

*During this holiday season,
a time to be with family and friends,
we give thanks for the healing power
of love and sobriety in the Fellowship
of Alcoholics Anonymous*



Box 4-5-9 is published bimonthly by the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115, © Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 2005

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New York, NY 10163

G.S.O.'s A.A. Web Site: www.aa.org

Subscriptions: Individual, \$3.50 per year; group, \$6.00 for each unit of 10 per year. Check—made payable to A.A.W.S., Inc.—should accompany order.

■ Reminder: Résumés for Trustees Election due Jan. 1, 2006

Two new Class B (alcoholic) trustees—from the Pacific and Eastern Canada regions—will be nominated at the General Service Conference in April 2006. Résumés must be received at G.S.O. no later than January 1, 2006, and must be submitted by delegates only.

The new Pacific regional trustee will succeed Phyllis H., of Lacey, Washington; the next trustee from Eastern Canada will follow Robert P., of St.-Jerôme, Quebec.

Please submit your candidate's résumé to the Secretary, trustees' Nominating Committee, General Service Office.

■ International News

• This past August, representatives from 12 countries attended the Sixth Asia/Oceania Service Meeting in the town of Surfers Paradise, Australia. Over the course of the two-day event, delegates delivered reports on A.A. activity in their countries and the challenges they face, including making inroads into the indigenous populations. In Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Indonesia, for example, meetings are for the most part English-speaking and attended by Westerners. The other countries represented were Australia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, and Singapore. Among the workshops was one on cooperation with the professional community, a critical effort in countries where doctors and others who treat alcoholics may only recently have become acquainted with Alcoholics Anonymous. Attending the meeting were 17 country delegates, about 20 observers, and a staff member and the general manager of the General Service Office in New York.

• Japan held its 30th Anniversary Convention in Fukuoka last September, with about 1,000 attending. The weekend was devoted to a celebration of A.A. and included a

flag ceremony, a sobriety "count-up," A.A. meetings, and a presentation on the history of A.A. in Japan delivered by a former general manager of the country's General Service Office.

■ 2006 Regional and Special Forums

Regional Forums strengthen the Fellowship's Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service by providing an opportunity for A.A. group and area representatives, as well as any interested individual A.A.s in a particular region, to share experience, strength and hope with representatives of the General Service Board and G.S.O. and Grapevine staff members.

Special Forums are designed for remote, sparsely populated or urban areas.

These weekend sharing sessions enhance and widen communication, and help spark new ideas in better carrying the message through service work.

Mailings regarding each Forum will be sent to G.S.R.s, area committee members, delegates, and central offices and intergroups approximately four months ahead of time. On-line registration is also available. The final Forum of 2005, the Southwest, will be December 2-4, at Embassy Suites Hotel, Rogers, Arkansas. In 2006 Regional and Special Forums are planned as follows:

- *Western Canada* — February 24-26: Howard Johnson Hotel, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- *Special* — May 20-21: Morongo Reservation, Banning, California
- *Pacific* — June 23-25: DoubleTree Hotel, Seattle Airport, Seattle, Washington
- *Eastern Canada* — September 15-17: Ramada Inn, Sudbory, Ontario
- *Special* — November 11-12: Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, Kenosha, Wisconsin
- *Southeast* — December 1-3: Westin Atlanta North Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia

Please post *Twelve Tips on Keeping Your Holiday Season Sober and Joyous* (page 10) on your group bulletin board.

■ A.A. More and More Speaks the Languages of the World

There is A.A. literature in more than 80 languages, with the Big Book in 52 of them, opening the door of recovery to millions of alcoholics in the non-English-speaking world.

The work of overseeing translation is handled in a systematic fashion, the goal being to protect the integrity of the A.A. message while producing A.A. literature in foreign languages that is clear, accurate and true to the originals.

Translations come about in two basic ways. Sometimes A.A. members or nonalcoholic professionals in a country will contact Alcoholics Anonymous World Services Inc. (A.A.W.S.), the publishing arm of General Service Office, New York, to request a translation of literature into that country's language. Mongolia in 2004, for example, made such a request.

More often, though, A.A. members in other countries start translating material on their own. A.A.W.S. advises starting with the basic recovery pamphlets, such as "Is A.A. for You," "44 Questions," or "A Newcomer Asks."

However, notes Liz Lopez, the (nonalcoholic) A.A.W.S. administrator in charge of licensing and copyrights, "everyone wants to dive into the Big Book."

The process may start with an offer from an A.A. member or entity in another country to undertake a translation. A.A.W.S. must first decide if there is a genuine need. The work of translation requires considerable resources, so A.A.W.S. cannot say yes to every offer by A.A. members to do translations.

If it is the Big Book that is being turned into the language of the other country, and A.A.W.S. recognizes the need for such a translation, it will request two or three sample chapters, including Chapter 5.

A.A.W.S. then sends these sections for assessment by a translation service it has been using for 14 years.

"The company we use to check the translations we receive from A.A. all over the world has developed a good sense of what we require, and the whole concept of A.A.," says Liz. "They know what to look for."

Mark Porto, president of the translating company, says, "working with A.A., you just naturally want to pull together and do whatever it takes to produce top quality work. We realize this literature is a big part of the lifeline that A.A. extends to those trying to help themselves from all parts of the world."

If the translation passes muster, that is, if it is at least good enough to work with, the A.A. members in the foreign country are given the green light to proceed. As Chris C., G.S.O.'s publications director, noted in a speech to the World Service Meeting last year, "It is better to have this review done before a lot of effort is expended on a translation which, in the long run, may not be acceptable to the Fellowship."



Liz López (nonalcoholic), who is in charge of licensing and copyrights, is a veteran of 30 years of service at the G.S.O.

If the translation falls short, then A.A.W.S. may undertake the task itself, using its translation service.

"The accuracy of translation is especially important when it comes to the writing of Bill W. Translations of our basic texts (*Alcoholics Anonymous* and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*) must capture the tone of spirit of Bill's original works," says Chris.

In all cases, A.A.W.S. holds the rights to the material, no matter who does the translation and no matter where in the world the material is printed or distributed. In this way, A.A. protects the integrity of the writings.

A.A.W.S. grants licenses, subject to renewal, to A.A. offices or entities in foreign countries. The licenses grant the foreign A.A.s permission either to translate, print or distribute specific A.A. literature. Established central offices like those in Japan or Portugal, as well as in many other countries, hold licenses to perform all three tasks. In many cases, though, A.A.W.S. prints and distributes the material.

A.A.W.S. holds the copyrights for about 650 various A.A. writings, from the Big Book to the pamphlet "44 Questions." Currently, there are about 20 translations underway of various pieces of A.A. literature.

"We try very hard to work with A.A.s doing translations around the world," says Liz. There is always latitude in choosing the right words or phrases in translations. "If there is a disagreement between A.A. translators and those in another country, we give the A.A. members in the foreign country the benefit of the doubt," she says.

Uldis D., who was born in Riga, Latvia, and got sober



Ioni. Another Israeli A.A., one with 20 years of sobriety, saw Ioni's translation and was favorably impressed.

After discussion with others in A.A. in Tel Aviv, it was agreed that there was a serious need for new translation of the Big Book into Hebrew, one that would meet the licensing approval requirements of A.A.W.S.

"A few A.A.s got together, some helping with the translation, some doing proofreading," says Ioni.

After a time, sample chapters were sent off to A.A.W.S., and the green light to proceed came back in February 2002.

in the United States, says that when he arrived back at Riga in 1998, he was invited to help with the translation of the Big Book. That effort had already been underway for five years.

"Our translation group consisted of me, from the U.S.A., with 16 years of sobriety; a Latvian poet who could read English; a music teacher who could read the German translation; and a geography teacher," says Uldis, whose experience mirrors that of translating projects in other countries.

"I feel that someone on the team needs to understand American history of the 1930s and be familiar with the slang of that time. Since I had lived in the U.S. and was 60 years old, I was familiar with a lot of the terms in the original Big Book," he says.

"Finally, after years of work, we sent the Latvian translation via e-mail to G.S.O. New York in July 2003, and received a review by a translator unknown to us but of good professional abilities. We reviewed the corrections and agreed or disagreed with comments. In any case, that translator's work was excellent."

Over the next year and a half, chapters went back and forth between the translating group in Riga and A.A.W.S. in New York. Last spring, the Latvian Big Book was published.

"We did not mind the time it took to double-check the translation, as I have already received raves about the readability and the fact that the work has feelings associated with it," says Uldis.

"I believe it carries the message as it was in the original."

In Israel, work to translate the Big Book into Hebrew has been underway for three and a half years. Ioni R., an A.A. in Tel Aviv, says that translations from the Big Book that he encountered when he first got sober in July 2001 fell short of fluid, modern Hebrew. "On my own I started to do a translation of Bill's Story from the Big Book," says

As regards the vetting process the translation undergoes at G.S.O. in New York, Ioni says, "we are very willing to play the game, play by the rules to get this translation approved. The assessment process is fine with us. Everything seems high quality and nothing goes unchecked."

Nine chapters had already been completed this past summer. "It has taken some time, but I looked on the work as service," says Ioni. "Maybe after this is done we can proceed to translate other stuff."

■ Knocking on the Right Door

Over the summer, an A.A. member from Kansas, Tim D., was in New York City and headed for the General Service Office. But he had the wrong address, and found himself knocking on a door about four blocks wide of the mark. No one answered, but he nonetheless soon found his way to the G.S.O.

The episode, though, brought back a memory of his father, a man who had a problem with alcohol. Tim's father had for many years carried in his wallet a newspaper clipping that mentioned the address of an A.A. meeting, just in case. One day, he headed for that address, but when he found it and knocked on the door the man who answered said there was no longer an A.A. meeting there. He invited Tim's father in, though, and made a few phone calls.

They had an A.A. meeting that evening, the first one held in that location in years. It was also the beginning of 13 years of continuous sobriety for Tim's father, who died sober at 78 years old.

■ Intergroups Meet In Annual Exchange of Info and Inspiration

Intergroup offices appeared in the first decade of Alcoholics Anonymous. In 1941, Chicago established what Bill W. called "A.A.'s first organized local service center" (*Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, p. 23). In the following two years intergroups started in New York, Columbus, Ohio, and Los Angeles.

According to Bill, it had begun "to dawn upon A.A. that group responsibility would have to reach much further than the meeting hall doorstep.... Groups in densely populated areas saw they would have to form associations, open small offices, pay a few full-time secretaries" (*The Language of the Heart*, p. 132).

Today there are about 500 intergroup or central offices in the United States and Canada, including local answering services.

About 140 representatives from these offices came together recently for the 20th Annual Intergroup Seminar, in Charlotte, North Carolina. The seminar, which is organized around general sharing sessions, workshops, and presentations, is an opportunity for intergroups to learn from each other.

Many intergroups are, in effect, small businesses and much of what is discussed at the seminar revolves around the nuts and bolts of running an office, including salary scales, health insurance, pensions, and hiring and retaining of talented workers.

"It's a business, and the business is helping drunks," according to one office manager who spoke at a sharing session. This same observer contended that an "awful lot of intergroups struggle because they are not well-grounded in business principles."

Many, though, are professionally run. The Minneapolis office, for instance, did a study on pay scales and as a result made adjustments. Jeff N., board chair for the committee that oversees the intergroup, said, "We didn't know if our benefits and pay were comparable to the market. When we did the research and found we were in fact not in line, we raised them."

Of course, intergroups differ from businesses in various ways. For one thing, steering committees or executive boards oversee an intergroup's operations. That relationship typically has to be built over time. Ideally, the board will set clear policy and then let the office manager run the day-to-day operation.

According to one office manager at the seminar, "sometimes the relationship between the board and the intergroup manager works well, and sometimes not. My board lets me do my job. I'm the board's business manager."

Intergroups count heavily on volunteers, making it critical that they be managed well.

Bruce P., who runs Chicago's intergroup and who chaired the workshop on volunteers and staffing, said,

"we have about 3,400 meetings that we are directing callers to. We put a lot of effort into training our volunteers and we make sure they have at their disposal whatever they need to do their job, including Twelve Step lists and directories."

Bruce said that he encourages feedback from the volunteers to make sure they are happy in the jobs they are assigned. "Sometimes volunteers will say yes to an assignment and not complain about it because they think they shouldn't say no to A.A. But we want to accommodate them as much as we can," says Bruce.

Personality issues may arise and must be dealt with, as in every work situation, he noted. On a rare occasion, says Bruce, a volunteer has overstepped the bounds and "started bossing around other volunteers. As a manager, though, I can't let that continue."

Volunteers are "vital to intergroup operations and in our office in Chicago we try to provide a good atmosphere that will attract them back."

One seemingly straightforward function of intergroups and central offices is the compiling of meeting lists. Sometimes, though, that task involves judgment calls.

Some representatives at the seminar noted that their offices do not list dual diagnosis groups. "Our heart goes out to them, and we wish them well, but we do not list them," as one attendee said. Some refuse to add the word "only" onto special interest group meetings, such as might be seen in "women-only" or "gay-only."

An intergroup office may also suggest a name change if it sees a potential for confusion, such as happened in Dallas when a group wanted to call itself the "A.A. Family Group." Jim J., head of that office, pointed out to the group contact that some might confuse the group with Al-Anon.

There are additional considerations, too. As Connie J., head of the San Diego intergroup office, explained, "we feel responsible when we list a group in our schedule and are directing people to that meeting. We want to be sure it is an A.A. meeting."

One A.A. group in San Diego is a special interest S&M group, which Connie made a point of attending when it was newly formed and looking to be listed. She found that though some people were dressed differently from what one would see at most A.A. meetings, they were talking about alcohol.

"We listed the group but asked that they change their name to something that would tip off anybody thinking of attending. We agreed on 'Sober Leather Folks,'" says Connie.

The seminar ran from registration time on Thursday evening, Sept. 29, to Sunday at noon on Oct. 2. Over that time participants covered many other subjects, including cooperation between intergroups and G.S.O. New York,

contributions, nonprofit filing, archives, and shipping and handling.

One order of business at the seminar is choosing the site of the following year's meeting, and this time Akron, Ohio, was chosen.

Intergroups are in the front ranks of Alcoholics Anonymous, the points of contact for most of those who come into the rooms. As Bill W. remarked, "they make A.A. tick" (*The Language of the Heart*, p. 133).

■ Looking at Redistricting Options

Communication among groups can break down when their number in a district reaches a point where the district committee member—the D.C.M.—is unable to stay in touch with them all.

A district may deal with this by pursuing one form or another of redistricting, such as splitting itself into two or more parts, each with its own D.C.M. Alternatively, a district might create subdistricts. The choice is up to the local A.A. members; what works for some districts may not work for others.

Area 6, California Northern Coastal, to cite one example of how an area approached redistricting, has 22 districts that have been divided into about 130 subdistricts. Each of these subdistricts elects a local committee member (L.C.M.).

Depending on area practice, L.C.M.s may or may not be voting members of the area committee and may or may not hold regular meetings with the G.S.R.s in their subdistricts.

Each area goes about redistricting in its own way. One example is from North Florida, which agreed on the following at an area conference in 1995: "When a district reaches 20 or more groups, it may elect local committee members for each combination of 10 groups. The L.C.M. will function as an assistant to the D.C.M. and will not have a vote at the assembly."

As spelled out in *The A.A. Service Manual*, "Good communication and cooperation among groups, districts, and areas is important when redistricting or other changes in district structure are undertaken. There are many variations, but the goal is the same: to take care of expansion at the district level." (p. S31)

According to Butch W., who served as alternate delegate for California Northern Coastal in 2003 and 2004, "as far as we were concerned, splitting a district is a last resort. In effect, when you redistrict, you are creating two new districts, not one. Among other considerations are financial ones. The same number of groups must now support twice as many officers, plus rent. Also, too many districts can make for unwieldy area assembly meetings."

During the time he did service in Area 6, members from a number of districts came forward at area assemblies to propose dividing up their districts.

"When someone from a district called for splitting that district, we did not want to talk them out of it, but we would ask a few questions. First we would ask: do you have all your service positions filled? We'd also ask what percentage of their groups have active G.S.R.s and how splitting the district would improve that? Finally, we would ask them what the district has done to encourage participation, such as putting out a newsletter or organizing a day-long A.A. event," says Butch.

The point of posing these questions, he says, was to get the A.A. members in the district to consider their situations. A.A. members that want to split their district, he says, may be under the misconception that dividing their district into two is automatically going to boost participation and enthusiasm for service. Again, though, the decision is up to the district itself, says Butch.

The same holds true in Area 59, Eastern Pennsylvania. The delegate there, Gary L., says, "the Area does not approve or disapprove district splits; we view it as a local matter. We do, however, counsel that it not be done impulsively and we strongly urge them to include at least the area officers and perhaps even the area committee in their discussions, not with an eye toward talking them out of it, but simply to give them a broader range of experience to draw upon. If there are simpler solutions to their problems then they are certainly urged to try those first before resorting to a split."

Nevertheless, his area was actively redistricting in the 1980s and into the 1990s. As Gary reports, "Area 59 has experienced district splits in 1981, 1982, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1992, and 1998. In three of those years, there were at least two separate splits. About 60% of the time it was one district splitting into two, and about 40% of the time it was one district splitting into three. We have gone from 23 districts in 1980 to 47 districts currently."

As Gary points out, "Eastern Pennsylvania is a pretty big chunk of land—at least relative to our neighbors in the Northeast Region. That may have been the motivation for many of the splits."

In 2004, "we had our most recent dealing with the issue—an attempted split that was ultimately voted down by the district," says Gary.

■ Update for A.A. Directories

Starting in January 2006 a reminder will be mailed to all delegates, area chairs and area registrars advising them that it is time for the annual Group Updates to the A.A. Directories. Our Area Download Application (MS Access) will be available for the area registrars to bring their area records up-to-date. Deadline for all information in May 1, 2006.

■ Big Book Study Guides: Reviewing a Position Paper

Sober alcoholics are notorious for refusing to be told what to do, say, or think. The Steps are “suggested,” and experienced sponsors are wise enough not to give newcomers hard and fast directives. Yet paradoxically, a surprising number of members seek out and rely on study guides when they begin delving into A.A. literature. A variety of such guides are available, published by non-A.A. entities. While the General Service Board neither endorses nor opposes these publications, we have historically declined to produce any kind of interpretive material ourselves, choosing instead to let our literature stand on its own.

In 1977, faced with a rising number of requests from non-A.A. sources and some A.A. members to reprint portions of the Big Book and other material in study guides, the directors of A.A. World Services, Inc. took a hard look at the subject and appointed a committee to explore the question. Members of the committee unanimously recommended that the board not grant permission to outside entities to use excerpts from our literature in study guides, and that A.A. itself should not publish study guides.

The resulting paper, “Big Book Study Guides and Other Interpretations of the A.A. Program: A Position Paper,” begins with thoughts of several of the directors who made up the committee. For example, one director wrote: “Part of the beauty and magic of A.A. is that persons from all walks of life with varied backgrounds may benefit from the Big Book, the Steps, the Traditions, the Concepts, from their own points of view. Placing guidelines on paper seems to say, ‘This is the way—the only way.’”

“The thrust of our literature, our program, the Steps, the groups, and the meetings are all designed, and effectively so, to facilitate self-diagnosis and self-action within the A.A. environment. I see our literature, particularly the

books, as being study guides. It’s all there. . . . I almost have the feeling that the words are living, changing, growing. I know this isn’t so as they are the same and only I change and grow. But this phenomenon takes place because the words are the words; they are unlayered, uninterpreted, standing on their own. One of our slogans is ‘Keep it Simple.’ I believe our books are just simple enough to stand as they are and just complex enough to live and grow.

“I understand our program to be a spiritual program. I know it has been and is for me. However, I don’t believe any amount of study with or without interpretive guides could have given me this. The words were part of it, but the interaction with other A.A.s at meetings and in face to face discussion is what really got me into action. Knowing what I should do has been less of a problem than having the faith to undertake the first quivering right actions. Exposure to living testament, not written words, provides the spark of faith that results finally in determined action. I would be sorely troubled to think that we believed that this would be better packaged than it already is. I think it would be very unwise to tamper with a delicate balance that seems to be working as they say, ‘just fine,’ for alcoholics who want it.”

Another director felt this way: “My knowledge of recovery has been received in the Fellowship through the experience of one drunk sharing with another drunk and it was not received on an instructive basis or in a classroom atmosphere. I believe that we in A.A. communicate with each other in a language of the heart, and this type of communication would be extremely difficult with the use of study guides. . . .”

“Finally, Tradition Two tells me we have but one ultimate authority—a loving God as he expresses himself in our group conscience. It seems to me if we allow interpretations of the Big Book through study guides, we will also undermine our ultimate authority.”

The final policy statement reads as follows: “The A.A. World Services Board of Directors feels strongly that per-



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mission should not be granted to outside publishers or other parties to reprint A.A. literature for the purpose of study guides or interpretive or explanatory texts, etc. If such interpretive or study guides are to be prepared, they should be published by A.A. World Services, Inc.

“The Board recognizes, however, that A.A. is a program of self-diagnosis, self-motivation and self-action—and that the use of study guides, courses, classes or interpretations is therefore not generally appropriate. The program is spiritual rather than academic. There are no authorities in A.A. and even a self-appointed ‘teacher’ has feet of clay. Hence, it is preferable that the individual member or prospect interpret the literature according to his/her own point of view. For these reasons, the Board does not plan to publish study guides or interpretations of A.A. literature at this time.”

Of course, while Alcoholics Anonymous has declined to participate in the production of interpretive material, it does not oppose their publication or their use by A.A. members. Many members get in touch with the General Service Office, asking whether they can use study guides. A letter written in 1985 by Bob P., then general manager of G.S.O., is typical of the replies to such inquiries: “I don’t see that the use of this material by your group would be contrary to either the letter or the spirit of the Twelve Traditions. ... And if [your group] wish to use mimeographed guides or forms to help the study of the book, neither the Board nor this office either endorse or oppose such materials.” Bob went on to explain the position of the A.A.W.S. Board, and enclosed the 1977 position paper as background.

■ Holiday Gift Ideas

Among items that would make suitable gifts for friends in A.A. is the new compact disc set from the Archives at the General Service Office. The two CDs contain talks by Bill W., including one on the early years of Alcoholics Anonymous (M-72; \$10).

Available until current supplies run out is the souvenir book from the International Convention at Toronto, *70 Years of Growth* (B-56; \$10). This heavily illustrated decade-by-decade timeline of A.A.’s growth throughout the world comes with a DVD containing audio material and additional images.

Available also is a boxed set of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th edition, and *Experience, Strength & Hope* (B-11; \$15), which contains the 56 stories dropped when new editions of the Big Book were produced. These stories, which have been unavailable for a time, are now rejoined in this volume. The boxed set comes with a 16-page booklet on the history of the writing of the Big Book.

Another gift idea is a recently published collection of 37 stories from the A.A. Grapevine called *I Am Responsible:*

The Hand of AA (\$7.95). The stories focus on how A.A. members carry the message to other alcoholics.

Also from the Grapevine is the wall calendar (\$7), with photographs and brief quotes selected from Grapevine articles. The quotes aren’t directly related to either A.A. or alcoholism, so the calendar may be displayed anonymously. There is also the pocket planner from the Grapevine (\$4).

Subscriptions to *Box 4-5-9* (\$6 a year for 10 copies of each issue) and the A.A. Grapevine (\$18) have for years been popular gift ideas. For Spanish-speaking A.A.s there is *La Viña* (\$7.50).

For Grapevine material check online at aagrapevine.org, or write to AA Grapevine, Grand Central Station, Box 1980, New York, NY 10163-1980. The other items can be ordered through your local intergroup or central office or from G.S.O. Shipping charges may apply.

■ Service Fair Aims To Boost Participation

District 14 in Gainesville, Florida, was looking for a way to generate enthusiasm for service work when it hit upon the idea of a service fair.

“District meetings had become rather routine,” says Dan L., alternate D.C.M. and chair of the committee that organized the fair. “The service committee chairs were reporting that their meetings were not well attended and there was not much participation. It was depressing,” he says.

The first step to making the fair a reality occurred in May when two local A.A. groups formed an ad-hoc planning committee. The local intergroup and district office approved the idea and contributed \$300 each, with the two A.A. groups contributing another \$100 each.

“That was the beginning and from there the event just took off,” says Dan. “From the first, we wanted to generate enthusiasm and the idea that service could be fun.”

The first meeting of the newly formed Service Fair Committee attracted 30 volunteers, included some who had never been involved in service. “I was flabbergasted at the number of people who showed up,” says Dan.

The event took place July 30, with more than 300 people attending. A tent was set up in which each of the service committees—accessibilities, archives, corrections, C.P.C./P.I., Grapevine, literature, and treatment—had booths, and four local treatment centers had been invited to the fair. The intergroup office was also represented. It sold literature, while also aiming to attract volunteers to cover phones.

Anyone visiting a booth was given a ticket to be used for various fun activities. There was a correctional service “jail,” for which people used tickets to incarcerate their fellows and other tickets to bail them out.

There was also a dunking booth. A dollar bought two

balls and the chance to drop “a local A.A. notable,” as Dan puts it, in the water.

There was a D.J. spinning records and an M.C. who delivered a steady stream of announcements. Food consisted of “N. Central Florida Intergroup’s World Famous BBQ Chicken Dinner,” as Dan describes it.

“The event was a phenomenal success. The booths were visited by lots of people, and Grapevine reported that 127 attendees filled out surveys,” says Dan.

The delegate for the area, Michael S., delivered his report at the event, instead of at the district business meeting. For many of the upwards of 70 people attending it was their first time hearing a delegate’s report.

Since the fair, attendance is up in the service committees, including the Treatment Committee, which had 15 at its most recent meeting, compared with the usual half dozen.

Intergroup signed up volunteers to cover the phones. “Our Intergroup now has a phone volunteer to answer the A.A. phone 24/7,” says Dan.

“There is a stigma that service is no more than a necessary evil, and I think something like our fair showed that that is not the case.”

The fair was officially designated “the first annual,” and “we plan on repeating this, and I would recommend it highly to other districts. It was not that hard to do and it demonstrated that the A.A. community responds to calls for service.”

C.P.C.

■ Reaching Professionals Where They Learn in North Carolina

Many seasoned professionals are familiar with A.A. and how we can cooperate with them to help alcoholics stop drinking and lead sober, productive lives. But what about those who don’t know us, like so many of the professionals in training or in continuing education who, often as not, confuse A.A. with Triple A? How will they learn about us if we don’t tell them?

Recognizing the need to acquaint these students in medicine, nursing, social work, law and criminal justice, to name some, members of North Carolina’s joint committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community and Public Information are available to schools to offer information about A.A. Says area chairman Craig P.: “Our commitment started growing out of a C.P.C. presence last year in Asheville, where we were trying to inform and stimulate the local community, and it is still going strong.”

Some area C.P.C./P.I. committees “have made inroads with local community colleges,” Craig says. “And last October we provided an A.A. informational forum—about recovery from alcoholism and how to make an effective A.A. referral—before the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers, as part of the State Bar Association’s mandated yearly continuing education program. More than 100 people came and were very responsive.”

Wanting never to miss a chance “to get our foot in the door,” Craig explains, “we try to cover as many bases as we can. Just this June we hosted two barbecue-lunch events for professionals, one in Goldsboro and another in Garner, and they went very well.” He further reports that plans are in the works for the C.P.C./P.I. committee to provide the same type of seminars for continuing education conferences of both the District Court Judges and the Superior Court Judges.

We’re also looking to hold an informational session for anywhere from 700 to 1,000 people at the Physicians Assistant Continuing Education Conference. He notes that “one of our C.P.C./P.I. members, who makes numerous presentations to professionals, “is himself an anaesthesiologist, but he never discloses his professional ties when speaking for A.A.”

In its efforts to distribute A.A. literature to professionals where they meet, the committee relies frequently on its portable exhibit that carries a variety of books, pamphlets and other information. “The one we have is really massive,” Craig says. “We’re getting ready to downsize to something smaller and more manageable, maybe with the technology to show public service announcements or films.

Craig is a member of the Green Acres group in Goldsboro. He says that almost without exception, the area groups are very much part of C.P.C./P.I. service work. “I feel that service is good for me,” he says, “and most of the members I know feel the same. In the past I did a lot of sponsoring to stay sober, but I never knew that service would give me the same feelings of being one with the world.”



Twelve Tips on Keeping Your Holiday Season Sober and Joyous

Holiday parties without liquid spirits may still seem a dreary prospect to new A.A.s. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays of our lives sober—an idea we would never have dreamed of, wanted, or believed possible when drinking. Here are some tips for having an all-round ball without a drop of alcohol.



1 *Line up extra A.A. activities for the holiday season.* Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.



2 *Be host to A.A. friends, especially newcomers.* If you don't have a place where you can throw a formal party, take one person to a diner and spring for the coffee.



3 *Keep your A.A. telephone list with you all the time.* If a drinking urge or panic comes—postpone everything else until you've called an A.A.

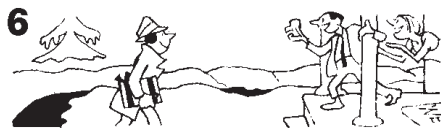


4 *Find out about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations*

given by groups in your area, and go. If you're timid, take someone newer than you are.



5 *Skip any drinking occasion you are nervous about.* Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put the talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life.



6 *If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an A.A. with you, keep some candy handy.*



7 *Don't think you have to stay late.* Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.



8 *Worship in your own way.*



9 *Don't sit around brooding.* Catch up on those books, museums, walks, and letters.



10 *Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations.* Remember—"one day at a time."



11 *Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy.* Maybe you cannot give material gifts—but this year, you can give love.



12 *"Having had a . . ."* No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.

Calendar of Events

Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers, not as an endorsement by the General Service Office. For any additional information, please use the addresses provided.

December

- 2-4—Rogers, Arkansas. Southwest Regional Forum. Write: Forum Coordinator, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org
- 3-6—Fuengirola, Spain. Costa Del Sol Convención. Write: Ch., Apartado 106, Fuengirola, Malaga, Spain 29640; www.aaspain.org
- 16-18—Papeete, Tahiti. A.A. in Tahiti 20th Anniversary Conv. Write: Ch., BP 50097-98716 Pirae, Tahiti, Polynesie Francaise

January

- 6-8—Garden City, Kansas. Southwest Kansas Conf. Write: Ch., Box 1604, Dodge City, KS 67801
- 13-15—South Padre Island, Texas. Sobriety by the Sea. Write: Ch., 1025 Tarpon Ave., Port Isabel, TX 78578
- 13-15—Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. 2006 A.A. Conv. Write: Ch., 827 Union Pacific PMB 078-174, Laredo, TX 76045-9452; www.aapvconvention.com
- 19-22—Raleigh, North Carolina. 39th Tar Heel Mid-Winter Conf. Write: Ch., Box 18412, Raleigh, NC 27619; nconference@nc.rr.com
- 20-22—Orlando, Florida. Big Book Workshop Weekend. Write: Ch., Box 951903, Lake Mary, FL 32795
- 20-22—Mahnomon, Minnesota. Wild Rice Round-Up. Write: Ch., Box 203, Mahnomon, MN 56557
- 26-29—Fort Walton Beach, Florida. 15th Annual Emerald Coast Jamboree. Write: Ch., Box 875, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549
- 27-28—Springfield, Illinois. The Journey Continues "Big Book Study" Conf. Write: Ch., Box 10244, Springfield, IL 62791

February

- 2-5—Cocoa Beach, Florida. Spacecoast Round Up. Write: Ch., 720 E. New Haven Ave., Suite #3, Melbourne, FL 32901; www.aaspacecoast.org
- 3-5—Corpus Christi, Texas. 52nd Annual Coastal Bend Jamboree. Write: Ch., Box 60664, Corpus Christi, TX 78466
- 3-5—Ostend, Belgium. 17th Annual North Sea Conv. Write: Ch., Avenue des Tilleuls 13/4, B-4802 Verviers, Belgium; nsc@popmail.com

- 9-12—Minneapolis, Minnesota. 42nd International A.A. Women's Conf. Write: Ch., Box 4262, St. Paul, MN 55104-0262; iaawc2006@yahoo.com
- 10-12—North Little Rock, Arkansas. District 9 - 2006 Winter Holiday Conv. Write: Ch., 1210 Wolfe St., Little Rock, AR 72202; winterholiday2006@svbell.net
- 10-12—Imperial, California. 16th Annual Imperial Valley Round-Up. Write: Ch., Box 795, El Centro, CA 92243
- 10-12—Syracuse, New York. Salt City Mid Winter Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 367, Syracuse, NY 13209; syracusemidwinter-roundup@yahoo.com
- 17-19—Burlington, Iowa. Southeastern Iowa Round-Up. Write: Ch., Box 8, Fort Madison, IA 52627
- 17-19—El Paso, Texas. 44th Annual El Paso Jamboree/Sobriety on the Border. Write: Ch., Box 3115, El Paso TX 79923-3115
- 17-19—Virginia Beach, Virginia. 30th Oceanfront Conf. Write: Ch., Box 66173, Virginia Beach, VA 23466
- 17-19—Pattaya, Thailand. 11th Annual Thailand Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 1551, Nana Post Office, Bangkok 10110, Thailand; info@aathailand.org
- 17-20—Mansfield, Massachusetts. 17th Annual Southeastern Massachusetts Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 8384, Warwick, RI 02888; www.semru.org
- 23-26—Santa Clara, California. ACYPAA XXXIV. Write: Ch., Box 6807, San Carlos, CA 94070; www.acypaaxxiv.org
- 24-26—Burlington, Vermont. 15th Annual Northeast Regional A.A. Service Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 901, Castleton, VT 05735
- 24-26—Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Western Canada Regional Forum. Write: Forum Coordinator, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org
- 24-26—Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada. Midwinter Round Up. Write: Ch., 27 Beaver Crescent, Apt 9, Dartmouth, NS B2V 1C8

March

- 3-5—Jekyll Island, Georgia. 19th Jekyll Island Unity Weekend. Write: Ch., 34 Glen Falls Dr., Ormond Beach, FL 32174; www.jekyllislandaa.net
- 10-12—Lore City, Ohio. Area 53 Mini-Conf. Write: Ch., Box 2131, Columbus, OH 43216; www.area53aa.org
- 10-12—Québec City, Québec, Canada. Congrès A.A. de Québec. Write: Ch., 2350 ave du Colisée, Loc 2-16, Québec, QC G1L 5A1; CongresdeQuebec@hotmail.com
- 17-19—Princeton, West Virginia. Area 73 Spring Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 143, Bluefield, WV 24605; www.aawv.org
- 17-19—Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Ontario Regional Conf. Write: Ch., Box 80084, 2850 Lakeshore Blvd. W., Toronto, ON M8V 4A1; www.aatoronto.org
- 24-26—Boca Raton, Florida. 2006 South Florida Big Book Step Study Conv. Write: Ch., Box 1624, Jupiter, FL 33468-1624; www.bbssconvention.org
- 24-26—Ames, Iowa. Aim for Ames Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 2522, Ames, IA 50010; www.aimforames.org
- 24-26—Newport, Rhode Island. 30th Rhode Island Conv. Write: Ch., Box 81063, Warwick, RI 02888; www.rhodeisland-aa.org/ricc
- 24-26—Richmond, Virginia. Serenity Weekend. Write: Ch., Box 832, Midlothian, VA 23113
- 31-1—Tarrytown, New York. 40th Annual SENY Conv. Write: Ch., Box 875, Bronx, NY 10462
- 31-2—Visalia, California. NCCAA 35th Annual Conf. Write: Ch., Box 4321, Visalia, CA 93278; handconference@sbcglobal.net
- 31-2—Itasca, Illinois. Northern Illinois Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 1434, Elgin, IL 60121

Planning a Future Event?

To be included in the Box 4-5-9 Calendar, information must be received at G.S.O. three months prior to the event. We list events of two or more days.

For your convenience and ours — please type or print the information to be listed on the Bulletin Board page, and mail to us:

Date of event: from _____ to _____, 20 _____

Name of event: _____

Place (city, state or prov.): _____

For information, write: (exact mailing address) _____

Contact phone # (for office use only): _____

Cut along dotted line, and post this page on your group's bulletin board



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