



AA EXCHANGE BULLETIN

NEWS AND NOTES ON ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WORLDWIDE

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HISTORIC MEETING PLACE



Twenty-six years ago this month Dr. Bob and Bill met for the first time in the gatehouse on the Seiberling Estate in Akron, Ohio. The story of this historic meeting is told in the book, "A.A. Comes of Age", which is a brief history of AA, available from GSO. The picture reprinted above is one of the many illustrations in the book.

"CONFERENCE DIGEST - 1961", a 4-page bulletin reporting on the General Service Conference is included with this A.A. Exchange Bulletin. Additional copies can be ordered from GSO at 5¢ each.

INFORMATION PLEASE!

Eve, who handles GSO services to groups in prisons and hospitals, is planning to make a survey of Institutional Committees in June. These committees provide speakers, literature and sponsorship for groups in prisons and hospitals. The survey will gather information on how Institutional Committees operate. This information will then be available to anyone who wishes to get such a committee established. Eve, of course, would like to have all Institutional Committees answer the questionnaire. If you are active in this particular type of sponsorship, will you please check and make certain that GSO has the name and address of your Institutional Committee.

ARMED FORCES GROUPS AND LONERS - ATTENTION!

We've just discovered a proofing error in the list of "Armed Forces Groups and Loners", recently revised and mailed to our AA contacts on Armed Forces bases around the world. Will those of you who received this list please change the location of Pyongtaek, Japan, to Pyongtaek, Korea.

This list is available at GSO to AA's in the Armed Forces, as is special mimeographed material, "Suggestions for Groups in the Armed Forces", which is based on information received from active A.F. groups.

DEDUCTIBLE

Last month, an AA friend in Raleigh, North Carolina sent us the following clipping from a local newspaper:

"Contributions to Alcoholics Anonymous are now deductible on North Carolina income tax forms. The State Senate Monday night passed into law a bill granting the deduction."

This spring, more than ever before, we've been asked whether donations to AA are exempt from Federal and State income tax. We don't know how many other states besides N. C. have granted deduction on state income tax forms. That information can be obtained locally.

Donations to GSO in support of AA world services are exempt from Federal income tax. However, the status of individual AA groups across the country is mixed. In some cities exemption has been obtained, while in others it has not. And there is no provision in the law which allows the General Service Board to make application for a blanket exemption for all Groups. Each group must seek exemption from the Commissioner of Internal Revenue. It is our understanding that if exemption has been granted to one group by a Regional Office that it applies to all the groups in the area.

FROM LONER TO GROUP

From a small town in Vermont comes this letter from a Loner telling how his status changed from Loner to group member.

"A few months ago I subscribed to the A. A. Grapevine and decided that, after I had read each issue, I would put it in the magazine rack at our local public library. Less than a month ago I stopped in at the library and the librarian asked me to talk with her a few minutes. She told me that her brother wanted help with his alcoholic problem. (He and I used to drink together once in a while here in town.) So I saw him two nights later and he is now sober, happy and enthusiastic. It was taking the Grapevine to the library that made it possible for this woman to know I was in AA. This library idea scores number one with me.

"In the meantime, another AA member moved to town. As a result, we had the first meeting of a new group here last Friday night. Five alcoholics were there -- the librarian's brother included. He is secretary, another that I worked with is treasurer and the prospects look good.

"Our local library does not have a copy of the big AA book so I ordered two last week. One for the new group and one for the library. I am giving it in memory of one of the best friends I had in AA who died last December.

"The association with your office has been a tremendous help to me since I signed up last July. I get a lot of help and inspiration from your 'Loners Meeting' bulletin."

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FROM THE A. A. GRAPEVINE - The Grapevine Group Sponsorship Plan is catching on. (With the plan, a group selects one individual each month and presents him with a GV subscription.) Ninety-two groups are now participating and have sent subscriptions to 124 brand new GV readers. The General Service Conference last month adopted the plan for its chief GV activity for 1961. The Delegates and GV-Staff hope that all groups will seriously consider this new way of carrying the message.

Starting with the May issue, the Grapevine's mailing wrapper will be wider and made of heavier paper. The title of the magazine will now be permanently centered on the cover. These changes have been made to prevent accidental disclosure of the GV title with possible embarrassment to the subscriber. However, if desired, a Grapevine subscription can be mailed first class in a sealed envelope for \$1.50 extra per year.

The June Grapevine will feature the second article of Bill W.'s new series, "in all our affairs." Its title is "Humility."

1961 WORLD DIRECTORY

The 1961 World Directory has been sent to all groups listed at GSO. It was mailed third class and may not have reached your group yet. However, it will be delivered soon.

We have tried to make the Directory as accurate as possible. If you find any listings that are incorrect or know of any omissions, please let Beth know.

This year, the two membership maps are printed on the inside front and back covers of the Directory. One map lists the number of groups and total AA population in each state and each Canadian province. The other map lists the information for all countries where AA is established. Separate copies of these maps for display may be obtained from GSO at 25¢ each. Additional copies of the Directory may be ordered by Group Officers at \$1.75 per copy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON AA

A new folder for Public Information use is available from GSO upon request. Titled, "Background Information on the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous", it was prepared for use in connection with AA's 25th Anniversary, last year. The folder was designed to answer those questions about the Fellowship that are most frequently asked by writers, editors and broadcasters. It is also recommended to others who may desire accurate information about A. A.

AA PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Last year, local AA Public Information Committees were invited to share their experience with GSO, in order that we might have an overall picture of AA's public information activities. Today, more than 50 local P. I. Committees are listed with GSO. They receive special bulletins and material from the General Service Board's P. I. Committee, as well as the monthly Exchange Bulletin.

Some AA's may wonder: Why do we need a P. I. Committee? The answer seems to be that it fills a need - particularly where AA has grown. Usually, when a group gets started, the pioneer members take care of requests from local church groups, doctors, judges and others in the community who are interested in alcoholics and want information about AA. As the group grows and neighboring groups are started, a committee to handle these activities gives local AA members greater representation and voice in their public information service.

Our exchange of information suggests that AA members with professional experience in communications media and public relations, as well as those with AA service experience, can be useful on a P. I. Committee. Their term of service allows for rotation, in keeping with AA custom. And the committee is always directly responsible to the group or groups it serves.

Last month, the 1961 General Service Conference reaffirmed AA's movement-wide Public Information policy which states:

"In all public relationships, AA's sole objective is to help the still-suffering alcoholic. Always mindful of the importance of personal anonymity, we believe this can be done by making known to him and to those who may be interested in his problem our own experience as individuals and as a Fellowship in learning to live without alcohol. We believe that our experience should be made available freely to all who express sincere interest. We believe further that all our efforts in this field should reflect our gratitude for the gift of sobriety and our awareness that many outside AA are equally concerned with the serious problem of alcoholism."

AA IN FRANCE

Although AA principles are the same everywhere, alcoholics in non-English speaking countries have had their difficulties. It is very hard for them to understand how the program works by hearing, or reading about, AA in English. Nationals of every country need to get the AA message in their own language, apparently, before they can catch fire and become a group.

This was especially true in Paris where, for more than ten years, a small English-speaking group had been trying to carry the message to Frenchmen without much success.

Then in 1959 Joseph Kessel, a well-known French newspaperman and novelist, became interested in AA through the recovery of a friend. During a trip to New York M. Kessel visited GSO to find out about AA at first hand. Bill W. and several Staff members and Trustees took him "inside AA". They arranged for him to visit the large metropolitan groups, one or two small-town groups, and a group in a prison and a hospital.

M. Kessel returned to France and wrote a series of twenty articles about AA which were published last July in France Soir, one of the leading French dailies. He thus became the courier of the AA message to Frenchmen as Jack Alexander had been to Americans in 1941 with his historic article in The Saturday Evening Post.

Letters began pouring into France Soir. The English speaking group in Paris was deluged with inquiries in French and a bilingual secretary was employed to handle the correspondence. Frenchmen began talking AA to each other and the French Group came alive. GSO was able to furnish French translations of AA literature with the help of the Montreal AA Central Office and the AA General Service Committee of Quebec.

Today the French Group in Paris has more than sixty members. Jacques B., the group secretary, has now been sober and active for nine months. He wrote recently: "The Paris Group is still growing. We plan to add another meeting, bringing us up to three a week. Around the country we have quite a few Loners and we shall keep in touch with them now through regular bulletins, replacing the handwritten letters we have been writing. We have already had a couple of radio broadcasts over the French National Network. In one of them four of our members spoke of their AA experience. In time we hope to start other groups. That is in the future. Many thanks to AA which has given me and all our friends in Paris the 'joie de vivre'."

FRENCH TRANSLATIONS FROM QUEBEC

These French translations of AA literature can be ordered from
 Quebec Provincial General Service Committee
 P. O. Box 1777, Station B, Montreal 2, P. Q., Canada

ALCOOLIKES ANONYMES (Abrégé du "Big Book")	L'EPOUSE ALCOOLIQUE
LES DOUZE ETAPES	L'EPOUX ALCOOLIQUE
LES DOUZE TRADITIONS	INTRODUCTION a AA
PARTENAIRES DANS AA	LES 20 QUESTIONS
44 QUESTIONS ET REponses	LES TROIS HERITAGES
ARTICLE DE LA REVUE "FORTUNE"	Q. et R. SUR LE PARRAINAGE
	REFLEXIONS SUR LES ETAPES (John P.)

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* CONTRIBUTIONS TO GSO from SPECIAL AA MEETINGS and AA COMMITTEES *
3/15/61 - 4/15/61

*		*
Massachusetts	Eastern Mass. General Service Committee	\$ 50.00
* Michigan	Central Michigan Intra Area Council	100.00 *
Oregon	1st Annual S. W. Oregon Winter Conference, in Coos Bay	42.36 *
* Quebec	Intergroup Association of Montreal	50.00
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Received 12-28-60

*	Oklahoma	*
	Joint Christmas Meeting of AA groups in Tulsa	\$ 54.00
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