, we need to get clearer about alcoholics using other drugs." In response to a query about how A.A. can reach young people more effectively with its literature, Jim suggests going to the source: Get young people together in focus groups, he urges, and "ask what attracts them to the program and what doesn't."

Recently, Jim, Larry and another YPG member, were

invited to share their thoughts on the matter at a meeting of the Public Information Committee. "We told them to get the young people involved," Jim reports, "and utilize their considerable resources and help."

Herself a telling composite of what so many of today's young people are feeling, Dara, a slim, blond 22-year-old, told the General Service Board sharing session: "I began to drink and drug in my small midwestern hometown when I was 12, and took a geographic to Nevada at 13. I sobered up in Madison, Wisconsin, when I was 15, even though the oldtimers kept saying, 'You're too young — go to Alateen.' I just made sure I stayed right there."

Dara related that her YPG represents "the first time in my sobriety that I've been part of a peer group. I keep hearing my own story; it helps me to stay sober and remember that alcoholism is not an age — it's a disease."

Larry says that weekend get-togethers of young A.A.s numbering 20 or so, are held every few weeks in the U.S. and Canada. "We have meetings, a speaker/dance Saturday night, a spiritual meeting on Sunday . . . similar to any A.A. conference weekend." These were started, he explains, "because as young people, we wanted to stay sober but we also needed a way to play in A.A."

Jim said it another way. He referred tongue-in-cheek to the exuberance of some YPG's as "unbridled spirituality."

Essentially, however, YPG's are involved in Twelfth Step work, hospital and institution facilities, public information, General Service, and every other facet of A.A. service. Newcomers are shown by people their own age that using A.A. principles in their daily lives and being committed to A.A. service "can lead to a lasting and comfortable sobriety."

For further information about the young people's groups and international conference, write to: ICYPAA Advisory Council, Box 19312, Eastgate Station, Indianapolis, IN 46219.

Grapevine Tapes — A Different Kind of 'Meeting'

Picture an A.A. meeting attended by this motley crew: the co-founders with a scattering of other early members; many A.A.s who found sobriety in the sixties, seventies, and eighties; and a few nonalcoholic guests (Dr. Silkworth, Dr. Tiebout, and Harry Emerson Fosdick, among others). Impossible? Well, yes. But the two series of cassette tapes from *The A.A. Grapevine*, our Fellowship's "meeting in print," bring to life articles by just

such an unlikely mix of members and friends of A.A.

The first Grapevine tape was produced at the request of the 1984 Conference, and response from members was so overwhelmingly positive that in 1985 the Conference gave the go-ahead for more. To date, there are five taped "meetings," and contents of future cassettes will be determined by a questionnaire sent out through the Grapevine representative network.

The first series, "Articles from Classic Issues," #1, #2 and #3, includes articles chosen for their enduring significance and reprinted in the November "classic" issues. All three feature articles by Bill W. (one of the *Grapevine's* most enthusiastic and frequent contributors), along with others that illuminate program principles, help us cope with the problems of living sober, and capture the reawakened humor we all find in sobriety.

A second series, "Not for Newcomers Only," Vols. 1 and 2, has proved valuable for sponsors and twelfth-steppers, for beginners, and for all who want to keep the memory green. These "beginners meetings," like any other, cover the basics: tips on staying away from that first drink, the slogans and other first tools, the first three Steps; and they give solid experience in dealing with such practical matters as getting out of debt and handling new, sober feelings about sex.

All tapes are available from *The A.A. Grapevine*. Write: Box 1980, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Single tapes, \$5.50 each. Classic series, package of three tapes, \$15.00. Newcomer series, package of two tapes, \$10.00.

The A.A. Grapevine, Our International Journal

Beginning with the March issue of *The A.A. Grapevine*, look for the familiar A.A. circle-and-triangle insignia and a line that identifies our magazine as "An International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous." This identification follows an Advisory Action of the 1985 General Service Conference, and we hope it clears up some of the misconception and confusion that apparently has existed regarding the status of the *Grapevine*.

Why did the Conference deem this Advisory Action necessary? Because the *Grapevine* cannot go through the "Conference-approval" process issue-by-issue. (The same thing is true, incidentally, of the newsletter you are now reading!) But the magazine itself — like the Big Book — was around A.A. before the Conference or the General Service Structure had even been thought of — and it has *always* been a part of Alcoholics Anony-

mous. In fact, the *Grapevine* reported to the Fellowship the formation of the Conference and the Service Structure. Here are a few examples of the part it has played:

- The A.A. Preamble, which is read at virtually every A.A. meeting in the world, is copyrighted by *The A.A. Grapevine*.

- Articles originally published in the *Grapevine* have been developed into pamphlets published by A.A. World Services, Inc.

- Many of the personal stories in the Big Book appeared first in the *Grapevine*.

- Its pages have carried articles by such towering figures in early A.A. history as Sister Ignatia, Dr. Harry Tiebout, Rev. Sam Shoemaker, and Bernard Smith, to name only a few.

- Co-founder Bill W. had a special place in his heart for the *Grapevine* and he frequently used it to try out his ideas on the Fellowship, including the Twelve Traditions and the proposal to change the ratio of alcoholic to nonalcoholic trustees on the General Service Board.

- Bill's *Twelve Concepts for World Service*, in Concept XI, contains several pages detailing the position of the *Grapevine* in the Service Structure and its relationship to other A.A. entities.

- *Grapevine* directors and staff members are voting members of the General Service Conference and the Conference has a standing committee on the *Grapevine*.

Perhaps misconceptions about whether or not the *Grapevine* is "Conference-approved" may have arisen from a lack of understanding about the meaning of the term "Conference-approved." It is used to designate written or audiovisual material that is published by A.A. World Services, Inc. at the direction of the General Service Conference, material which always deals with the recovery program of A.A. or information about the Fellowship, material which has undergone a lengthy and painstaking process to ensure it represents solid A.A. experience.

A wide variety of other literature intended to help alcoholics is published by other people. Some of it has proved valuable and is widely used by A.A. members. The Conference does not disapprove of this outside material. A.A. does not tell any individual member what he or she may or may not read, nor any group what it may or may not purchase and display.

However, the Conference has recommended that "groups be discouraged from selling literature not distributed by the General Service Office or the *Grapevine*," or, at least, that when a group (or an intergroup or central office) displays non-Conference-approved material, it be separated from A.A. Conference-approved literature.

Even this straightforward and well-intended suggestion has led to some confusion, because not all "A.A. literature" is "Conference-approved." Local intergroups and central offices write and publish meeting lists and

other useful leaflets and pamphlets that are not Conference-approved. Yet they are certainly "A.A. literature" in the broad sense of the term and should be displayed with the rest of the A.A. literature. Even G.S.O. develops and publishes material which does not go through the process of Conference-approval: service material, Guidelines, newsletters and bulletins, for example. The same thing is true of *The A.A. Grapevine*, which is just as much a part of Alcoholics Anonymous as your G.S.O. and is recognized as such by the General Service Conference.

But let's keep it simple: from now on, the A.A. circle-and-triangle on the cover says it all.

Ames S. Joins *Grapevine*

When Ames S. first thought about working for *The A.A. Grapevine*, his enthusiasm was colored by two reservations. "After seven years of service-oriented sobriety," he recalls, "I felt strange about working for A.A. in a nonvoluntary capacity." Then he turned to Tradition Eight, which changed his perspective. "Our Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for," it states, "but those who labor in service for us are worthy of their hire."

Ames was further concerned about "the possibility that I would be tempted to mix my A.A. program up by substituting A.A. work for meetings." As he would soon discover, the projection was erroneous. "It's been just the opposite," he says. "I've stayed even closer to meetings than before I joined the *Grapevine* last August."

As associate editor, Ames works closely with the entire staff, especially editor Ann W., who observes that "Ames has caught on extraordinarily fast. He is great to work with and has a good sense of what the *Grapevine* is about. We're delighted to have him with us."

The aspect of his work that interests Ames most is "selecting material for each issue and putting together a coherent statement." He is presently absorbed in the preparation of special sections to appear within forthcoming *Grapevine* issues. Among those planned for 1986 are: "The Family Afterward," February; "Dual Addiction," March; "Young People," May; and a September followup report on the International Conference of Young People in A.A., which will congregate in Miami next May.

Born in Manhattan, the third of four children, he was drinking and drugging — "sniffing glue was my drug of choice" — by the time he arrived at Brown University in Rhode Island. After a year and a half at Brown, he cut out and proceeded to hold a variety of jobs, including stints as a proofreader, messenger and

security guard at Rockefeller Center, where he "guarded the giant Christmas tree from midnight to 8 a.m." All the while, he was "drinking just about anything" he could get his hands on. "I don't call myself a drug addict," he notes, "but the fact is that I did everything from smoking aspirin to shooting heroin." During this time, he enrolled at Columbia University, "going to school full time and drinking full time," and somehow managed to earn his B.A. degree in a dual major, English and creative writing.

In late 1977, Ames' mother sobered up in A.A. and took him to a meeting in Bedford Hills, New York. "I felt that the program was for older people and didn't apply to me," he remembers. "I was too young for all that" (Ames was 23 at the time).

But the seed of sobriety had been planted. Some months later, Ames bottomed out. Plagued by anxiety and despair, he bumped into a longtime bar buddy who was on his way to an A.A. meeting; Ames decided to go along. "The meeting was at Chelsea Riverside," Ames says, "and afterward all I could remember was hands — on my shoulder, my arm, everywhere — and faces saying, 'It's going to be all right.' That was May 5, 1978, and I've been sober ever since."

In 1980, Ames and an A.A. friend created and distributed a short-lived "Children's Weekly." It was "the largest comics section in the U.S.," he reports, "but nobody seemed to notice what a couple of drunks with a great idea, and no business acumen, had done, and we folded."

Today, Ames' life is on an even keel, and A.A. is its leitmotif — both at work on the *Grapevine* and at home. His wife, Laurie, is an A.A. member of ten years' standing. The couple's two children — two-and-a-half-year-old Caitlin, and Annalee, born in October — have turned their A.A. romance into a fast-growing A.A. concern.

1962 Version of Twelve Concepts

The 1985-86 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, just off the press, includes (in addition to routine updating and the incorporation of relevant Conference Actions of the 1985 Conference) the Twelve Concepts in the original version as written by Bill W. This is in response to a recommendation of an ad hoc committee of the General Service Board, approved by the 1985 General Service Conference.

In order to update certain statistical information, for example the size of the Fellowship and its service entities, footnotes are now provided at the end of each

chapter. Previously these appeared in the text itself, sometimes in brackets but sometimes in replacement of previous information without any explanation or special identification.

The reader of the Concepts will now have Bill's writings completely unedited (even to the inclusion of at least one misquote by Bill of his own previous writing).

The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service is a one-volume booklet, \$2.00; *Twelve Concepts for World Service* is also printed separately, \$1.50. Also available from G.S.O., "Twelve Concepts Condensed," which explores significant passages from the Concepts. This is a 12-page service piece which may be obtained, free of charge, by writing to the General Service Office.

A.A. Name and Logo is ®

In a recent *Box 4-5-9* we discussed the use and significance of our four registered "logos" based on the circle and triangle. Our attorneys ask that we identify these registered marks by the symbol ® when we use them, for example △®, so as to comply fully with trademark law.

This also should apply to the names A.A. and Alcoholics Anonymous, which are also registered trademarks. To comply we should indicate the symbol ® with the first prominent usage of the name, for example, Alcoholics Anonymous® or A.A.®. All entities other than A.A.W.S., Inc. should also state in a footnote that the symbol or name is a registered trademark of A.A.W.S., Inc.

G.S.O. has not itself been consistent in the past in identification of these trademarks, but we are in the process of coming into conformity with each new printing of each of our publications.

How to Become a G.S.O. Staff Member

"What are the qualifications and how does an A.A. member apply for a job on the General Service Office Staff?" is a frequently asked question.

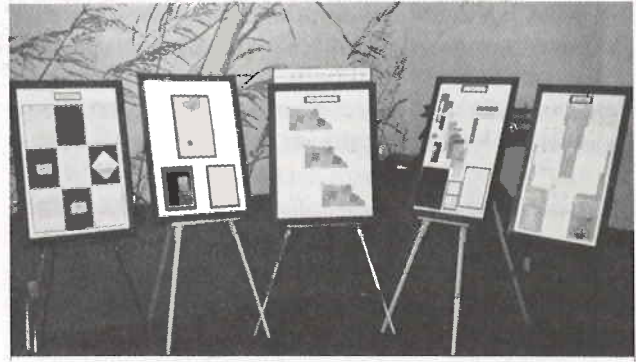
The qualifications include: good sobriety (a minimum of four years is required, longer is highly desirable); the ability to communicate; dedication to the service work performed at G.S.O.; a background in service at the group and possibly district and area levels;

and business or professional experience.

The "average" G.S.O. staff member is 49 years old with 13 years of sobriety and has been on the staff slightly longer than six years. There are nine women and two men. One is a native of England and another hails from Ecuador. Two left California (Los Angeles and San Francisco) to work at G.S.O. while another came from Anchorage, Alaska. Pompano Beach, Florida was the former home of another transplanted A.A. Others originally hailed from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Chicago, and we even have a few native New Yorkers aboard.

There are no openings at the present time, but if you would like us to keep your resumé on file please send it in. When an opening occurs, the most qualified applicants are interviewed by the entire staff and a group conscience decision is made.

If interested, write to: Staff Coordinator, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.



each office or station in the state — approximately 500 entities in all (exclusive of cable TV stations) that the P.I. committee is in touch with. 4. A display of some of the contents of the P.I. kit. 5. Papers and press releases issued by G.S.O. that have been reprinted on the Southern Minnesota P.I. letterhead and distributed locally; and copies of local newspaper stories that resulted from releases about A.A.'s 50th anniversary.

P.I.

Exhibit Features Media Reach of P.I. in Minnesota

An interesting and informative exhibit of work done by the Southern Minnesota Area Public Information Committee attracted many A.A. viewers at the West Central Regional Forum in Sheridan, Wyoming last September. Composed of five 30" x 40" display cards on individual tripods, the comprehensive exhibit included, from left to right: 1. A video cassette of news coverage of A.A.'s 50th Birthday which, according to P.I. chairperson Dennis B., "resulted from cooperation between local radio stations and us; a reel and cassette of public service announcements put together by the P.I. committee; and the description of an interview regarding A.A. that aired on a local radio station. 2. A proclamation by Minnesota Governor Rudy Perpich, recognizing A.A.'s 50th Birthday and proclaiming July 5, 1985 as Alcoholics Anonymous Day throughout the state; a photo of past Class A trustee Mike Alexander receiving the proclamation; and a P.I. committee release about the proclamation. 3. Three maps, representing Minnesota radio, newspapers and television respectively, which show the locations of

Annual 'Anonymity Letter' Mailed to Press

Each December, in keeping with a General Service Conference Action, the Public Information Committee sends a memo explaining A.A.'s tradition on anonymity at the public level to editors of the press, radio and television, and requesting their continuing help in protecting what co-founder Bill W. called "our shield and our buckler."

Headed "Anonymity," the memo then defines "Anonymous" as "a word so important that it's 50% of our name."

"We ask your help," it continues, "in maintaining our tradition of personal anonymity by not identifying members by name or by recognizable photos as 'members of Alcoholics Anonymous.' We have learned from experience that alcoholics or potential newcomers to A.A. may avoid any help that might reveal their identity.

"A.A. members are always happy to see articles about our Fellowship, but not in terms of A.A. personalities. Cooperation by the press over the years has been outstanding, and the publicity given to the A.A. program in all phases of the media has played a major role in encouraging many thousands of alcoholics to seek help."

In conclusion, the memo expresses thanks to the media "for your continuing understanding and support."

Local P.I. committees often send this letter to smaller newspapers and to local radio and TV stations. Sharing this memo on an annual basis helps us to observe our Traditions, and to seek cooperation from the media in the spirit of love and gratitude.

C.P.C.

Help the Elderly To Help Themselves

Most urban A.A.s take it for granted that they can get to a meeting any time they please. But not the elderly, who all too often must overcome not only their own infirmities but the very real dangers lurking on city streets. From Boston, Anthony F. sends "a gentle admonition" to respond to the plight of our aging:

"Despite politicians who say otherwise, the streets are not as safe as they were even in the 1970s. Our elderly are targets. They know it. And they live in fear. Old hardline A.A. remedies for recovery such as 'Let them chase it like I did,' or 'Here's the book, get to a meeting,' are passports to isolation, loneliness and death in the case of the aged.

"There is no substitute for taking someone to a meeting, particularly when that person is scared to death."

The older persons we take a little time out to help are our future selves, if we go on living. Someday, we may need someone to do as much for us.

Literature Stacks Melt Like Hotcakes at 50th Anniversary Exhibit

At Yale New Haven Hospital, Connecticut, thousands of people paused at the recent week-long A.A. exhibit commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Fellowship.

Noting that a very representative grouping of A.A. literature was on display, Walter B. reports that the pamphlet "The Jack Alexander Article About A.A." was constantly picked up, while "the self-test for 'Are You an Alcoholic?' had to be replenished three times a day."

The manner in which the latter were taken was fascinating, he says: "The visitors would glance around, then surreptitiously snatch them up and quickly insert them in their pockets." The "Schedule of A.A. Meetings" was the second most popular item, he adds, with "A.A. for the Woman" coming in third.

Walter has a small replica of the exhibit which he will gladly make available to any district that would like to make use of it.

Treatment Facilities

Treatment facilities news, information and sharing will be included in *Box 4-5-9*, beginning with this issue.

Last July, the trustees' Committee on Treatment Facilities, per a suggestion from the Conference Treatment Facilities Committee, recommended that the last issue of the *Treatment Facilities Bulletin* be published in October 1985, and that, in the future, such news would appear as a special department in *Box 4-5-9*.

The Treatment Facilities Desk welcomes your suggestions for topics that A.A.s working in this form of service would find interesting and useful.

Treatment Facilities Workbook Available

The new *Treatment Facilities Workbook*, which will help A.A.s carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic in hospitals, detox centers and rehabilitation units, is now available from G.S.O. at a cost of \$7.

The plastic-coated maroon looseleaf notebook is divided into sections for easy reference. In its pages, A.A.s throughout the U.S. and Canada share their efforts and experience in working with alcoholics in treatment facilities. Also included is specific, common-sense information on how to handle temporary contacts, how to contact treatment facility personnel, and how to work most effectively with your C.P.C. and P.I. committees.

If you are apprehensive about doing treatment facility work, says G.S.O. staff member Phyllis M., "stick to the

guidelines that are provided in the workbook," along with helpful A.A. bulletins, pamphlets and order forms. "Remember," she adds, "you're doing basic Twelfth Stepping — giving your sobriety away in order to keep it."

A.A. Group or Treatment Facility Meeting?

For some time G.S.O. has been trying to clear up the confusion regarding the difference between a regular A.A. group which holds meetings in a hospital, and a treatment facility meeting. In order to clarify the difference and keep our records up-to-date, the Treatment Facilities Desk at G.S.O. sent a memo to hospital groups last August. Since there still seems to be some confusion we feel highlights of the memo bear repeating.

If your group is open to all alcoholics in your community, and if all members of the group are alcoholics, then this is a *regular A.A. group* — even if it meets in a hospital. As we know, every A.A. group ought to be self-supporting and should, to the best of their financial ability, pay rent or some type of payment in-kind (donate coffee pot, literature, etc.) to the facility where they hold their meetings.

Treatment facilities meetings are held for patients only, and a few selected outside A.A.s who carry the message. The A.A.s are there as guests of the facility, and these meetings are not open to local A.A. members.

For further information, on this topic or any other questions you might have, please see the pamphlet "A.A. in Treatment Centers."

Correctional Facilities

'Thursday Night Live' At the Cook County Jail

What do alcoholics do on Thursday night? "Many drink," observes volunteer Gregory D., but others, "who have determined themselves as alcoholics, and who have made a commitment to stay sober on a daily basis,

renew this commitment at an A.A. meeting."

At the Cook County Jail, Division I, P.A.C.E. Institute, in the Northern Illinois Area, Gregory and other volunteers of the Western Suburban and North Shore Groups "brook rain, sleet and dark of night" to carry the message at the Thursday Night Live meeting.

"Our P.A.C.E. students, some first-time offenders and others repeaters, represent our own reflections and images," Gregory writes. "They are reminders of where we have been or could have been without this God-given program. With each passing day of sobriety, they begin to represent a light at the end of a very dark tunnel — one that has flickered for some upon entering social reality but has brightened for others who have chosen the A.A. way of life. Upon release, they have made that phone call, attended meetings, and are staying sober today."

Volunteers go to any lengths to participate in the Thursday Night Live meetings, Gregory reports. One A.A., named Ted, rides his bicycle seven miles each way both winter and summer in order to attend, and "his personal commitment has inspired us all."

Gregory points to numerous other volunteers who come from the inner city and the suburbs to share their experience, strength and hope. "Our commitment springs from having faced the truth that, as active alcoholics, we were not always responsible. Then in A.A. it was suggested to us that if we wanted to maintain comfortable, contented sobriety, we would have to learn to change our life styles — to become responsible for our own actions.

"Continuous growth in the A.A. way of life suggests that we set an example for other alcoholics who still suffer. After all, we were told, 'You might be the only Big Book another alky ever reads.'"

Carrying the Message To Young People Inside

Problems that surround carrying the message inside juvenile facility walls were among those discussed in a correctional facilities workshop at the West Central Regional Forum in Wyoming last fall.

The importance of this aspect of correctional facilities work is highlighted by a recent report, released by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, stating that "54% of the people convicted of violent crimes had been drinking." Moreover, it said, "62% of those convicted of assault had been drinking" and "49% of those convicted of murder or attempted murder had been drinking." These statistics assume a critical dimension when one consid-

ers Class A trustee Jim Estelle Jr.'s report at the 1985 General Service Conference: "Most crimes are committed by males between the ages of 17 and 27."

At the correctional facilities workshop in Wyoming, participants spoke of the problems encountered at juvenile facilities when disruptive behavior by inmates is encountered at A.A. meetings where attendance is mandatory. Some suggested solutions included: attempt to communicate with the disruptive person; communicate A.A.'s purpose to the staff and ask about an internal screening process; and work with the facility's staff to develop guidelines, inform everyone involved (both on the inside and the outside) about the guidelines, and set an example by acting within them.

Constructive dialogue at the workshop extended to problems concerning protective custody which, it was explained, is for those inmates in correctional facilities who have behavioral difficulties and need to be segregated from the main population. Some suggested approaches: let literature carry the message where an A.A. member can't; provide tapes, if permitted; and communicate with the staff to see what options are available and in the best interests of all involved.

Also stressed at the workshop was the importance of providing sponsorship prior to release, and giving direction to the released person so that, within 24 hours, he or she makes outside contact with Alcoholics Anonymous.

New Pamphlet Needed for Correctional Facilities?

The trustees' Correctional Facilities Committee recently recommended an in-depth assessment of the possible need of a new flyer for correctional facilities representatives at the group level. They invite suggestions and recommendations from members involved in such service work before bringing the matter to the 1986 General Service Conference for discussion and direction.

In contemplating the matter, it might be helpful to review some of the procedures followed by the most successful groups in correctional facilities, which usually follow as closely as possible those used by "outside" groups:

- Choose a representative who will remind other members periodically of the need for twelfth-stepping on the inside. If the area has a correctional facilities committee, each representative can work through this committee structure to coordinate the group's activities with those of other groups.
- Try always to show respect for all correctional

facilities rules and regulations. After all, we are usually guests in such places and should be on our best behavior to attract alcoholics to our way of life. Attraction, not promotion, is best for A.A., most of us know.

- Avoid an A.A. attitude of "We're the experts." This can alienate correctional facilities personnel and thus deprive some sick alcoholics of their chance at the program.

- Furnish A.A. literature for alcoholics in correctional facilities (special packets of A.A. pamphlets, subscriptions to the *Grapevine*, etc.)

- Supply speakers, leaders, literature and refreshments for A.A. meetings on the inside.

- Attend A.A. meetings in correctional facilities as listeners, to encourage cooped-up members.

- Try to make sure that those who join A.A. behind walls have A.A. sponsors upon release.

- Be aware that the correctional facility representative at the group level is a "messenger" for his or her A.A. group, bringing information to and from the facilities. The representative informs the group of openings for speakers and chairpersons, helps volunteers make contact with the correctional facilities committees, and reports on the needs and activities of the A.A. groups on the inside.

Pen Pal Program Takes Off in Rhode Island

An inmate correspondence program has become a major project of the Institutions/Correctional Facilities Committee of the Rhode Island Area Assembly. Writes Barbara L., "I've just received the first letter, from a woman inmate in a New York facility. This really is a wonderful way to share your experience, strength and hope with people who may not have meetings available to them or, even if they do, perhaps cannot interact on a one-to-one basis at the meetings."

Correspondence guidelines being prepared by the committee will stress, among other things, that "men write to men and women write to women" to avoid involvement, gift-giving, etc. Because some A.A.s are reluctant to post their home address, the committee is considering the advisability of renting a Post Office box for general use.

The committee is also discussing ways in which to help inmates contact A.A. immediately after their release. One committee member suggested setting up a list of A.A. members who could meet an inmate on the day of parole to introduce him or her to A.A. on the outside. It was stressed that, upon release, the former inmate should be recognized only as an A.A. member, unless of course the individual wishes to say otherwise.

BOX 4|5|9 BULLETIN BOARD

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

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1986

Calendar of Events

February

- Jan. 31-Feb. 2 — *Salem, Oregon*. Third Annual Soberfest. Write: Ch., Box 5418, Salem, OR 97304
- 1 — *Chatham, Ontario, Canada*. St. Clair Dist. One Day Roundup. Write: Treas., Box 1032, Chatham, Ont., N7M 5K1
- 6-9 — *Pine Mountain, Georgia*. Pine Mountain Fellowship. Write: Ch., Box 617, Pine Mountain, GA 31822
- 7-9 — *Greely, Colorado*. 35th Annual Greely Stampede. Write: Ch., 2121 E. 20th St., Greely, CO 80631
- 7-9 — *San Diego, California*. 14th Annual All California Young People Roundup. Write: Ch., ACYPAA, Box 82327, San Diego, CA 92138
- 7-9 — *Auckland, New Zealand*. 23rd National Conv. Write: Ch., Box 56281, Dominion Rd., Auckland
- 7-9 — *North Little Rock, Arkansas*. Fourth Annual Winter Holiday Conv. Write: Conv. Treas., Box 55269, Little Rock, AK 72205
- 7-9 — *Overland Park, Kansas*. Fourth Annual Sunflower Roundup. Write: Ch., Sunflower Roundup, Box 1281, Mission, KS 66222
- 7-9 — *Douglaston, New York*. Second Annual Bridge Over Troubled Waters Young Peoples Closed Conv. Write: BOTWYPCC, 1930 Holland Ave., Bronx, NY 10462
- 13-16 — *St. Petersburg, Florida*. Second Annual Big Book Seminar. Write: Ch., Box 1682, St. Petersburg, FL 33731
- 13-16 — *Miami, Florida*. Third Annual Florida Roundup (sponsored by gay and lesbian A.A.s) Write: Ch., Box 381274, Miami, FL 33238

Planning an April, May or June Event?

Please be sure to send your information on April, May or June events in time to reach G.S.O. by *February 15*. This is the calendar deadline for the April-May issue of *Box 4-5-9* (to be mailed March 15).

Naturally, G.S.O. cannot check on all the information submitted. We must rely on local A.A.s to describe the events accurately.

- 14-16 — *Limerick, Ireland*. Sixth Annual Conv. Write: Ch., Cunnikee, Rillonar, Ballysimon, County Limerick
- 14-16 — *Sacramento, California*. Ninth Annual Spring Fling. Write: Spring Fling, Box 19548, Sacramento, CA 95819-0548
- 14-16 — *Camrose, Alberta, Canada*. Sixth Annual Valentine Roundup. Write: Ch., 4610 - 61st St., Camrose, Alta. T4V 2H7
- 14-16 — *El Paso, Texas*. 24th Annual Jamboree. Write: Jamboree Secy., Box 1405, El Paso, TX 79948
- 14-16 — *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. 22nd National Women's Conf. Write: NAAWC, Box 32057, Philadelphia, PA 19146
- 14-16 — *Lake Whitney, Texas*. 38th Quarterly Young People's Conf. Write: Ch., Box 4, Fort Worth, TX 70101
- 14-16 — *Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada*. Fifth Annual Heritage Weekend. Write: Conf. Ch., 157A Hillside Dr., S., Elliot Lake, Ont. P5A 1N2
- 14-16 — *Cincinnati, Ohio*. Fifth Annual Conf. of Young People. Write: Ch., Box 19336, Cincinnati, OH 45219
- 21-23 — *Courtenay, British Columbia, Canada*. 35th Annual Comox Valley Rally. Write: Ch., Box 1337, Comox, B.C., V9N 7Z8
- 21-23 — *Lexington, Kentucky*. 35th State Conf. Write: Host Com., Box 23, Lexington, KY 40501
- 21-23 — *Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada*. 19th Annual Roundup. Write: Roundup Ch., Central Office, 311-220 Third Ave. S., Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 1M1
- 21-23 — *Bellevue, Washington*. 12th Annual Winter Holidays '86. Write: PSYPC, Box 3791, Bellevue, WA 98004
- 21-23 — *Montgomery, Alabama*. 42nd Anniv. & Fifth Heart of Dixie Fellowship. Write: Ch., 3733 Marie Cook Dr., Montgomery, AL 36109
- 21-23 — *Virginia Beach, Virginia*. 10th Oceanfront Conf., Write: Oceanfront Conf., Box 7261, Virginia Beach, VA 23458
- 21-23 — *Knoxville, Tennessee*. Fourth Annual Tenn. Conf. of Young People. Write: TCPYAA Box 3726, Kingsport, TN 37664
- 22-23 — *Vulcan, Alberta, Canada*. 12th Annual Roundup. Write: Roundup Comm., Box 808, Vulcan, Alta. T0L 0L0
- 22-23 — *San Jose, California*. Sober & Free Conf. (Sponsored by gays & lesbians in A.A.) Write: Conf. Ch., 45 N. 1st St., Suite 8100, San Jose, CA 95103
- 28-Mar. 2 — *Las Vegas, Nevada*. Pacific Region Service Assy. Write: PRAASA Ch., 2800 Eastern Ave., Apt. 104, Las Vegas, NV 89109
- 28-Mar. 2 — *Afton, Oklahoma*. Ninth Four-State Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 2106, Joplin, MO 64803

Closed Meeting Topics From the Grapevine

For more detailed suggestions, see the pages noted.

February (page 28): Family recovery; self-acceptance; the invisible line; expectations.

March (page 22): World of work; simplicity; relapse; before and after; technicalities.

- 28-Mar. 2 — *Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada*. Eighth Annual Mid-Winter Roundup. Write: Ch., 1030 S. Park St., Apt. 1207, Halifax, N.S. B3H 2W3
- 28-Mar. 2 — *Toronto, Ontario, Canada*. 36th Annual Regional Conf. Write: Coord., Metro Toronto Intergroup, 272 Eglinton Ave. W., Toronto, Ont. M4R 1B2
- 28-Mar. 2 — *Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada*. 18th Annual Nanaimo Rally. Write: Rally Ch., 779 Townsite Rd., Nanaimo, B.C. V9S 1L6
- 28-Mar. 2 — *Sioux Falls, South Dakota*. West Cent. Reg. Conf., Write: Secy., 3800 E. 25th, Sioux Falls, SD 57103
- 28-Mar. 2 — *Eau Claire, Wisconsin*. 27th Annual Banquet. Write: Banquet Ch., Box 292, Eau Claire, WI 54702-0292
- 28-Mar. 2 — *St. Albert, Alberta, Canada*. St. Albert Ninth Annual Roundup. Write: Roundup Com., Apt. 305, 6 Gainsborough Ave., St. Albert, Alta. T8N 0W4

March

- 6-9 — *Anaheim, California*. Second Annual Orange County Conv. Write: Ch., Box 2984, Anaheim, CA 92804.
- 7-9 — *Corpus Christi, Texas*. 32nd Annual Coastal Bend Jamboree. Write: Ch., Box 3204, Corpus Christi, TX 78404
- 7-9 — *Rapid City, South Dakota*. Second Annual Rushmore Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 5086, Rapid City, SD 57709
- 7-9 — *Brandon, Manitoba, Canada*. 38th Brandon Conf., Write: Ch., 64 Brentwood Village, Brandon, Manitoba R7A 5Y1
- 7-9 — *Perrysburg, Ohio*. Fourth Annual NW Ohio/SE Michigan Area Mini Conf. Write: Secy., Box 536, Pemberville, OH 43450
- 13-16 — *Rock Hill, South Carolina*. 39th State Conv. Write: S.C. Conv., Box 731, Rock Hill, SC 29731

Flip up this end of page — more events listed on reverse side

14-16 — *Ocean City, New Jersey*. 22nd Annual Southern NJ General Service Conv. Write: Conv. Comm. Secy., Box 804, Glassboro, NJ 08028

14-16 — *Fort Collins, Colorado*. State Spring Assembly. Write: Secy., 1513 Glen Haven, Dr., Fort Collins, CO 80526

14-16 — *Salmon Arm, British Columbia, Canada*. Salmon Arm Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 2218, Salmon Arm, B.C. V0E 2T0

14-16 — *Marshall, Minnesota*. 13th Annual Spring Roundup. Write: Roundup Ch., Box 451, Marshall, MN 56258

15-16 — *Kingston, Ontario, Canada*. Eastern Ont. Area Service Conf. & Assy. Write: Ch., 72 Maybourne Ave., Scarborough, Ont. M1L 2V9

21-23 — *Omaha, Nebraska*. Sixth Annual Dist. II Mini Conf. Write: Ch., Box 14925, Omaha, NE 68124

21-23 — *Victoria, British Columbia, Canada*. 35th Annual Rally. Write: Rally Comm., #8-#2020 Douglas St., Victoria, B.C. V8T 4L1

21-23 — *Irving, Texas*. Irving Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 151598, Irving, TX 75015

21-23 — *Victorville, California*. Second Annual High Desert Conv. Write: Ch., Box 3701, Hesperia, CA 92345

27-31 — *Melbourne, Australia*. 26th National Conv. Write: Conv. Secy., Box 136, Melbourne E., Victoria 3002

28-30 — *San Diego, California*. Ninth Annual Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box A2529, San Diego, CA 92112

28-30 — *Gulf Shores, Alabama*. Second Annual Gulf Shores Jubilee. Write: Conv. Com., Box 1183, Foley, AL 36536

28-30 — *Reno, Nevada*. 15th Annual Reno Spring Festival. Write: Ch., Box 72, Reno, NV 89504

28-30 — *Williams Lake, British Columbia, Canada*. Fourth Annual Williams Lake Roundup. Write: Ch. 797 Gibbon St., Williams Lake, BC V2G 1V6

28-30 — *East London, Republic of South Africa*. South African National Conv. Write: Ch., Conv. Comm., Box 7215, East London 5200, Republic of South Africa

April

4-6 — *Lockport, New York*. Western N.Y. Spring Service Conv. Write: Ch., 16 Grant St., Lockport, NY 14094

4-6 — *Rice Lake, Wisconsin*. 45th Annual No. Wisc. & Upper Peninsula Mich. Spring Conf. Write: Comm. Treas., Rt 3 - Box 3361, Spooner, WI 54801

4-6 — *Flin Flon, Manitoba, Canada*. Eastside Group Annual Roundup. Write: Ch., 7 Willow Crescent, Flin Flon, Man. R8A 1T5

4-6 — *Fort St. John, British Columbia, Canada*. 16th Annual Roundup. Write: Ch., SS2, Site 18, Compartment 2, Grand Haven, Fort St. John, BC V1J 4M7

4-6 — *Wichita, Kansas*. 11th Annual Spring Roundup. Write: Spring Roundup, Box 18093, Wichita, KS 67218

4-6 — *Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada*. Southern Alberta Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 212, Lethbridge, Alta. T1J 3Y5

5-6 — *Palm Bay, Florida*. N. Fl. Assembly Second Qtr. Write: Secy., 2052 Euclid St., Jacksonville, FL 32210

11-13 — *Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada*. Celebrate Sobriety (sponsored by the Gay Groups). Write: Ch., Box 718, Stn. A. Vancouver, BC V6C 2N5

11-13 — *Seaside, Oregon*. Fourth Annual No. Coast Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 923, Seaside, OR 97138

18-20 — *Lincoln, Montana*. 18th Wilderness Agape Weekend. Write: Coord., 23 Konley, Kalispell, MT 59901

18-20 — *Clarksburg, West Virginia*. Jackson's Mill Roundup. Write: Jackson's Mill Roundup, Box 825, Clarksburg, WV 26301

19-20 — *Broken Bow, Oklahoma*. Beavers Bend Round Robin. Write: Ch., Box 144, Hatfield, AR 71945

25-27 — *Stillwater, New Jersey*. Fourth Annual Young People's Conf. Write: Garden State Young People's Conf., Box 4018, Metuchen, NJ 08840

25-27 — *Cork City, Ireland*. Fourth Annual European Conv. Write: Ch., 10 Denroches Cross, Bandon Road, Cork, Ireland