

## 'Twelve Concepts Illustrated'

They said it couldn't be done! A pamphlet on "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated," that is — similar to the popular "Twelve Traditions Illustrated." Yet, thanks to the Conference process, it has become a reality.

The text is brief and breezy, easy to understand. The clever drawings make complicated ideas clear. Those who have seen the pamphlet through various stages of production are unanimously enthusiastic.

When the booklet "Twelve Concepts for World Service, by Bill W." was published, following Conference-approval in 1962, it filled two basic voids:

First, it brought into symmetry the Three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e.:

The Legacy of Recovery had its 12 Steps

The Legacy of Unity had its 12 Traditions

The Legacy of Service now had its 12 Concepts  
The Concepts *codified* the Third Legacy.

Second, it provided guidance as to the functions and responsibilities (as well as the rights) of the various service entities and how they work together. It spelled out how the whole service structure was supposed to operate, and the relationship of the parts. It explained the spiritual principles that undergirded the structure. It provided answers to nearly every question about service.

However, the text of the Twelve Concepts was hard reading. One trustee confessed, "I keep the booklet by my bedside, because reading it always puts me to sleep." For a decade, the average A.A. member — even the average member in service — was scarcely aware of the Concepts, much less a student of them.

Gradually, the worth of the Concepts came to be recognized. Word spread from service sponsor to service sponsee that here was the cornerstone of the Third Legacy — *must* reading for all. At assemblies, conferences and other service meetings, workshops on the Concepts, once deserted, became crowded.

So, about five years ago, one of the Conference areas suggested that if the Concepts could be explained more simply and *illustrated*, it would be most helpful. When the proposal reached the trustees' Literature Committee,

they discussed it long and earnestly — and then threw up their hands. The Concepts, they felt, were too lengthy, too complex, too hard to wade through to lend themselves to "light" illustrations. It couldn't be done!

But the area which had originated the idea refused to give up. They persisted, and enlisted the support of their regional trustee. The upshot was that this time the proposal was forwarded to the 1984 General Service Conference, which recommended that an illustrated pamphlet of the Twelve Concepts be prepared. Never mind that it "couldn't be done"!

So the General Service Office engaged a cartoonist to prepare trial drawings of Concept I. To everyone's surprise, the rough drawings he produced turned out to be clear, incisive and amusing. Right on target! The trustees' Literature Committee was delighted and gave a go-ahead. A delay of several months ensued. The



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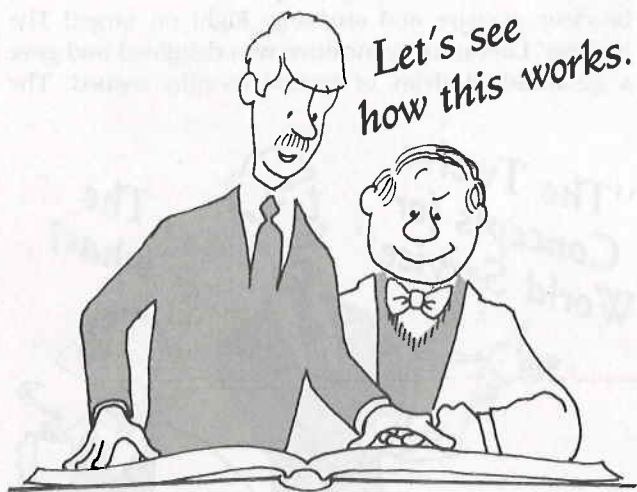
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cartoonist finally came back and declared it was too difficult a job for him. Maybe the people were right who said it couldn't be done!

The project then lay fallow for about a year, and the failure to complete it was reported with "regret" to the 1985 Conference.

A few months later, a new approach was decided on. A writer with long service experience was assigned to prepare a simplified and popularized text for such a pamphlet, and then to suggest how this text might be illustrated. This approach worked. Even then, G.S.O. had to go through two more artists to arrive at exactly the right style and appeal.



The resulting "Twelve Concepts Illustrated" was finally approved enthusiastically by the 1986 General Service Conference, and is now available from G.S.O. or your local intergroup. The same size and format as the pamphlet "Twelve Traditions Illustrated," it runs 28 pages and is priced at 30¢ each. The pamphlet is intended as an illustrated introduction to the Twelve Concepts. If it answers or guidance the reader is seeking, he or she should go to the Concepts in their full form.

It *could* be done, after all!

## 1987 Conference Ponders Tradition of Self-Support

"The Seventh Tradition—A Turning Point" will be the theme of the 37th General Service Conference, to be held April 26 through May 2, 1987 at the Hotel Roosevelt, New York City.

Ninety-one delegates elected in area assemblies across the United States and Canada will comprise the majority of the 134 Conference members. Also participating in the super-size A.A. business meeting: trustees of the General Service Board, G.S.O. and Grapevine staffs, and A.A.W.S. and Grapevine directors.

As they join in the traditional democracy of the Conference process, a number of those assembled will marvel that what Bill W. called "our principle of corporate poverty" has withstood the test of time. Thus, the word "gratitude," along with "self-support" and "financial independence," is apt to recur frequently.

The Conference will officially begin Monday morning with opening remarks by Gordon Patrick, chairperson of the General Service Board. The week will be filled with presentations followed by floor discussions, workshops, committee meetings, and consideration of committee recommendations by the entire assemblage.

Presentation/discussion sessions will include: "Are We Carrying the Message to All?"; "The Area Structure"; "Can G.S.O. Be Self-Supporting Through Group Contributions Only?"; "What About the Birthday Plan?"; "Publishing—Too Much?"; and "Maintaining the Basics." Conference members also will hear a report on the Ninth World Service Meeting, with workshops planned on topics including: "Unity—Let's Talk About It" and "Living Sober—Growing Together or Growing Apart?"

The bulk of Conference work is done by the Conference committees, to which delegates are assigned by random drawings. Committee reports to the full Conference are approved or rejected by the entire Conference, and form the Conference Advisory Actions. Each delegate receives a package containing the Conference Early Bird edition of *Box 4-5-9* summarizing the week's activities. Later in May, every group is mailed a copy of that edition, as the June/July issue of *Box 4-5-9*. The more extensive *Final Conference Report*, published in late summer, is available to all members; \$2.00 from G.S.O. It is confidential and includes complete financial data and rosters.

As a decision-making body, the General Service Conference seeks to reach "substantial unanimity" in its voting procedures, which ultimately affect the ways in which A.A. as a whole carries its message of sobriety.

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*Drawings on pages 1 and 2 from "Twelve Concepts Illustrated."*

## Literature Carries the Message in Myriad Tongues

Experience in many countries around the world has shown that A.A. does not grow significantly until recovery literature is available in the language of the country. Typically, A.A. has begun in other lands through response to a call for help that comes to G.S.O./New York or some other service office; or through a sober A.A. member in another country helping a suffering alcoholic to achieve sobriety. Then that person twelfth-steps another and the chain of recovery in A.A. is begun.

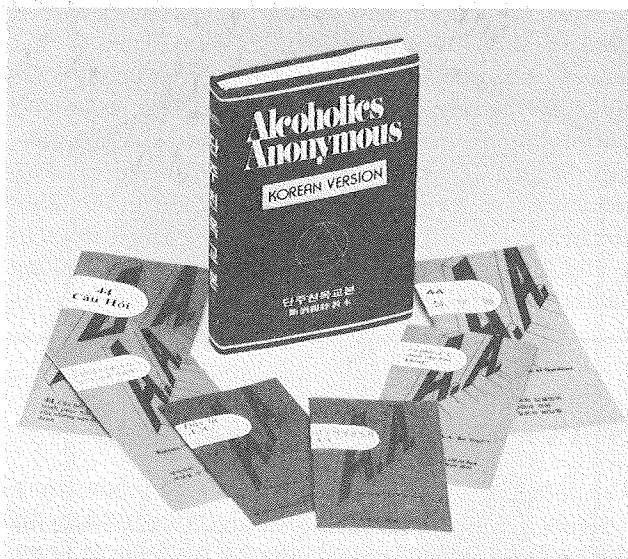
But word-of-mouth is not enough — as the founding members in America discovered 50 years ago. To carry the message to meaningful numbers, literature that they can read is needed — preferably the Big Book or, lacking that, some basic recovery pamphlets. And who is better fitted or more motivated to take the initiative than the new A.A.s in that country? A.A. World Services in the U.S. stands ready to assist with shared experience and even with financial assistance in getting the publishing under way. A.A.W.S. does not give money to the A.A. entity abroad; but it may, for example, pay for the printing of the Big Book in that country, retaining ownership of the inventory of books until the advance has been returned from income realized from the sale of the books. The translation is best done in the country involved, and then checked by A.A.W.S. for faithfulness to the original, before permission is given to go ahead.

In just this way, the Big Book has now been published in 14 languages besides English. A translation order form for these is available from G.S.O., listing: Afrikaans, Dutch, Finnish, Flemish, French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish. The latest, not yet on the order form, is Korean.

A number of countries also publish most or all of the other English-language A.A. literature in their native tongue; notably, Finland, Iceland, Italy, Mexico, Brazil, and French-speaking Quebec, Canada. In other countries, a less-than-full range of books and pamphlets have been translated.

Helen T., staff member on the overseas assignment, reports two other language breakthroughs in the last year or so. In Polish, a translation of *Living Sober* has been published, and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* is in the process, along with the pamphlet, "44 Questions." Several pamphlets have been published in Danish: "A Newcomer Asks," "Is A.A. for You?," "A.A. at a Glance" and "Now That You've Stopped" (a piece from Great Britain).

Even within the boundaries of the United States and Canada, A.A. literature in languages other than English



must be available. Our largest language constituencies, numbering many thousands, are our French-speaking and Spanish-speaking members. In fact, G.S.O. publishes virtually all A.A. material — both recovery and service — in the three languages. But there has been an influx of Asians to the West Coast and New York, so three basic recovery pamphlets — "This is A.A.," "Is A.A. for You?" and "44 Questions" — have been translated into Korean and Vietnamese, and may be purchased from G.S.O./New York.

This highlights the two forms in which the need for foreign-language literature presents itself: in overseas countries and for residents of the United States and Canada who speak only foreign languages. Where possible, we try to meet both needs simultaneously.

With the opening of Russia and China to tourist travel, a new element was introduced. The alcoholism problem in Russia has been widely publicized; the situation in China is less known. But the influx of visitors to those countries — including many sober members of A.A. — led to many inquiries at G.S.O. about the availability of A.A. literature.

When this was brought to the attention of the trustees' International Committee, the decision was eventually made by the General Service Board to translate and publish three basic recovery pamphlets in Russian and Chinese: "44 Questions," "Is A.A. for You?" and "A Newcomer Asks."

To make it possible for A.A. literature to carry the message in myriad languages, G.S.O. needs the help of a large corps of translators and/or translation-checkers. We prefer that they be A.A. members so that they have a "feel" for the A.A. program and the A.A. jargon; but we welcome non-A.A. assistance as well. So if you are proficient in one or more foreign languages (other than French or Spanish), or know someone who is, please let us know that you are willing to help. Just write to the Overseas Desk at G.S.O.

When Bill and Dr. Bob, in 1937, obtained permission from the 40 or so sober alcoholics who existed at that time, to write a book describing their program of recovery, they scarcely could have imagined the scope and complexity of A.A. literature needed to carry the message around the world in 1987. But it is up to us to carry forward the vision they had. And, like everything else in Alcoholics Anonymous, it is possible only through a Higher Power working through countless willing hands.

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## Service Offices Overseas

The phone rings at G.S.O. in New York. The young male voice on the other end says, "I'm a member of A.A. My company is posting me to Japan for a couple of years. I wondered if there would be any A.A. over there." We tell him he's in luck, Alcoholics Anonymous is growing in Japan, with well over 100 groups with upwards of 2,000 members, and a couple of dozen of the groups are English-speaking. We tell him there is a General Service Office in Tokyo and several intergroup offices — just like home! Furthermore, the G.S.O. over there publishes the Big Book and other A.A. literature in Japanese. We send him a free copy of the International Directory. He is flabbergasted — and tremendously relieved.

At the opening reception of the 1986 General Service Conference, a delegate shakes hands with a stranger and sees from his badge that he is Roberto C., an observer from A.A. in Italy. The delegate confesses with some surprise, "I didn't realize there was any A.A. among the Italians. I was in Rome about ten years ago and attended the Via Napoli English-speaking group, and that's really all there was, as I recall."

"You are right," replies Roberto, "but that was ten years ago. Now there are 140 groups in all parts of Italy, around 3,000 members I would guess. It's just exploding!" He rolls his eyes upward. "Our own General Service Conference begins a few days after I get home, and we have a service office in Rome and many central offices in other cities, and we publish all the A.A. literature in Italian. Eight years ago, there were just two groups," he muses. "Just two groups. Imagine!"

These two examples illustrate the way Alcoholics Anonymous has grown and developed in at least 31 countries around the world where general service offices exist. A.A. is found in another 83 countries besides — some of which have intergroup offices, some have only groups, and some simply have lone members.

Alcoholics Anonymous began spreading to other countries in the 1940s, not as the result of a decision of some faceless executive in a headquarters office, but rather by one concerned and caring alcoholic, sober in

A.A., reaching out to help a still-suffering alcoholic elsewhere in the world. In that decade, the message was carried by A.A. members in the armed services, both during World War II and in the occupation forces afterward. It was carried by travelers. It was carried by seamen — or "Internationalists" as they came to be called — and by members employed in overseas countries — the early "Loners." It was carried by the media, especially by a *Reader's Digest* article on A.A. which appeared in 1946. When it was printed in the foreign editions of the *Digest* it brought calls for help to the New York service office from as far away as South Africa and New Zealand.

This spread of A.A. around the world was deeply gratifying to co-founder Bill W. In May 1950, Bill and Lois went to Europe for the express purpose of visiting A.A. there: in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, France, England and Ireland. And by 1955, Bill was able to declare, at the St. Louis Convention, that "A.A. had established beachheads in seventy foreign lands." "Beachheads" was what they were, for almost none among them boasted any kind of service office at that time. In the ensuing years, however, the lone members carried the A.A. message to others and formed groups. As the groups multiplied, they felt the need to have the A.A. literature in their native languages, and to have some kind of rudimentary intergroup service office. Finally, as the groups grew both in number and in the geographical area they covered, they felt the need for a structure through which they could manage their own affairs, including a national service office.

Put more simply: publication of A.A. literature in the language of a country leads to growth; growth leads to the need for structure and service; a service structure and service office lead to more significant and sustained growth.

This pattern of development has now taken place in the following countries outside the U.S./Canada. In alphabetical order, they are: Argentina; Australia; Belgium; Brazil; Colombia; Costa Rica; El Salvador; Finland; France; Germany (West); Great Britain (England, Scotland, Wales); Guatemala; Honduras; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Mexico; Netherlands; New Zealand; Nicaragua; Norway; Paraguay; South Africa; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Trinidad/Tobago; Uruguay; Venezuela. In other places, which may not yet have a service structure or a general service office, there is often an intergroup or central office.

All these service offices are points of contact for the traveler. They are more likely than the individual group to understand and speak English, and to help the traveler find a meeting. The *International A.A. Directory*, available from G.S.O./New York to A.A. members only (75¢), lists the addresses and phone numbers of all service offices overseas and indicates whether or not they have English-language capability.

The countries listed above are invited to send two delegates each to attend a World Service Meeting held biannually (*see below*). In the interim years between WSMs, "zonal" service meetings are held in Europe and Latin America. To these meetings, any country where A.A. is present may send two delegates, regardless of whether or not a service structure exists. Countries where A.A. is more developed are encouraged to sponsor less developed countries. By thus helping service structures to be formed, the meetings lead to greater growth as the A.A. message is carried more effectively to still-suffering alcoholics.

Italy and Japan — and many other countries like them — were once the "newcomer" countries as far as Alcoholics Anonymous was concerned. Now A.A. is flourishing on their soil, and soon they will be helping the Fellowship grow, through service, in still other countries — just as the individual sponsor extends a helping hand to the new man or woman coming through the door.

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## Highlights of the IX World Service Meeting

Thirty-five delegates representing 27 countries from North and South America, Europe, Africa, the Far East and Down Under met together for five days (Oct. 19-23, 1986) in Guatemala for the Ninth World Service Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous held since 1969. Many countries have attended all nine WSMs; Japan was at its first. (See Aug./Sept. Box 4-5-9.) It was acclaimed a tremendous success.

Helen T., coordinator of the meeting, tells her view of why: "It epitomizes the Third Legacy of Service. Countries with greater experience are sharing that experience, strength and hope with countries in need of that sharing so they can better reach the still-suffering alcoholic. Individual delegates are eager to learn from each other. With that premise, the meeting is bound to go beautifully."

Helen H., the delegate representing U.S./Canada, emphasized the accomplishments of the committees in their deliberations and recommendations on subjects of importance to A.A.-as-a-whole. For example, the Literature/Publishing Committee recommended that countries which have not yet registered the A.A. logos, do so, and keep A.A.W.S. informed of their progress. Also, that it is preferable for groups to distribute only litera-



*One of two banners, used in the meeting rooms, which were individually designed, woven in beautiful colors and festooned with elaborate tasseled sashes. Two weavers undertook the task, which required three months to complete!*

ture published by A.A. entities, and that there is a need in the Fellowship for a daily reflections book. The Working With Others Committee shared many suggestions for carrying the message through public information work, such as poster displays at train stations and "cartoon strip" messages both in print and on TV; and successful techniques for working with professionals and doing institutional work in prisons. The committee recommended the importance of making clear to A.A. members that we take nothing "inside" but our A.A. message; nor do we take anything out. The remaining committees made important contributions to the functioning of the WSM itself and recommended significant subjects to be explored at the Tenth WSM, to be held in New York in October 1988.

The quality of the work done in the four standing committees of the WSM and in the whole assembly as well greatly impressed John B., general manager of G.S.O./New York who presided over the general sessions. Says John:

"The sharing of the countries and of the individuals representing those countries was of the highest order

of maturity. It is evident that A.A. has indeed come of age internationally.

"This is a unique service conference," he continues. "We have our service conference for the U.S. and Canada — and other countries have theirs. And there are European service conferences and Ibero-American service conferences. But the World Service Meeting is a service conference of Alcoholics Anonymous."

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## How Anonymous Can We Get?

Many of us protect our anonymity by using an initial only. Occasionally, someone raises the art of anonymity to new heights, as a letter written by a G.S.O. staff member shows:

"Dear Marty—I certainly hope this reaches you, as you did not include your last name (in your letter requesting pamphlets). You need never be reluctant to do this when corresponding with the General Service Office. If you will notice, our return address does not contain the initials 'A.A.' or the words 'Alcoholics Anonymous.' This is done to protect the anonymity of our membership. However, I am sure that an envelope addressed, as this is, to 'Marty S.' tends to arouse far more suspicion than one addressed to 'Marty Smith'—or whatever your last name may be."

P.S. The letter must have landed safely; it never came back. Could be the mailperson was a friend of Bill W.

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## The Oxford Group: Forerunner of A.A.

An airline pilot called it "a wonder drug that makes real human beings out of people." A newspaper man wrote "It's not an institution/It's not a point of view/It starts a revolution/By starting one in you."

They were talking about the Oxford Group, the chief forerunner of A.A. The founder or "initiator" as he called himself, was a tall, impeccably dressed man with a reserved manner and owl-like features; to many he appeared an improbable prophet.

Born in Pennsylvania in 1878, Frank Buchman started his career as a Lutheran minister. After a series of personal disappointments, he became a "changer of men" and launched the Oxford Group between 1916-

1920. The group established high ethical standards for its members and urged them to aspire to the four absolutes: absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love. These absolutes became the standard for evaluating individual progress.

Possibly the most important single feature of group life was the practice of confession or "sharing." The early days of the group's development were characterized by experiences in which members stood before audiences to tell about their failures.

Buchman gained access to the high society of his day and inspired a deep devotion among his followers, partly because of his remarkable ability with language. He would couch his message in folksy, easily understood metaphors: "If a man's got eye trouble, it's no use throwing eye medicine at him from a second story window" and "Don't put the hay so high a mule can't reach it."

By the 1930s the Oxford Group had attracted many alcoholics; and some stayed sober.

In the mid-1930s, Bill W. came in contact with the Oxford Group at the Calvary Episcopal Church in New York, which conducted a mission for alcoholics. On a business trip to Akron, he found himself struggling with his drinking urge and looked around for some other alcoholic who might be having similar difficulty. He met Dr. Bob who, coincidentally, also had been associated with the Oxford Group.

As these two men shared their experiences, they became aware of the value of spiritual principles, fellowship and a common bond, such as they had in their alcoholism. Moving from weakness to strength, they felt they could reach out to help others who were struggling with alcoholism, and so Alcoholics Anonymous was born.

Meanwhile, the Oxford Group had moved from small intimate groups to large gatherings. In 1938 it took the name Moral Rearmament (MRA), and increasingly worked with national and world assemblies. A number of the early followers withdrew from the movement, dissatisfied with the shift from individual emphasis to mass methods. Buchman's main theme at the time was, "World changing through life changing," and it led to his downfall.

Also in the mid-1930s, Buchman tried to meet Adolf Hitler, convinced that even he was not beyond the range of God's love and power to change. He was unsuccessful, but kept trying to reach the dictator through his followers. Consequently, he was branded pro-Nazi.

A.A.'s founders learned from the Oxford Group's rise and fall. It is not by chance that the Preamble reads in part: "A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes."

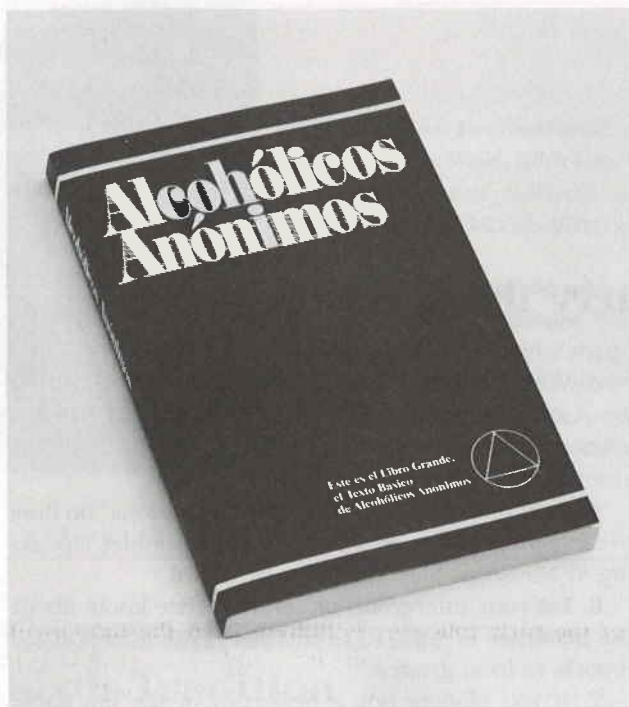
Another important distinction was anonymity. In the

early days, Buchman insisted on anonymity at the public level; later he became convinced that the use of one's name was a component of one's witness and could be used for winning others. Displaying a touch of Madison Avenue, he thought that testimonials could be used to market a satisfying life style, create teamwork in industry, and promote spirituality.

Yet, despite these differences Bill W. would never fail to acknowledge the profound influence of the Oxford Group in the rise of A.A. Speaking at the 20th anniversary meeting of the Fellowship, he said, ". . . the early Alcoholics Anonymous got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgment of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Group."

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## More Literature in Spanish



For the first time ever, the *Twelve Concepts and Service Manual* (*El Manual de Servicios de A.A. y Doce Conceptos para Servicio Mundial*), have been combined in one foreign-language volume—Spanish.

In *The Twelve Concepts*, Bill W.'s footnotes, from 1962 on, appear traditionally at the bottom of the pages; additional footnotes appear at the end of each chapter.

Also available is a newly revised Spanish version of the Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*. Based on the text of the Spanish edition published by A.A. World Services in 1964, the new version was carefully reviewed and emended to assure an accurate translation in a style accessible to all members of the Hispanic A.A. community. Both available from G.S.O., \$2.50 each.

## Tape Exchange Network Benefits the Blind

Many A.A.s—particularly those among us who are blind or visually impaired—don't know that the General Service Office maintains a list of members in the United States and Canada who have A.A. talks on tapes, cassettes and eight-tracks for exchange. Some are for sale.

Also available from G.S.O. is a listing of libraries, institutes and organizations that provide a wide selection of A.A. Conference-approved books, booklets and pamphlets on tape and in Braille. Some organizations charge a minimal fee, while others require the exchange of a blank tape in return. Libraries, of course, are free.

The Big Book (*Alcoholics Anonymous*) and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* are available in Braille at \$7.00 each, from G.S.O. Both titles, as well as *A.A. Comes of Age*, also come on tape cassettes, \$25.00 each. G.S.O. also carries a broad selection of audio cassettes including talks by A.A. co-founders Bill W. and Dr. Bob. And don't forget the A.A. *Grapevine's* popular cassettes of "classic" *Grapevine* articles. All have labels in Braille.

If there is a blind or visually-impaired person in your group won't you please share this information with them.

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## Record Crowd Enjoys G.S.O. Open House

A record crowd of 834 visitors trooped through the General Service Office and the A.A. *Grapevine* at the annual Open House on Saturday, November 15. They came by the bus-load from as far east as Boston and as far south as Washington, D.C., and from all the states between. One bus full of French-speaking members had come all the way from Montreal. There were even a respectable number from the city and the surrounding metropolitan area.

Many of them were "repeaters"; that is, they had attended previous open houses at G.S.O. And many of these are presently or were formerly active in A.A. service. "I enjoy coming every year," explained one past delegate, "to greet old friends and help out with the newer members from our area who have never been here before."

The enthusiasm of these "first-timers" was contagious. As they started down the row of staff offices, one was heard to say, "I've wanted to do this ever since I got sober three years ago." Others voiced similar sentiments: "It's so nice to fit faces to the names I've written

to.” “Thank you all for just being here!” And, “This is the high point of my A.A. life.”

One young man, meeting the staff members, was full of questions — but *uninformed* questions. “When did you come into A.A.?” he was asked. Replied he, “this is my second meeting.”

In addition to the G.S.O. and Grapevine staff, over 80 volunteers from the non-A.A. employees, members of the service boards and others helped handle the crowd. They staffed the information desk and the switchboard, acted as greeters and “traffic cops,” showed the A.A. films, picked and packed the A.A. literature ordered by the visitors. Dozens of them were tour guides, picking up groups of ten in the crowded lobby and escorting them on the entire 40-minute tour of all four floors — and then repeating the process.

Tours were offered in three languages: French, Spanish

and English. One tour guide was able to sign for the hearing impaired, and four visitors required this service.

Open House visitors were asked to come first to Norman Thomas High School, a short block from the office, where they registered and where coffee and rest rooms were available. They then proceeded to 468 Park Avenue South for their tours, which lasted from 9 a.m. to well after noon. Lunch, offered at a reasonable price by the S.E. New York Area Committee, was in the high school cafeteria. From 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. in the school auditorium, staff members briefly described their service assignments and an opportunity was given for questions.

The event was summed up, to one of the G.S.O. staff, by a nonalcoholic assistant who had never helped at an open house before. “The people were so interested and so nice,” she said. “It was just a joy!”

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## P.I. & C.P.C.

### Idea Starters: Other Ways to Carry the Message

It's been proven time and again. We A.A.s keep our sobriety by giving it away. One-to-one sharing with another alcoholic is our chief way of carrying the message, but many more opportunities abound. Here are some idea starters for P.I. and C.P.C. committees:

1. “Sponsor” your doctor, clergy, lawyer, family, friends, and perhaps your employer. Many thousands of A.A.s have been helped by nonalcoholics. Revealing your A.A. membership at the private level could save lives. You could start by sharing your story, taking the person(s) to an open meeting and offering help and A.A. literature. If you are contacting your doctor, say, he or she might be willing to share experiences at an A.A. public meeting or a medical seminar. With help from your P.I./C.P.C. committee, you perhaps could be instrumental in arranging a panel meeting, or a newspaper story, or a mailing to other doctors or outside agencies, including a quote from the doctor.

2. Explain P.I. and C.P.C. service work to your fellow A.A.s as another way to carry the message. Some members turn off when you say “service,” but are ready and willing when you mention “Twelfth Stepping.”

3. Ask an A.A. member to sit in on a P.I. or C.P.C. committee meeting.

4. When you qualify at a beginners meeting, bring up A.A.'s Three Legacies to plant a seed for service work. Or talk about the ways in which such work has strengthened your own sobriety.

5. Hold P.I. “seminars” or “training sessions” on how to carry the message outside A.A. The pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” can be useful.

6. Let your intergroup or central office know about the activities of your P.I. and C.P.C. committees. Give reports to local groups.

7. If you plan to buy a new copy of the Big Book, why not donate your old copy to the local library? Some A.A. groups raffle off Big Books and *Grapevine* subscriptions, asking that old copies be donated to institutions and correctional facilities.

8. Directly “sponsor” your hospital, church, school, library or other institution with A.A. pamphlets, books and *Grapevines*. One committee left literature in the local town hall; another, at the police station. Remember to check with a key person at the facility or organization before leaving literature, and keep an inventory check once it is placed. You also might ask whether any direct inquiries about A.A. have resulted from your efforts.



9. In some areas, D.C.M.s and G.S.R.s distribute forms to the groups. These forms might carry a short, descriptive paragraph telling what is involved in P.I. and C.P.C. work. Members wishing to participate fill out the forms, and a confidential master list is then compiled.

10. Once you have contacted or "sponsored" an individual, organization or facility, and they are interested, don't stop! Keep the lines of communication open and going.



***"If You Are a Professional... A.A. Wants to Work With You"*** has been revised following a 1985 General Service Conference Advisory Action.

*The revised pamphlet, which contains new information on referrals from courts and treatment centers, now has a bright red cover in heavier stock, and is available from G.S.O., 15¢.*

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## Cooperation and the Sixth Tradition

Some months ago, Missouri A.A. Jim P. opened his newspaper and was unhappy with what he saw: an article announcing that a local treatment facility would be hosting "a homecoming and A.A. meeting for all former clients."

As treatment facilities proliferate, such events, with attendant publicity, become more commonplace. However, experience has shown that there is an appropriate and constructive A.A. response: Gather together a few solid, level-headed members and discuss the problem with administrators at your local facilities. Help them to understand A.A.'s Sixth Tradition of cooperation but not affiliation and how it applies to our relationship

with them. Just opening up lines of communication can work wonders.

When the going gets tough, it is good to remember that the concepts defined in the Sixth Tradition are not always easy even for A.A.s to understand. As one member put it, "Please delineate the difference between cooperation and affiliation—or, explain the distinguishing characteristics of quantum physics. Whichever is easier."

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## Sometimes We Are Who We Aren't

Because P.I. committee work often puts A.A.s in the public eye, members try to keep the anonymity tradition firmly in mind. How well it works in all our affairs is illustrated by the following scenario:

After speaking at an A.A. meeting one evening, a P.I. committee member was stopped by a woman who said, "Because of you, I am in A.A. and I've wanted to thank you although I didn't know your name."

The speaker did not recognize her and asked how he was responsible. "You spoke at my son's high school five years ago with two other members," she replied. "About a year later, when I was in trouble with drinking and needed help, my son said he knew what to do. He called A.A. and I've been sober ever since."

The speaker began to feel very good. "What school was this?" he inquired. "Exactly what year?" The woman named the school and the year. The speaker realized he had not lived in that part of the country at the time.

"On my way home," he remembers, "I grinned. I had just learned something very valuable about humility and 'principles before personalities.' It was an exciting step forward in my own understanding of anonymity. Credit is not what we're after in P.I. work or any other twelfth-stepping, is it? We're after spiritual growth in our sobriety."

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## Correctional Facilities

### Back to Basic Truths

When Jack R.'s "unofficial sponsor" invited him to carry the message to inmates at Ionia, Michigan, he was less than pleased. Writing in the Lansing Central Office

newsletter, he explains, "I'm not a volunteer. But, when I started to believe that A.A. was helping me to stay sober, I decided to accept any and all invitations to do service work."

His first visit to Ionia found Jack "sitting in a room with about 30 inmates and scared stiff. It was my first experience behind bars and I knew they would use that against me, which they did. How could I possibly understand their problems if I had never been in prison?"

Suddenly, Jack says, he realized he was there "to talk about how I stay sober, one day at a time, not about crimes and incarceration." While individual experiences may vary, he observes, "life is life and presents every one of us with both good and bad times. As alcoholics recovering in A.A., our first priority is to stay sober. That's a basic truth whether we are at home or in jail."

Today Jack carries the message to the inmates at Ionia every other Monday night, driving an extra 20 to 30 miles to do it. "I accept every invitation to share my experience, strength and hope with those fellows," he reports. "But I still won't volunteer!"

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## One State's Approach To Contact Sponsorship

The Mississippi Area Institutions Committee has developed comprehensive guidelines for its temporary contact sponsorship program. Some main points:

- Temporary contact is offered to all inmates who have been active in an A.A. group and/or the state's alcohol and drug program.

- A temporary contact will assist the ex-offender in matters relative to his or her alcohol problem and in getting established in a "free world" A.A. group. (The contact will not be responsible for securing employment or residence or providing any other such service for the ex-offender.)

- At least once a month, the correctional facility's A.A. group sponsor will ask those members desiring temporary contact to identify themselves. Those who do desire a temporary contact will be identified by placing an asterisk beside their names on the roster. The area institutions committee chairperson will be responsible for securing a contact for each inmate after receiving the needed information, and will provide the inmate with the name and phone number of a temporary contact before he or she leaves the institution.

In the spirit of cooperation, the state alcohol and drug department has given the area institutions committee chairperson access to its phones as well as mail privileges to be used for the purpose of communicating with correctional facility groups and potential temporary contacts.

## Treatment Facilities

### How to Smooth The Way For Newcomers

"We have more newcomers than we can handle" . . . "Our meetings are being disrupted" . . . "What do we do about all the nonalcoholic drug addicts?" . . . These are some of the group problems caused by the influx of newcomers told by treatment facilities to "go to A.A."

"As with most issues in A.A., there are no surefire solutions," says Maureen C., staff member on the Treatment Facilities assignment. "One thing we can do is to communicate with the treatment facilities that are sending us their patients. It is vital to the future of the suffering alcoholics in those facilities. Our shared experience shows that continuing dialogue between A.A.s who carry the message 'inside' and the treatment facilities themselves can stop problems before they start."

It is helpful, some A.A.s have found, to have small groups of A.A.s — such as the chairperson of the treatment facilities committee, the D.C.M., the delegate and a few members from groups affected by the problem — form a committee to contact the facilities and set up meetings with them. The Treatment Facilities Workbook offers guidelines on how to approach the facilities.

Many groups, after talking with their local treatment facilities, have found practical solutions to some pressing problems. Where there are too many newcomers for one group to handle, some are taking meetings into the facilities. Others divide the patients among neighboring groups so that no one group bears all the responsibility. And a number of groups have introduced beginners meetings to accommodate the patients. Another possibility is to introduce the patients to regular meetings gradually, as they progress in treatment.

In those instances where facilities send nonalcoholic, drug-addicted patients to meetings, it helps to contact Narcotics Anonymous; suggest that representatives from both A.A. and N.A. approach facility administrators together to explain what each fellowship does and does not do. The World Services Office of N.A. is at 16155 Wyandotte Street, Van Nuys, California 91406.

Finding solutions to these issues will take time. Any shared experience you, or your group, have had would be welcomed by Box 4-5-9. Meanwhile, it may help to remember that many of us got here under pressure from one source or another. Perhaps the greatest thing we can do is make sure the Fellowship is as available to other alcoholics as it was for us — no matter where they come from or how they get here.

## Calendar of Events

### February

- 5-8 — *Pine Mountain, Georgia*. 17th Pine Mountain Fellowship Weekend. Write: Ch., Box 617, Pine Mountain, GA 31822
- 6-8 — *Canterbury, New Zealand*. 24th National Conv. Write: Sec. Conv. '87, Box 2062, Christchurch, New Zealand
- 6-8 — *Mission, Kansas*. Sunflower Roundup. Write: Box 1281, Mission, KS 66222
- 6-8 — *Little Rock, Arkansas*. Fifth Annual Winter Holiday Conv. Write: Box 55269, Little Rock, AR 72205
- 6-8 — *Whitney, Texas*. 42nd Quarterly TCYPAA. Write: Sec., 611-8 Laramie I.H., Granbury, TX 76048
- 6-8 — *Ocean City, Maryland*. Sixth Annual Sea Side Winter Conf. Write: Ch., Box 793, Ocean City, MD 21842
- 6-8 — *Universal City, California*. 12th San Fernando Valley Conv. Write: Ch., Box 2268, Toluca Lake, CA 91602
- 12-15 — *Albuquerque, New Mexico*. 23rd National Women's Conf. Write: Box 11432, Sta. E., Albuquerque, NM 87192
- 12-15 — *St. Petersburg, Florida*. Third Annual Mid-Winter Big Book Seminar. Write: Box 1682, St. Petersburg, FL 33731
- 13-15 — *Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada*. Sixth Heritage Weekend. Write: Ch., Box 322, Elliot Lake, Ont. P5A 2J8
- 13-15 — *El Paso, Texas*. 25th Annual Jamboree. Write: Sec., Box 1405, El Paso, TX 79948
- 13-15 — *Greeley, Colorado*. 36th Annual Stampede. Write: Box 595, Greeley, CO 80632
- 13-15 — *Bellevue, Washington*. 13th Annual Winter Holidays. Write: Ch., Box 3791, Bellevue, WA 98004
- 13-15 — *Camrose, Alberta, Canada*. Seventh Valentine Roundup. Write: Ch., 4610 61st St., Camrose, Alta. T4V 2H7
- 13-16 — *Miami Beach, Florida*. Fourth Annual Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 381274, Miami Beach, FL 33238
- 20-22 — *Memphis, Tennessee*. Conf. of Young People. Write: Ch., 1625 Monroe, Apt. 3, Memphis, TN 38104
- 20-22 — *Green Valley, Arizona*. Area Assy. and Sharing Session. Write: Ch., Box 331, Green Valley, AZ 85622
- 20-22 — *Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada*. 20th Annual Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 8878, Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 6S7
- 20-22 — *San Jose, California*. Second Annual Sober and Free Conference (hosted by gays and lesbians). Write: Ch., 45 N. First St., Box 8100, San Jose, CA 95103
- 20-22 — *Ashland, Oregon*. Service Assy. Write: Dist. 16, Box 4751, Medford, OR 97501

- 20-22 — *Eufaula, Oklahoma*. Tenth Annual Four State Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 2146, Joplin, MO 64803
- 25-Mar. 1 — *St. Simons Island, Georgia*. 25th St. Simons Weekend. Write: Ch., Box 892, Statesboro, GA 30458
- 27-Mar. 1 — *Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada*. 18th Annual Rally. Write: Ch., 408-3108 Baron's Rd., Nanaimo, B.C. V9T 4B6
- 27-Mar. 1 — *Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada*. Ninth Annual Mid-Winter Roundup. Write: Ch., 137 Prince Albert Rd., Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 1M5
- 27-Mar. 1 — *Montgomery, Alabama*. 43rd Anniversary & Sixth Heart of Dixie Roundup. Write: Ch., 2302 McCarter, Montgomery, AL 36107
- 27-Mar. 1 — *Dayton, Ohio*. SW Ohio Mini Conf. Write: Ch., Box 42501, Cincinnati, OH 45242-501
- 27-Mar. 1 — *Toronto, Ontario, Canada*. 37th Annual Regional Conf. Write: Ch., Inter-group, 272 Eglinton Ave. West, Toronto, Ont. M4R 1B2
- 28 — *New York, New York*. Manhattan Share-A-Day. Write: Box 6990, FDR Station, New York, NY 10150

### March

- 6-8 — *Sioux Falls, South Dakota*. Sioux Falls Conf. Write: Ch., Box 386, Beresford, SD 57004
- 6-8 — *Eau Claire, Wisconsin*. 28th Annual Banquet. Write: Ch., Box 292, Eau Claire, WI 54702-0292
- 6-8 — *Sacramento, California*. Pacific Region Service Assy. Write: Ch., Box 163387, Sacramento, CA 95816

## 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 10*. 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.

## Closed Meeting Topics From the Grapevine

For more detailed suggestions, see the pages noted.

*February* (page 33): A.A. unity; attraction; "rules without reason."

*March* (page 17): Personal anonymity; Tradition Two; miracles; compulsion.

6-8 — *New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada*. First Western Reg. Serv. Assy. Write: Ch., 1529 Dogwood Av., Comox, B.C. V9N 5W9

13-15 — *Las Vegas, Nevada*. Young People's Roundup. Write: Box 60657, Las Vegas, NV 89160

13-15 — *Rapid City, South Dakota*. Third Annual Rushmore Roundup. Write: Box 5086, Rapid City, SD 57709

13-15 — *Springfield, Illinois*. State Conf. for Young People. Write: ISCYPAA, Box 5877, Springfield, IL 62705

13-15 — *New Orleans, Louisiana*. Big Deep South Conv. Write: Central Office, Tulane Ave., #301, New Orleans, LA 70119

14-15 — *Kenosha, Wisconsin*. Mini-Conf. Write: Treas., 5626 44th Ave., Kenosha, WI 53142

19-22 — *Greenville, South Carolina*. 40th State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 6063, Greenville, SC 29606

20-22 — *Victorville, California*. Third Annual "Sunlight of the Spirit" Conv. Write: Ch., Box 3701, Hesperia, CA 92345

20-22 — *Providence, Rhode Island*. 11th State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 9342, Providence, RI 02940

20-22 — *Corpus Christi, Texas*. 33rd Coastal Bend Jamboree. Write: Ch., Box 3204, Corpus Christi, TX 78415

27-29 — *Columbus, Georgia*. Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 12041, Columbus, GA 31907

27-29 — *Painesville, Ohio*. NE State Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 43225, Richmond Heights, OH 44143-0225

### April

3-5 — *Lockport, New York*. Western N.Y. Spring Conv. Write: Ch., 70 Niagara St., Lockport, NY 14094

April (continued)

- 6-8 — 3-5 — *San Antonio, Texas*. 42nd State Anniv. Write: Ch., Box 16845, San Antonio, TX 78216
- 3-5 — *Gulf Shores, Alabama*. Third Annual Jubilee. Write: Ch., Box 1183, Foley, AL 36536
- 3-5 — *Marshall, Minnesota*. 14th Annual Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 451, Marshall, MN 56258
- 3-5 — *Victoria, British Columbia, Canada*. 36th Annual Rally. Write: Ch., 2020 Douglas St., #8, Victoria, B.C. V8T 4L1

- 9-12 — *Ocean City, Maryland*. Mid-Atlantic Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 185, Joppa, MD 21085
- 10-12 — *Ocean City, New Jersey*. 23rd Annual Southern N.J. Conv. Write: Ch., Box 493, Marlton, NJ 08053
- 10-12 — *Kaiser Slautern, Germany*. Ninth Annual Dist. 1 Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 81, APO, New York, NY 09021
- 10-12 — *Moline, Illinois*. Northern Ill. Area Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 353, Moline, IL 61265

- 17-19 — *Reno, Nevada*. 16th Annual Spring Festival. Write: Ch., Box 72, Reno, NV 89504
- 24-26 — *Banff, Alberta, Canada*. 14th Annual Roundup. Write: Comm., Box 6744, Station D, Calgary, Alta. T2P 2E6
- 24-26 — *El Segundo, California*. Sixth Annual H & I Conf. Write: Ch., Box 3003, El Segundo, CA 90245-8103
- 24-26 — *Metuchen, New Jersey*. Garden State Young People's Conf. Write: Sec., Box 4108, Metuchen, NJ 08840