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REGIONAL TRUSTEES

(continued from p. 1)

A.A. Fellowship as a whole, not just one geographic portion of it. They do not "represent" their regions in any sectional sense.

Electoral procedure is detailed in "The A.A. Service Manual," and letters announcing the election have gone to these assemblies, which will name candidates:

East Central U.S. (to succeed Jack M., Kalamazoo, Mich.): Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin
Pacific U.S. (to succeed George G., Phoenix, Ariz.): Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington
Southeast U.S. (to succeed Tom M., Pulaski, Tenn.): Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia

East Canada (to succeed Robert R., Hull, Que.): Labrador, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec

The G.S. Board has 14 alcoholic and seven nonalcoholic members. Of the former, six are general service trustees, who bring to the Fellowship special business or professional skills or other special qualifications.

Because four of the six are also on the service-corporation boards (A.A.W.S. and Grapevine), these four come from within the New York commuting area — so they can be available monthly, weekly, or even daily when needed. As for the remaining two, one may be elected from anywhere in the U.S.;

the other, from anywhere in Canada.

The eight regional A.A. trustees are selected at "staggered" intervals from their designated areas. They are expected to bring to their work at least ten years of continuous sobriety, as well as resoluteness and availability. Every year, the job takes at least one full week (the Conference) and three long weekends.

Like the other alcoholic board members, regional trustees are expected to demonstrate a thorough grasp of A.A. structure, history, and Traditions, and to provide A.A. leadership, according to Conference suggestions which are based on long A.A. experience.

The qualifications desired are discussed thoroughly in "The A.A. Service Manual."

'MOTHER HAS A HABBIT . . .'

"Dear Sirs," starts a handwritten letter to us from a boy in the Southwest U.S. "Me and my younger brother have a problem on our hands that we just can't stop. Our mother has a habit of drinking a lot of beer and sometimes wine or whiskey while we are at school.

"We do not like for this to happen, and Brother feels very hurt when she does. We warn her of having a wreck in the car, but she pays no attention. She works four times a week at night 20 miles from here. Is there any information you could send us that we could get across to her?"

"P.S. Could you tell me how to get a person sober? Thanks again."

NO ANSWERS, PLEASE

"I'm marrying the director of the local N.C.A. branch, so my name should be changed," happily writes a Colorado member with her change-of-address notice. "After all, didn't Bill say, 'Let's be friendly with our friends'?"

"But," she asks, "how do you suppose I'm to manage cooperation without affiliation?"

G.S.O. STAFF MEMBERS' TRIPS

Trips to area A.A. get-togethers are about the most enjoyable part of a G.S.O. staff job. Not only do we have a good time, but these trips are also important ways of keeping G.S.O. in touch with A.A. everywhere. Nothing matches talking face-to-face with A.A. members as a communications method.

But these excursions can be costly, too—not in money, of course, since expenses are paid by host committees, not G.S.O.

What can hurt is too much time away from our G.S.O. desks. For example, a Thursday-through-Sunday trip means almost half a week's work is piling up to await our return.

So please understand when we have to decline invitations for much more than Friday to Sunday. We'd love to visit you longer, but our responsibilities at G.S.O. can't be neglected for too many days.

Thanks for your consideration.

With love,
The G.S.O. staff

FROM THE ASK-IT BASKET

Q. (from the floor at the 1973 Conference): What about the demise of Gratitude Month, without benefit of obituary?

A. Canadian Thanksgiving is in October; U.S., in November. Therefore, one specific month wouldn't suit all. Many areas still have gratitude functions — the time chosen is up to local A.A.'s.

(For instance — see page 4.)

NEW CONFERENCE PLANNING GROUP STARTED

A new "Conference Committee" has been formed by the Trustees' Policy Committee, of which the new group is actually a subcommittee. It will meet with the Conference Agenda/Admissions Committee during the Conference. Beforehand, it will also help G.S.O. in planning the Conference, working on agenda and theme suggestions.

'Warm Voices of Hope' Help a Newcomer Stay Sober

A sobriety-saving use of A.A. pamphlets and a good question about them have come to us in recent letters.

"In my first shaky steps toward sobriety," writes M.P. of New York City, "I would have dreaded coming home, alone, after the meeting—back to the room where drink had always seemed a solace.

"But the hand that might have reached for a glass was holding A.A. leaflets someone had put there. So I found I had brought sober friends home—clear, warm voices of hope, like those at the meeting."

That's precisely what A.A. pamphlets are mainly for, of course—to help us recover. They simply use paper and ink to carry the message, in a handy form, when no other member is nearby.

They also bring us the experience of thousands of faraway members whom we'll never meet. In fact, that's one major difference between "Conference-approved" A.A. material and the outside publications seen on some groups' literature tables.

Dave H., Las Vegas, Nevada, raised this question: "What about the use of non-Conference-approved literature in A.A.? People are constantly trying to read other books and pamphlets. I have nothing against these, but I don't feel supplying them should be part of the A.A. group's services—particularly when group money is used to buy them."

Ever since Bill W. read William James's "Varieties of Religious Experience," A.A. members have been receiving help from literature that came from non-A.A. sources, of course. The Fellowship probably will never oppose members' getting help by reading anything they choose.

But the A.A. General Service Board—specifically, its publishing unit, A.A.W.S.—has the responsibility of seeing that whatever book or pamphlet bears the following symbol and legend is undeniably good A.A., representing the broadest possible consensus of A.A. thinking.



This is A.A.

General Service Conference-approved literature

That is why every single piece of A.A.W.S.-published material is literally months (sometimes years) in the making. Here's the process, highly condensed.

First, the idea is considered by the Trustees' Literature Committee, and approved by the board and Conference. Then an A.A. who is a professional writer does a first draft, which the G.S.O. staff scrutinizes minutely. A revised version is then reviewed by the staff and

by the appropriate board and Conference committees—usually Literature, but not always. For instance, "Understanding Anonymity" was a Public Information project.

Sometimes, a new writer is assigned, and the whole thing starts afresh before the manuscript is ready for consideration by the Conference. Minority opinions get special attention, so that, as far as humanly possible, the finished piece will be of the widest possible benefit to the largest number of alcoholics. Only then is the piece ready to go to the Conference for the final approval indicated by the seal and legend.

Certainly, there are good local A.A. publications and religious or scientific materials that are popular with one particular geographic region or segment of the A.A. population. Some of these have been considered for Conference approval, but rejected because their appeal was too specialized or they might have embroiled A.A. in undesirable affiliations or public controversy. Nevertheless, many A.A.'s find them helpful, so who would "oppose" their availability?

But it has been strongly suggested at the Conference that whenever A.A. literature is displayed, the non-Conference-approved material *always* be clearly separated from the pieces with the Conference seal. That way, folks can know what they're getting and where it came from.

MEET BOB M., NEW TRUSTEE

Welcome aboard to Robert M., Pine Meadow Group, Pleasant Valley, Conn., our newest general service trustee.

Bob got sober on joining the West Middle Group, Hartford, in 1949, and has been group secretary, G.S.R., state G.S. committee member, Conference delegate (Panel 9), and, since 1970, A.A.W.S. director. He is secretary of an A.A.

group in a psychiatric hospital.

Bob has been an alcoholism counselor for courts, director of a local alcoholism council, and president of High Watch, a rehabilitation farm in Kent, Conn.

He is the new chairman of the G.S. Board's Professional Relations Committee and a member of the Finance and Policy Committees.

Bob's quiet humor and consideration won him many friends around G.S.O. long ago. We hope

you may some time share them, too.

1973 CONFERENCE REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

The complete 1973 *General Service Conference Report* is now available to A.A. members. It contains all official Conference proceedings, reports, rosters, financial statements, etc. Price: \$1.75.

NEW A.A.W.S. DIRECTORS

Chris A. (Ovington Group, Brooklyn) and Martin L. (Lenox Hill Group, Manhattan) are new members of the board of A.A. World Services, Inc. A.A.W.S. is the General Service Board's "business arm," responsible for operating G.S.O. and our publishing activities.

Chris was in the steamship field for over 35 years. Sober since 1946, he attended his first A.A. meeting in New York's old 41st Street clubhouse, then joined the Bay Ridge Group, near his home. He helped start the Ovington Group and has been "trusted servant" in all its offices.

He has also seen service on the New York Intergroup Steering Committee, and was a Conference delegate on Panel 4 (the famous St. Louis one — see "A.A. Comes of Age").

Martin is the president of a well-known Wall Street brokerage firm and is also a director of an insurance company, so he brings to the board special management and administrative skills.

Sober over seven years, Martin has served the Lenox Hill Group as treasurer and chairman and currently chairs its steering committee. He, too, was on the New York Intergroup Steering Committee, and later served as the intergroup's president.

How grateful we can all be that members like Chris and Martin devote so much time, energy, and A.A. spirit to A.A.'s world affairs.

CONTAGIOUS IDEAS

'Penny a Day for Sobriety'

"A 'penny a day' canister has been set up at meetings as a reminder that G.S.O. does have expenses. It has added \$25 to our monthly contribution." — *Lou P., Glenwood Group, Southgate, Mich.*

"We mailed \$30 this year, \$3 per member. But learning of 'penny a day,' we unanimously voted to send the \$6.50 balance. World ser-

vice work is vitally important, and we wish to see it continue." — *Allen L., Naugatuck Valley Group, Waterbury, Conn.*

Letters like these show us A.A.'s are determined that our Fellowship pay its own way, in line with our Seventh Tradition (self-support). Probably that's why "penny a day" or \$3.65 a year — the new suggested yardstick for a member's contributions to support A.A.'s world services — has quickly caught on, after 1973 Conference approval.

Gratitude Dinners

After starting in Florida in 1962, these happy autumn occasions have spread widely, providing good A.A. fellowship, as well as some where-withal to help meet G.S.O. expenses.



***Calling all new G.S.R.'s!** Have you contacted G.S.O. yet, to let us know that you now hold this important A.A. service responsibility? If not, please hurry.

We have much interesting information and helpful material (free) to send you. But we can't write until you tell us who you are, right?

Retiring G.S.R.'s: Please remind your successors to write G.S.O. right away, won't you?

***North Carolina's** General Service Conference Committee, at a recent assembly, distributed 200 A.A. Guidelines on various topics. One member explained their background. How about your area? Is everybody acquainted with the *whole list* of the free Guidelines?

***Group Information Cards:** Even though there won't be a 1974 *World Directory, Part I*, these cards are being mailed to all groups in

Wes. P., Pompano Beach, Fla., sent us samples of their Gratitude Dinner program, telling how the Palm Beach, Broward, and Dade County groups launched the idea — and by 1971, had raised \$19,640.32 for G.S.O.

The dinners are a sort of blend of old-fashioned picnic, lodge supper, and "special event" A.A. meeting. Members furnish all the food and labor, so expense is minimal; fellowship, maximal; and the support for A.A.'s world services, considerable.

A few years ago, November was customarily known among A.A.'s as Gratitude Month. It was noted in the Grapevine (which always ran special Traditions articles), and G.S.O. wrote each group asking

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G.S.R. Corner

the U.S. and Canada this month. G.S.O. needs the up-to-date information about your group, so that our mailing list will be complete and accurate and your group will be included in the changeover of systems for the next U.S. and Canada *World Directory*, in 1975. Have you filled out and mailed *your* group's card?

***All over the place,** the new pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" is helping to cool some hot misunderstandings. Several G.S.R.'s have led meeting discussions on it. Can any group afford *not* to understand this A.A. Tradition, so important to the survival and future of both individual members and our whole Fellowship? Copies are only a nickel apiece (or 3¢ each for 500 or more).

***Another great answerer** of questions, especially helpful to G.S.R.'s, is "The A.A. Service Manual." How about encouraging everyone at your next assembly to own and use it? Or *Box 4-5-9*, for that matter! It wouldn't harm the other A.A. members, either.

CONTAGIOUS IDEAS

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it to share in support of A.A. services to overseas groups, Loners, institutionalized members, Internationalists, etc.

As the Fellowship matured, the idea seemed to fade away, since most contributing groups now send a monthly pledged amount.

Maybe the Gratitude Month idea is in for a modern revival. Gratitude for sobriety is *always* a good A.A. idea, isn't it?

OUR GRAPEVINE (cont. from p. 1)

Twelve Traditions appeared first in the Grapevine; so did the first call for a General Service Conference, in 1950. The Preamble, which is read to open many meetings, was written by a Grapevine editor. The seeds of Al-Anon and Alateen were planted in the Grapevine.

News of the founding of the National Council on Alcoholism appeared first in the Grapevine, and each issue continues to report on public education, research, and other work that A.A. cannot do in the struggle against alcoholism.

Through the early years, financing the Grapevine was a continuing struggle, but since 1964 it has been in the black. Each year since then, it has been able to make a contribution to the General Service Board's general fund. Despite years of rocketing costs, the Grapevine has held to its preinflation price of 35¢.

Of course, manuscripts and art work are contributed free, even from those who privately are highly paid professionals. Practically all of the material in any issue comes unsolicited through the mail. There is a tremendous growth in the number and quality of the manuscripts received, and the editors are constantly raising their sights.

Legally, The Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc., is a not-for-profit corporation, owned by the General Service Board, but having its own separate Corporate Board of nine directors, including three G.S.B. trustees (two A.A.'s, one

nonalcoholic). The Grapevine also has a separate mailing address: Box 1980, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017.

The Conference Grapevine Committee oversees the magazine's health and policies.

Day-to-day operation is in the hands of four A.A.'s: the editor and the managing editor, assisted by a copy editor, and a circulation director. There are seven nonalcoholic employees.

In addition, there is a volunteer editorial board of twelve A.A.'s who have skills in writing, graphic arts, and allied fields. They meet

six times a year to evaluate and advise.

Also of great service are the Grapevine Representatives, or GvRs, who stimulate interest in the Grapevine at the area and group level.

The increasing circulation, the growing volume of favorable mail, the nice things people say—all are evidence that today's smart-looking, meaty magazine is received with enthusiasm by our Fellowship. Above all, the growing sense of participation in and with the Grapevine makes it truly *our* magazine.

From the Mailbag

A Student Query

"As a freshman at Bowling Green State University, I need information regarding alcoholism as a cause of broken homes and divorces. . . .

"Last month we celebrated my dad's 25th A.A. anniversary. Thank you for helping me avoid the problems I am now studying, and for giving my dad a chance to enjoy life"

Dear Marcia: Please extend our warmest wishes to your dad. We guess one of the gifts of sobriety he is most grateful for is the joy of seeing you grow into the person you are.

Here are six A.A. pamphlets. We have no statistics, but the Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, P.O. Box 182, Madison Square Station, New York, N.Y. 10010, and the National Council on Alcoholism, 2 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016, can send you interesting and useful material.

We hope your paper proves enlightening and the writing of it an enjoyable experience.

Loner Anniversary

"Well, another year of sobriety has slipped (pardon the expression) by. I'm now four years old by the

A.A. calendar — as a Loner.

"My last drink was in October, 1968. For the life of me I can't remember the day and don't really give a hoot. But anyway I'm enclosing my birthday contribution plus a dollar to grow on.

"I am looking forward to returning to the States, and the thing I miss the most is meetings. Still, I can't complain, because I correspond regularly with a member in Limerick City, Ireland, one in Chicago, an Internationalist and the members of my old group in Laurel, Md. Plus I attend the meetings (German) in Kassel and once in a while get to an English-speaking meeting here. . . .

"Thank you for everything."

— Warren C., Germany

12 Steps in Lithuanian

"Here they are. It's now a reality! Don't ask why! I don't know! You'd think I just got off the boat from the old country, yet I was raised (born first) here. Please distribute them.

— George P.,

Pradzia Group, Chicago, Ill.

Thank you, George. They are a fine printing job and we can now send them in response to inquiries.

A. A. Calendar of Events

OCTOBER

- 5 - 7 - *Tucson, Arizona.* 23rd Arizona State Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., P.O. Box 6498, Tucson, Ariz. 85716.
- 5 - 7 - *Utica, Illinois.* Starved Rock Lodge Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., 3310 Grant St., Evanston, Ill. 60201.
- 5 - 7 - *Atlantic City, New Jersey.* 3rd Northeast Regional A.A. Conv. Write: Chm., N.E. Regional Conv., P.O. Box 191A, Teaneck, N.J. 07666.
- 5 - 7 - *Amarillo, Texas.* Top-o'-Texas Roundup. Write: Top-o'-Texas Roundup, P.O. Box 412, Amarillo, Tex. 79105.
- 5 - 7 - *Olympia, Washington.* State A.A. Conv. Write: Secretary, 2903 Morse Rd., Olympia, Wash. 98501.
- 5 - 7 - *Tumwater, Washington.* Washington Area Assembly of A.A. Write: Chm., Wash. Area Assembly, P.O. Box 2376, Olympia, Wash. 98507.
- 5 - 7 - *Grand Falls, Newfoundland.* Annual Nova Scotia-Newfoundland Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., 4 Smith's Rd., Corner Brook, Nfld., Canada.
- 5 - 7 - *Montreal, Quebec.* Quebec Provincial Bilingual Conf. Write: Chm., P.O. Box 53, Como, Que., Canada.
- 18-20 - *Savannah, Georgia.* 20th Annual Conv. of A.A. Write: Treasurer, 20th A.A. Conv., P.O. Box 3386, Savannah, Ga. 31403.
- 19-21 - *Winnipeg, Manitoba.* 29th Annual Manitoba Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., Central Office, Rm. 204, 457 Main St., Winnipeg, Man., R3B, 1B5, Canada.
- 19-21 - *Selsey, Sussex, England.* English Conv. Write: General Service Board of A.A., 11 Redcliffe Gardens, London, SW 10 9BG, England.
- 26-28 - *London, Ontario.* 20th Western

Ontario Conv. Write: Conv. Chm., P.O. Box 725, London, Ont., Canada.

NOVEMBER

- 2-4 - *Honolulu, Hawaii.* 12th Annual A.A. Conf. Write: Intergroup of A.A., Box 2384, Honolulu, Hawaii.
- 2-4 - *Las Vegas, Nevada.* Seventh A.A. Roundup. Write: Chm., P.O. Box 269, Las Vegas, Nev. 89101.
- 2-4 - *Pocono Manor, Pennsylvania.* 15th Annual Eastern Pennsylvania Gen. Serv. Conv. Write: Chm., Eastern Pa. A.A. Conv., Box 277, Wernersville, Pa. 19565.
- 3 - *New York, N.Y.* Intergroup Association Annual Dinner and Dance. Write: Dinner Chm., N.Y. Intergroup Association, 24 E. 22nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10010.
- 9-11 - *Burley, Idaho.* Idaho Fall Assembly. Write: Assembly Chm., Rte. 1, Box 46, Gooding, Idaho 83330.
- 9-11 - *Calgary, Alberta.* 23rd Provincial A.A. Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., Box 4717, Postal Station C, Calgary, Alta., Canada.
- 10 - *Minneapolis, Minnesota.* 33rd Annual Founders Day Banquet. Write: Banquet Chm., 2218 First Ave., So., Minneapolis, Minn. 55404.
- 9-11 - *Vancouver, British Columbia.* B.C.-Yukon Conv. Write: Chm., P.O. Box 58334, Vancouver 14, B.C., Canada.
- 16-18 - *Bakersfield, California.* Second Annual Statewide Hospital and Institutional Conf. Write: H. & I. Conf. Chm., P.O. Box 598, Orange, Calif. 92666.

DECEMBER

- 24-25 - *Phoenix, Arizona.* 13th Annual Al-cathon. Write: Chairman, 11816 N. 49th Ave., Glendale, Ariz. 85304.

HIGH ON A.A.

"Flying over here to Hawaii, my husband said, 'Wouldn't it be great if a section of this big plane could be for an A.A. meeting? Not only would many of us get to be with our own people, but think of all those chances to plant the seed!'"

So writes Dorie of California. She continues, "We had to find out how we feel about the A.A. in Hawaii. Some day we may move here. Believe us—it's great! The same beautiful people!"

We agree, Dorie. And how about airborne meetings? Any takers for that idea?

SPECIAL GIFTS TO G.S.O.

CALIFORNIA	
Fillmore: Dist. 12 of Southern Calif.	\$ 25.00
Palm Springs: Desert Roundup .	1,000.00
San Francisco: N. Calif. Council of A.A.	867.44
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	
11th & 12th Dist.	12.00
Navy Group.	15.00
FLORIDA	
Clearwater: Second Annual Suncoast Conv.	200.00
MINNESOTA	
Grand Rapids: Third Upper Minn. A.A. & Al-Anon Get-Together.	750.00
NORTH CAROLINA	
Charlotte: Vade Mecum Get-Together.	50.00
Salisbury: 25th Anniversary Banquet.	150.00
PENNSYLVANIA	
Kane: W. N.Y. General Service Assembly.	150.00
SOUTH CAROLINA	
Spartanburg: Gen. Service Comm. of S.C.	600.00
TEXAS	
Brownwood: Lakeside Conf. . .	100.00
Midland Midwinter Conf.	100.00
Galveston: S.E. Tex. Area Conf.	250.00
CANADA	
B.C.: Vancouver; Avalon Breakfast Meeting.	15.90
Victoria Easter Rally.	200.00
Ontario: St. Lawrence Intl. Conf.	275.82
Toronto: Sun. A.M. Men's Meeting.	99.50
West Toronto Men's Meeting . .	124.38
Saskatchewan: Kindersley Groups.	56.26
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	
Santo Domingo: 11th Central American Conv.	200.00
GERMANY	
Frankfurt: Eng.-Speaking Intergroup Roundup.	79.00

A.A. SPREADS IN TURKEY

Four A.A. groups have sprouted in Turkey, Ken H. of Adana writes us.

Thanks not only to Ken, and to Alice P. (in Karamussel), but also thanks to (nonalcoholic) Chaplain Larry Matthews, USAF (in Izmir) and certain other chaplains, social actions officers, hospital officials and even a base commander or two, the message is spreading.

Ken says the Air Force is now vigorously "preaching treatment instead of punishment for people like us," and the groups, including one in Ankara, are the results.

Sober little more than a year, Ken says he "broke his anonymity" (but *not* the Anonymity Tradition) all over the place. To stay sober,

he began telling folks about his own alcoholism and recover. Soon the four-man Adana group began to get referrals.

He traveled across the country talking to A.A.'s and others interested, and taped two radio shows, anonymously. The visiting command chaplain from Germany helped.

Only 31 and single, Ken writes: "I am proud of the fact that I no longer have to drink. I am happy with this life and for the first time in more years than I care to remember, I feel reasonably at peace within myself. I want to live, and A.A. teaches me how."

He asks us to pray for all the sober members, and prospects, in Turkey. Ken, A.A.'s all over the world join in those prayers.