



BOX 4-5-9

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

Vol. 21 No. 2

April-May 1976

990% A.A. Growth In Latin Countries

Our Latin brothers and sisters in the Fellowship must be doing something right. In 1969, there were 300 Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking A.A. groups. Today, the total is 3,270—990% growth over seven years! And this does not count 200 Spanish-language groups in the continental U.S.

Since only about 6,500 groups exist outside the U.S. and Canada, this means our Latin groups account for about half of our overseas size. Why? A.A. is not growing that fast anywhere else, as far as we know. Maybe all of us can learn from the *Latinos* and *Latinas*.

We've heard two guesses about the reason for that rapid growth. Both may give the rest of us some ideas.

Someone has pointed out that U.S. and Canada groups meet, on the average, only 1.1 or 1.2 times per week, but Latin American groups average four meetings per week. Does that frequency of A.A. activity generate a spiritual intensity that results in A.A. growth?

Groups in Central and South America have been famous for doing mass Twelfth Step work on other groups. When a new group starts, from miles around come busloads—the whole membership of other groups. If a group seems to falter, members in nearby groups charter buses and regularly travel many hours to bolster attendance for the ailing group. Do groups in the U.S. and Canada do that much to help out other groups?

No doubt, other factors are also

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Conference to Examine Sponsorship

Vital questions arise from the theme of the 26th annual meeting of the General Service Conference of A.A. (U.S.-Canada), Apr. 19-24, 1976. The theme is "Sponsorship—Our Privilege and Responsibility."

When 91 area delegates convene at New York's Hotel Roosevelt (with members of the General Service Board, corporate directors of the Grapevine and of A.A. World Services, Inc., and G.S.O. and GV staff members), a surefire discussion-starter will be "Is sponsoring different from twelfth-stepping?"

Some older members will say, "Yes, there is a big difference," and claim newer members don't grasp this important lesson. Possibly, the longer-dry folks had early

A.A. experiences rather unlike the things that happen to A.A. newcomers today. But certain truths appear to have remained universal in A.A.

For example: A.A. really began when a certain drunk realized one day that he could avoid taking a drink only if he could find another alcoholic to whom he could talk with total honesty about *his own* alcoholism.

It worked. In fact, just the act of *trying* to find a second troubled boozier released that first alcoholic from the desire to drink, in Akron, Ohio, in 1935.

That has worked repeatedly for thousands and thousands of us since. We now generally call that
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GROUPS ENJOY AND PROFIT FROM GROUP INVENTORIES

Every A.A. group that writes us about taking a group inventory is enthusiastic about the results. Most even say the process is fun.

A member in Honduras has asked us about results of using the group-inventory questions on page 37 in "The A.A. Group," so here are three examples:

"Since we took this inventory, our meeting attendance has doubled," writes Dick B., member of a men's discussion group. "None of us can explain this, but perhaps we changed our own attitudes."

When the Biscayne Group, Miami, Fla., took its first inventory, "We could do nothing but pat ourselves on the back in the begin-

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EXPERIENCE GIVES TIPS FOR BETTER CONVENTIONS AND CONFERENCES

Seventeen ways to improve your next local A.A. conference or convention have been culled from experience sent G.S.O. in response to questionnaires about such affairs. Here they are.

1. Have a small committee; choose people who work well together.
2. Remember "principles before personalities"; overcome personality clashes by referring to the Twelve Traditions.
3. Start planning as early as possible. Use past delegates for Traditions and Ask-It Basket sessions.
4. Don't overprogram; leave time for rest.

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SIoux FALLS HOSTS SECOND MINI-CONFERENCE

West Central U.S. was the site of the second experimental A.A. mini-conference, March 5-7, 1976, Ramada Inn, Sioux Falls, S.Dak.

Atlanta, Ga., was host to 292 members (including 12 Conference delegates and seven G.S.O. and board personnel) at the first, held in December. Results of both will be discussed at the General Service Conference in April. A brief report on them is available from G.S.O.

LAWYERS IN A.A. MEET

Lawyers in A.A. in the Buffalo, N.Y., area and others interested gathered at Niagara Falls for a two-day A.A. session one weekend last autumn.

On Sunday morning, they visited the weekly A.A. meeting in Buffalo City Court. (Naturally, such cooperation between local A.A.'s and any sort of institution dealing with alcoholics always pleases us.) "Many intoxicated offenders who come before this court have been sent to this meeting and have had sobriety ever since," our correspondent wrote.

During the winter, attorneys in A.A. in the Hartford, Conn., area also began planning to meet regularly. Is a lawyers' equivalent to International Doctors in A.A. in the making? I.D.A.A. will hold its 27th annual meeting in Los Angeles, Calif., Aug. 5-8, 1976.

Another successful gathering is the International Conference of Young People in A.A., scheduled to hold its 19th annual session in Philadelphia, Pa., July 23-25 this year.

New at this enterprise, the New York and Connecticut lawyers in A.A. are eager to hear of similar meetings that may have been started elsewhere. If you know of any, please write to G.S.O., and we'll relay your experience.

WE CANNOT ACCEPT MEMORIAL GIFTS FROM NON-A.A. SOURCES

Sometimes, the beautiful people who survive a deceased A.A. member want to send G.S.O. an *in memoriam* gift to express their love for their A.A. relative, their regard for our Fellowship, and their appreciation of what A.A. did for the family and friends of the late member. Such a loving gesture kindles feelings of real humility and gratitude.

However, we have to decline even the smallest contribution from non-A.A.'s - if we are to remain faithful to our Tradition of self-support.

To our genuine sorrow, when we return such a donation to non-A.A.'s, their feelings are sometimes hurt. They do not understand. Maybe you could help soothe such feelings by trying to explain our long-standing policy of self-support. It is an important pillar of our sobriety.

During our drinking days, many of us were irresponsible with money. Now, one of the ways we can make amends for that, and behave more maturely, is to be strict with ourselves about paying our way, accepting no handouts at all.

A.A. could have been a very wealthy outfit if we had accepted the thousands upon thousands of dollars well-meaning nonalcoholics have offered us. But thanks to the wisdom of our earliest members (and some non-A.A. trustees), we

decided to turn down all outside gifts, whether for \$5.00 or \$50,000.

This puts sharp pressure on those of us still grateful enough to A.A. to pay our fair share of its essential service expenses. So far, we have managed to make ends meet, thanks to the yearly income from literature sales. (Contributions alone do not match world service expenses.)

Please try to help us explain this to non-A.A. would-be donors: We are acting, not just out of pride, but out of concern for our recovery and survival when we hold to our Tradition of self-support.

WHAT'S A BEGINNERS' KIT?

A short guide on how to hold successful newcomers meetings (showing a wide variety of plans that have worked well) is included in the Kit for Leading Beginners Meetings, which G.S.O. can furnish (\$1.50) to any group or member wanting to start, or improve, service to newcomers. The kit also contains a handful of materials especially useful to the *leader* of beginners meetings.

Occasionally, however, a member asks for "the kit for newcomers," evidently meaning a packet of pamphlets selected especially for new members.

No such beginners' kit exists at G.S.O. It couldn't. There is no such thing as a "typical" A.A. newcomer. The material you'd want to give a 20-year-old, skid-row victim of multiple addictions would not be ideal for a middle-aged women's-club president hooked on champagne.

Good twelfth-steppers try to choose material especially right for each particular newcomer. So we hope everyone who tries to help a newcomer is familiar with the entire range of A.A. materials available. That way, each of us can make up a special "newcomer's kit" of the materials most suitable for each individual case.

G.S.R. Corner

G.S.R.'S NEED TO SHARE

From experience, I know one way *not* to be a good G.S.R. The group wasn't thrilled when I gave my first report. I heard whispers like "What's this got to do with keeping me sober?" I wilted at once, and didn't even mention a report for eight months.

Looking back, I can see that then I was more anxious to be liked than to do a good A.A. job. I was too sensitive to the remarks of just a few unhappy people. *Most* members made no objection at all to my G.S.R. announcements, and some even voiced their appreciation. Still, I hated asking for money or any other expression of support; I was so afraid of rejection and unpopularity that I let both the group and myself down.

I wish I had asked other G.S.R.'s for help then.
—*Anonymous, New York, N.Y.*

According to a letter from Karen T. of Chicago, Ill., interest in the Conference structure is gradually growing in that metropolitan area. An all-Chicago G.S.R. meeting is planned for early May.

KEEPING IN THE BLACK

This is the first installment of an article presented by George M., Annandale, Va., at the second annual Washington (D.C.) Area Intergroup Conference.

"Brother, can you spare a dime?" It is many years since this was a byword. Today, in an affluent society, though beset with financial pressures, I raise it again. Can you spare a dime? For your sobriety, one day at a time, can you afford to give one dime for each of *those* days? Can you contribute "a penny a day" to one kind of A.A. service and a few pennies more to others?

We are constantly confronted with the question: "How much should a group contribute?" Your group conscience must decide. First, of course, so the group remains self-supporting (Seventh Tradition), you must take care of the expenses of the group itself: housekeeping, refreshments, equipment, and A.A. literature. Your contributions are funds furnished to help in running your intergroup, the General Service Office in New York, and the local general service area committee. Here are some suggestions. (To be continued in Aug.-Sept. issue)

Central Office Corner

Delegate Corner

NEW DELEGATES ON THE BRINK

Chosen at random and interviewed by phone one recent weekend, three Panel 26 delegates to the 26th Conference told their feelings about and preparation for the April trip to New York.

I've just walked in from a P.I.-C.P.C. meeting, and opened "A.A. Comes of Age." I'm rereading it to get ready. I'm overwhelmed by the area's confidence in me. I take my tote bag everywhere, crammed with Conference reading materials.

—*Margaret K. (N. Interior Calif.)*

I hadn't been in A.A. five months, in 1953, when my sponsor got me into group work, and I've been a structure cookie ever since. I just came from a workshop for G.S.R.'s and D.C.M.'s, and we discussed Conference agenda topics. I'm amazed at the amount of mail I get on Conference business.

—*Eugene D. (S.W. Tex.)*

Six years ago, when I was new, a friend asked me to be his alternate as G.S.R., and I've been in A.A. service ever since. I'm trying hard to read all that preparatory material, including last year's *Final Conference Report*. A big problem around here is sponsorship, with a few members sponsoring as many as 20 newcomers.

—*Richard F. (S.W. Ohio/N. Ky.)*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SPIKE

This greeting is a surprise, we hope, to nonalcoholic trustee Austin MacCormick, who celebrates his birthday during Conference week.

In 1940, Austin heard Bill W. speak. As an official in the U.S. Navy and in the New York City Corrections Department, Austin had been concerned by the number of alcoholics he saw in trouble, and the futility of imprisoning them. Learning of A.A. gave him hope. Austin instantly befriended us.

He joined the board in 1949, but left in 1951 to teach criminology at the University of California. When, in 1961, he returned to the Osborne Association (a leading prison-reform group) in New York, Austin accepted an invitation to rejoin the board, which he has graced ever since.

Past chairman of the trustees' Literature and Nominating Committees, he now chairs the Institutions Committee. His service as a Grapevine director reflects his long-time enthusiasm for our magazine.

Trustee Corner

How the A.A. Message Is Carried Through Literature Sent From G.S.O.

A Loner in India writes: "Dear A.A. friends at G.S.O.: I thank you for your help, which has enabled me to maintain complete sobriety for the last 15 years. Remittance of money to foreign countries is not permitted by the government of India. Could you kindly secure 'Living Sober' for me? I am still a Loner and there is no A.A. group within a hundred miles or so. I therefore cannot get A.A. literature. Sincerely in A.A., Narinder S. N."

Yolanda L., G.S.O. staff member on the Loner assignment, sends a copy of "Living Sober" along with a "sharing" letter. This kind of service is repeated hundreds and even thousands of times each month, as the A.A. message is carried through A.A. literature for which no charge is made.

"Civilians" want to know about A.A.: "I am a student. Please send me information on drinking and what to do about it." "Our company will be starting an alcoholic program in the near future, and I would like. . ." "We would appreciate your sending us any no-cost pamphlets. Director of Nursing, Community Hospital."

Helen Trisdorfer, nonalcoholic steno/clerk, spends her full time answering more than 800 such requests each month, in behalf of June R., staff member on the P.I. assignment. A widowed lady who has worked for A.A. for six years, Helen brings great compassion and

dedication to her job at G.S.O.

An A.A. member may be sent appropriate no-charge literature if, for example, he or she is: G.S.R. or secretary of a brand-new group; an inmate in a prison or other institution; a new member of a district or state committee; chairman of a new area P.I. or C.P.C. committee.

Other members write for literature: "Send me a catalog and order blank." "Our P.I. committee needs 100 copies of 'A Brief Guide to A.A.' for a talk at a school." "Do you have a list of A.A. literature in Spanish?"

Miriam Graham, steno/clerk, sees to it that they receive the needed items.

When an A.A. exhibit goes to national meetings of medical societies, health officials, and others, quantities of pamphlets go along to carry the message to these non-alcoholic friends. Fanny Lizcano, stenographer, takes care of this.

Finally, some A.A.'s have problems that literature may help solve.

An Internationalist (i.e., a sailor at sea) writes that he is having trouble reaching his Higher Power. Along with a sympathetic and encouraging letter from the staff, he receives a copy of "Came to Believe . . ."

"The A.A. clubhouse here won't let newcomers in to attend meetings until they are paid up." The Guidelines for Clubs may help.

"My wife and I are finally going

to go to Europe. Can you give me A.A. contacts in . . . ?" The *International A.A. Directory* gives him the contacts he needs.

Such problems are usually handled by staff members, who may authorize anything from "Is A.A. for You?" to the Big Book to be sent as they see fit. Some correspondents need only a single pamphlet, booklet, or book. Others (for example, student nurses) routinely receive an assortment of ten to 20 different pamphlets.

In G.S.O.'s Shipping Department, two clerks, Joe Moglia and Warren Eigen, spend the majority of their time standing behind long tables stacked with piles of pamphlets, assembling new-group handbooks, P.I. Kits, and other packages and selections of literature to handle the flow of correspondence from the desks of Helen, Miriam, Fanny, and staff members.

Year in and year out, an average of about six percent of all A.A. literature distributed is sent out "no charge." That amounted last year to well over 300,000 pieces — almost all in answer to individual people writing to A.A., expressing individual needs that must be carefully and conscientiously met. This is one of the most important ways that the General Service Office carries the message in behalf of A.A. members and groups everywhere.

—Bob P., general manager, G.S.O.



Nonalcoholic employees work on literature requests: (left to right) Helen, Miriam, Fanny, Warren, Joe

JUSTICE MURTAGH, FORMER TRUSTEE, DIES

Justice John M. Murtagh of the New York State Supreme Court, who died suddenly in his office in January, was one of our Fellowship's early and most influential friends among the judiciary. He was a nonalcoholic trustee on our General Service Board from 1963 until he resigned in 1970 because official duties made it impossible for him to be as active in behalf of A.A. as he wanted.

We are grateful for the judge's beautiful service to alcoholics. We extend our respectful condolences to Mrs. Murtagh and to his daughter, his sons, and his brothers.

IN A.A., WE TRUST ONE ANOTHER

Earlier in our discussion of the Twelve Concepts, we've found *mutual trust* to be an essential part of our whole service structure, just as it is in our personal relationships with fellow A.A.'s. Concept Eight explains how this principle applies to the relationship between the General Service Board and the personnel of its two corporations, A.A. World Services, Inc. (which runs G.S.O. and publishes A.A. literature and other service materials), and The A.A. Grapevine, Inc.

"With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance," this Concept says, the trustees "are the principal planners and administrators." What about all the details of day-to-day work at G.S.O. and the Grapevine? Trustees may drop in at these offices, but you'll never find one of them telling a staff member how to answer that letter from a group in California—nor telling the Grapevine editors, "Use this article. Drop that one."

Toward both "constantly active services," Concept Eight continues, "the relation of the trustees is

mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight," which is exercised mostly through the board's election of A.A.W.S. and GV directors. Neither the board nor the two directorates could possibly be in session every working day, and they needn't be. They *trust* the G.S.O. and Grapevine staffs to relay the A.A. message as effectively as possible each day through letters, the printed word, and all the varied services that the two corporations provide.

A.A. IN HOW MANY COUNTRIES?

A group in Arlington, Tex., asks how many countries have A.A. groups.

Our public information releases usually say "more than 90." For a more definite figure, you may count the countries shown in the A.A. directories.

G.S.O. is no authority on geography or national claims to independence. We simply list groups as they wish.

Aren't we fortunate to be responsible only for our primary purpose of service to alcoholics, not for making political decisions! Trying to decide what is or is not a country might drive us to you-know-what.

GROUP INVENTORIES (continued from p. 1)

ning," a member wrote. "But some of us began to be a little more honest as things progressed. That was a step in the right direction. There must be something we are *not* doing right, or we would have had to enlarge by a city block!"

Biscayne members decided they had been neglecting institutions work and some new members.

The men's discussion group spent three weekly one-hour meetings on the inventory. They decided, "We are sometimes lax in our

application of spirituality," and agreed members should be very careful about lending money to newcomers.

They decided to do more about carrying the message to physicians, clergymen, police, and judges, and expressed confidence in the group officers. They were glad to realize they give their fair share of support to the local central office, the Grapevine, and G.S.O.

Another group, in Manitoba, Canada, used 89 questions for its inventory, dividing them into sections on sponsorship, institutions, public information, international A.A., communication, finance, the local general service committee, A.A. pamphlets and books, and the Grapevine. With this kind of enthusiasm, maybe it's no wonder Manitoba A.A. seems so big and vital.

Only 13 questions are suggested for inventory in the pamphlet "The A.A. Group," but it is suggested that each group add questions of its own. When *your* group takes its inventory, please tell us the results, so we can share them with others.

EXPERIENCE GIVES TIPS (continued from p. 1)

5. Have a general coffee room where everyone can meet and talk.
6. Keep speeches to a minimum; limit major talks to one hour.
7. Plan a buffet meal rather than a served meal.
8. Be sure to plan for all expenses. Suggested financing: (a) Charge registration fee including banquet and breakfast; or (b) collect a fixed amount from groups and have no registration fee (pass the basket).
9. Don't assume that all food-service people know we cannot take alcohol; check desserts, beverages, etc. that will be served.
10. Obtain speakers with widely varied backgrounds.
11. Make sure that there is a *need*
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EXPERIENCE GIVES TIPS

(continued from p. 5)

for such a gathering, and that all involved want to cooperate.

12. Schedule the *main speaker* for the second day in the morning, since many people leave at noon.

13. Try not to conflict with other planned conventions. Try to avoid "board weekends" (Aug. 1 and Oct. 31 this year), since regional trustees will be in New York then.

14. Communicate—be sure to get the word out early, widely, often!

15. Use the helpful G.S.O. Guidelines on Conferences and Conventions.

16. Be prepared for speaker substitution.

17. Have as many committee meetings as possible in preparation.

LATIN COUNTRIES

(continued from p. 1)

at work, such as socioeconomic conditions, cultural attitudes, and the like. But whatever the causes,

here are the numbers of groups in ten countries which have their own general service offices or literature distribution centers: Argentina, 222; Colombia, 296; Costa Rica, 222; Guatemala, 274; Honduras, 199; Mexico, 625; Nicaragua, 171; El Salvador, 671; Brazil, 408; Spain, 88.

Another 164 groups are in these ten places: Puerto Rico, 61; Panama, 15; Venezuela, 31; Dominican Republic, 27; Uruguay, 7; Ecuador, 8; Peru, 8; Guyana, 3; Chile, 3; Bolivia, 1.

1976 General Service Conference (U.S.-Canada)

CONFERENCE TO EXAMINE SPONSORSHIP

(continued from p. 1)

effort Twelfth Step work — safeguarding our sobriety by talking with newcomers about our own drinking and recovery. Most of us find it easy to do.

Thousands of us have formed enduring friendships within A.A. They may or may not be with the members who first twelfth-stepped us, or people we twelfth-stepped. Often, these friendships are called sponsorship, but A.A.'s resist strenuously any "official" definitions, rules, musts, or even "shoulds" about sponsorship. Many agree it is a bit tougher to do than simple twelfth-stepping.

Most sponsors have probably been in A.A. longer than the newcomers they try to befriend. And thousands of us would not have made it without a friend who gave us direct advice. Other thousands of us would have fled from anything that smacked of authority, or from any attempts to tell us what to do.

Sponsors often have years of A.A. experience that gives them information not yet available to newcomers. Yet many good sponsors declare it is really the beginner who sponsors the oldtimer. Practically all of us have seen trouble

arise when a sponsor gets bossy, pulls seniority, and loses sight of the real value behind both twelfth-stepping and sponsorship — our own recovery, of course. Sponsors who get prideful and possessive repeatedly come to grief. Good sponsorship seems to involve respect for the independence of the person being sponsored.

When we as sponsors begin to think of ourselves as smart, or good at it, or folks-who-know-better, or noble doers of good for those poor alcoholics, we are off the proved track of A.A., aren't we?

Doesn't sponsoring for the sake of getting praise for our A.A. activity miss the point, too? The source of the Twelfth Step idea is the old Oxford Group idea about giving of oneself freely with no expectation of reward, financial or any other kind (pp. 58-59, 63 in "A.A. Comes of Age").

Sobriety is our only reward, and that's not bad pay for alcoholics with life at stake, is it?

Conference deliberations on sponsorship will be summarized in the next *Box 4-5-9* and in the *Final Report* of the 1976 Conference, available this summer for all members.

OTHER CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS

In appropriate committee meetings, in workshops, in presentation-discussion sessions, and at informal gatherings of Conference members, these are some of the other agenda items which will be explored at the 1976 Conference:

- Prearranged A.A. sponsorship for alcoholics in institutions, and sponsoring those from court, A.S.A.P., and other programs
- Literature (including paperback Big Book, "Bill W." distribution, illustrated pamphlet for teen-agers)
- Specialized literature for public information
- Nonalcoholics on the G.S. Board
- Use of word "suggested" in describing Steps
- Rotation of institutions committees membership
- Volunteering by A.A.'s for professional alcoholism agencies
- Adding Rights of Appeal and Petition (Concept Five in "Twelve Concepts for World Service") to Conference Charter
- Groups that don't know of the Grapevine
- Charging only handling costs for literature ordered on credit; and
- Any question raised anonymously through the Ask-It Basket



THE BULLETIN BOARD

April-May 1976

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

A.A. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH

- 26-28 - *New Orleans, Louisiana.* Big Deep South Conv. Write: New Orleans Conv. Comm., 707 Gravier Bldg., 535 Gravier St., New Orleans, LA 70130
- 27 - *Whiting, Indiana.* Tri-City Anniv. Banq. Write: Secty., St. John's Panel Rm., 1844 Lincoln Ave., Whiting, IN 46394

APRIL

- 2-5 - *Jackson's Mill, West Virginia.* Fourth Annual W.Va. Spring Roundup. Write: W.Va. Spring Roundup, P.O. Box 825, Clarksburg, WV 26301
- 2-4 - *Longview, Texas.* Seventh Annual E. Tex. Roundup. Write: Secty., P.O. Box 2082, Longview, TX 75601
- 2-4 - *Waterford, Ireland.* 19th Irish Conv. Write: Conv. Comm., 25 Lisback, Longford, Ireland
- 2-4 - *Nurnberg, West Germany.* European English-Speaking Roundup. Write: Intergroup Secty., 240-54-7796, HHB, 2nd BN., 59th ADA, New York, NY 09142
- 3-4 - *Wausau, Wisconsin.* Wis. & Upper Mich. Annual Spring Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., 1307 South Mountain Rd., Wausau, WI 54401
- 9-11 - *Kanab, Utah.* Utah Area Annual Spring Rally. Write: Chm., P.O. Box 110, Kanab, UT 84741
- 9-11 - *Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.* Fourth Annual Young People's Roundup. Write: Chm., P.O. Box 1086, Stn. A, Vancouver, B.C., Canada
- 9-11 - *Pembroke, Ontario, Canada.* 14th Annual Upper Valley Dist. Conv. Write: Conv. Chm., Box 1, Pembroke, Ont., Canada K8A 8X1
- 10-11 - *Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.* First A.A. Roundup. Write: Intergroup Chm., P.O. Box 11, Regina, Sask., Canada
- 29-May 2 - *Spartanburg, South Carolina.* 29th S.C. Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., 104 Kreswell Circle, Spartanburg, SC 29302
- 30-May 2 - *Surrey, British Columbia, Canada.* Sixth Fraser Valley Rally. Write: Secty., 36-9348 138th Street, Surrey, B.C., Canada V3V 6A4

MAY

- 7-9 - *Atlantic City, New Jersey.* Ninth Philadelphia Intergroup Roundup. Write: Roundup Secty., 2202 St. James St., Philadelphia, PA 19103
- 7-9 - *Fresno, California.* Fourth Annual Hospital & Institutional Conf. Write: H & I Conf., P.O. Box 4554, Downey, CA 90241

- 8 - *Washington, D.C.* 34th Annual Banq. Write: Banq. Chm., W.A.I.A., 4530 Connecticut Ave., N.W., #107, Washington, DC 20008
- 14-16 - *Broadstone, Dorset, England.* Spring Weekend Conv. Write: Registrar, S.W.I.G. Conv., 125, Springdale Rd., Broadstone, Dorset, England
- 14-16 - *Merrillville, Indiana.* Indiana State Conv. Write: Chm., 560 Delaware St., Gary, IN 46402
- 14-16 - *Missoula, Montana.* Montana Area Spring Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., P.O. Box 2712, Missoula, MT 59801
- 15-16 - *Kelseyville, California.* Fourth Annual Post-Conf. Konocti Assembly. Write: Chm., Konocti '76, 395 Imperial Way, #122, Daly City, CA 94015
- 21-23 - *Killington, Vermont.* Ninth Annual Vt. State Conv. Write: Vt. State Conv., Box 204, Rutland, VT 05701
- 28-30 - *Bakersfield, California.* Third Annual Golden Empire Roundup. Write: P.O. Box 3489, Bakersfield, CA 93305

JUNE

- 4-6 - *Omaha, Nebraska.* Nebraska State Conv. Write: G.S.R., Road Runners Group, 9915 "Q" Plaza, #2A, Omaha, NE 68127
- 5-6 - *Winchester, Virginia.* Four-State & D.C. Get-Together. Write: Chm., P.O. Box 651, Winchester, VA 22601

NEW MEXICO 'FAROLITO' DOES EXCELLENT SERVICE

One of the best A.A. newsletters we have seen is *El Farolito*, put out by the New Mexico Area Assembly. It is an eight-page mimeographed job, supported entirely by group contributions, with a wide variety of newsy, informative, and entertaining entries.

Assembly meetings (and agenda) are described. Some drawings are funny; some, inspirational. Anniversaries are listed, as are new groups. Group events are announced, plus weddings, new group servants, and various A.A. happenings. Traditions are discussed, too.

One recent issue had a four-page section on A.A.'s world services,

well-written, brief, and highly instructive.

If other assemblies, or area G.S. committees, put out such fine material, it is no wonder so many A.A. members are intelligently informed about our whole Fellowship.

If G.S.O. is not on *your* area's mailing list, please add us, won't you? We want to keep up with all Third Legacy activities so we can share them all over the place.

CLOSED MEETING TOPICS FROM THE GRAPEVINE

April: Four articles on "Depression" can start a fruitful exchange of experience on ways to approach this common problem. Read "Shy?" and "Pride"; discuss the effects of self-centeredness. How can we recognize it in ourselves? How can we overcome it? For the many groups and members particularly interested in Step Eleven, "Meditation" shares insights and offers useful how-to directions.

May: A special "Closed Meeting Topics" (pp. 24-25) is designed to focus attention on the vital A.A. principle of anonymity. It describes specific situations, asks whether membership in A.A. should be revealed in each case, then gives possible reasoning behind both "yes" and "no" answers. These examples may spur many in your group to tell of others from their own personal experiences, explaining what they decided and why. The whole purpose is to reach a deeper and clearer understanding of A.A. anonymity, in both our actions and our spiritual lives.