



# AA EXCHANGE BULLETIN

NEWS AND NOTES ON ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WORLDWIDE

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## TWO AREAS WILL NAME TRUSTEES

### '56 Fund Appeal Notes Growth Of A. A. Service

Demands upon A.A.'s General Service Headquarters for service to alcoholics throughout the world are increasing steadily.

That's the theme of the traditional Fall Group Fund Appeal letter being sent to all groups this month in the name of the General Service Conference of A.A., representing the membership as a whole.

Also emphasized is specific financial information showing that a substantial percentage of the budget required for 1956 activities remains to be raised before the end of the year. (The bulk of contributions to the Group Fund is customarily received during the last quarter of each year). The letter points out that no financial appeal for support of the General Service Conference will be made this year.

Contributions should be made payable to "Group Fund." They must be received on or before December 31 for crediting in the 1957 World Directory.

### Headquarters Briefs

#### AREAS TO NAME TRUSTEES

Two A.A. areas have been asked to nominate a member to serve on the General Service Board of Alcoholics. (Page 1)

#### FALL FUND APPEAL

Groups throughout the world are being asked this month to participate in the traditional Fall Fund Appeal to support A.A.'s worldwide services. (Page 1.)

#### INFORMATION, PLEASE

English-speaking groups overseas are asked to specify if they have wire or tape recording machines for use in connection with meetings.

Also, General Service Headquarters will appreciate having the names of members known to be hospitalized on a long-term basis. If your group knows of such members, please send their names and addresses to G.S.H.

### British Columbia & Pennsylvania Selections Due

Members of A.A. groups in Pennsylvania and British Columbia, Canada are being asked this month to submit, through their Area committees, the names of two alcoholics to replace two retiring Trustees of the General Service Board of A.A., the custodian of the Fellowship's movement-wide traditions and service agencies.

The significance of the action to be taken by the two areas lies in the fact that the new Trustees will be selected in accordance with the detailed and completely democratic procedures authorized by the movement itself during the course of the 1955 General Service Conference.

These procedures, designed to assure rotation of area representation in A.A.'s "most responsible" service positions, contained the following general specifications:

1. One alcoholic (Class B) Trustee from Canada should always fill one of the seven Class B Trusteeships on
- (Continued on Page 2)

### Brazilians Seek Translation Help Optimism Rules In El Salvador

A Portuguese translation of the "Big Book" would be most helpful to Brazilian members and their families, Luiz M., secretary of the Grupo Central in Rio de Janeiro, suggests.

While it is not possible for the General Service Board to approve a standard Portuguese edition of the book at the present time, it is possible that a Portuguese translation can be mimeographed for distribution within A.A. in Brazil.

Members of El Pionero Grupo, San Salvador, El Salvador, are planning to insert a blind ad in the local newspaper in an effort to make A.A.'s availability known to Salvadoreños, Eddie F. reports.

Although local attitudes discourage approaches to the A.A. program, all groups in the country are still functioning, "ready to grow and here to stay," Eddie writes optimistically.

## GROUPS MARK GRATITUDE 'WEEK', TRADITIONS 'MONTH'

November is "Traditions Month" in A.A. Since 1949, when the idea was first publicized on a movement-wide basis by The A.A. Grapevine, groups in all parts of the world have set aside one or more meetings for special review and study of the twelve principles that have helped to assure group survival and A.A. unity.

This year "Traditions Month" will have special significance with the setting aside, in the United States and many other sections, of Thanksgiving Week as "A.A. Gratitude Week," a designation inspired and approved by the 1956 General Service Conference. It is hoped that a large number of groups will devote their meeting(s) during

the week of November to the theme of "gratitude for the great gift of sobriety."

The November *Grapevine* features two articles by Bill W. on the Twelve Traditions, "Our Keys to Survival and Growth," in which the surviving co-founder points out that the Traditions are as important to the groups and service centers as

the Twelve Steps are to the individual. The second article, "Our Experience Has Taught Us . . ." reminds members that the Traditions were not carved out of thin air but derive from hard experience.

A third *Grapevine* article is a "completely personal interpretation" of the Traditions.

## British Columbia & Pennsylvania Selections Due

(Continued from Page 1)

- the 15-man Board, with the selection rotating from Province to Province.
2. The United States was divided into five Areas designated A, B, C, D and E, from which, as vacancies occurred, Trustees would be selected in rotation. (Within each Area, the section with the largest A.A. population would have the privilege of nominating the first Trustee from the Area; when the Area next became eligible to nominate a Trustee, the privilege would go to the section with the next largest A.A. population.)
  3. The "non-political" electoral methods outlined in Bill's "Third Legacy Manual" were approved for selection of nominees.

One of the retiring Trustees is Adam C. of Toronto, which has the largest A.A. population in Canada. Thus British Columbia, with the *second largest* number of Canadian A.A.'s, is being asked to nominate a Trustee this time.

Similarly, Pennsylvania A.A.'s are being asked to nominate a Trustee at this time because the Keystone State has the largest A.A. population in Area "A." Since Pennsylvania has two Delegates to the General Service Conference from both the Eastern and Western parts of the State, selection of a nominee will involve joint action by two Area Committees.

Alcoholic Trustees serve four-terms and, in accordance with A.A. Tradition, may not succeed themselves. (Non-Alcoholic Trustees serve on an annual basis but may succeed themselves).

In all matters of this type, final decisions on local methods of nominating a Trustee are left to the Delegate and Committeemen in each Area. They must decide whether an Area Assembly should be convened or whether they themselves should propose a nominee from the Area.

## 40 Members from 5 Nations At 4th European Round-Up

A decision to try to acquaint physicians and members of the clergy with the availability of A.A. in Europe was one of the highlights of the Fourth Annual European A.A. Round-Up in Weisbaden, Germany, earlier this Fall, according to an outstanding report from Millie G., received recently at G.S.H.

*(Editor's Note: Secretaries of special A.A. conferences, conventions and round-ups throughout the world are urged to report such gatherings promptly to the Bulletin so that adequate coverage can be planned for such events.)*

Forty members from five European nations attended the Weisbaden meeting which consisted of three sessions, one of them "closed," over a two-day weekend period. A family Group meeting was also held. Nearly all those attending are members of the Armed Forces stationed in Germany, England, Holland, France and Austria.

Doctors and clergymen were

poorly represented at the meeting this year, Millie reports, suggesting that more intensive follow-ups of written invitations should be adopted in the future.

Members at the Round-Up also decided to keep the central file for Europe with the Weisbaden-Frankfurt group. Other groups throughout Europe have been asked to submit reports on new members and other local developments every four months.

Although the Armed Forces Radio Network carries spot announcements on A.A. and contacts are possible through many chapains, the growth of the Fellowship in military installations abroad seems to be inhibited by the reluctance of some alcoholics to disclose their problem to men and women of lower military rank, Millie notes.

She concludes her report on an optimistic note: "We have a good group of A.A.'s over here and it is keeping us sober for today. We hope to be able to carry the message to more sick alcoholics here in Europe.

## Intergroup Service Being Considered By Twelve Groups In Puerto Rico

Twelve groups, two "24-Hour Clubs" and one loner are flourishing in Puerto Rico, according to latest reports received at G.S.H. Two of the groups on the Island, where A.A. is now rounding out its first decade, are in correctional institutions.

The growth of the A.A. service concept in Puerto Rico is further illustrated by steps now being taken at monthly "intergroup" meetings sponsored by the Goodman Group in the San Juan area. Plans for the establishment of an Intergroup Office are under consideration.

Groups in the San Juan area include the San Juan, Goodman (Santurce), Santurce English Speaking Group, Hato Rey, Caparra Terrace, Presidio Insular and the "Ultima Copa" group in the State penitentiary at Rio Piedras. A lone member

is registered at Catano, across the bay from San Juan.

There is a group in the District Jail, as well as an "outside" group in the city of Ponce which, like San Juan, also has a clubhouse. The Ponce group recently had the distinction of being the first to list a Latin woman as a member.

Single groups are located at Cayey, San German and Aguadilla, where there is a group at the Ramey Air Force base. The San German group, in the Western part of the Island, is one of the newest groups and has approximately a dozen members.

Spanish-speaking groups throughout the world will be interested in the attractive and informative mimeographed monthly bulletin, "Sobriedad" published in Puerto Rico for the first time last month for the benefit of all Island groups.

## HOSPITALS

### Hospital Group In New Zealand Is Number 239

#### NEW GROUPS

State Homeopathic Hospital  
MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

St. Anthony's Group  
St. Anthony's Hospital  
WOODHAVEN, N. Y.

Chippewa Lake Group  
Guy Clark Mem. Hospital  
CHIPPEWA LAKE, OHIO

Formation of a new group at Queen Mary Hospital, Hammer, New Zealand, has just been announced by Arthur M., acting group secretary. The unit is the 239th hospital group to be registered at G.S.H.

"This hospital is run purely for nerve cases, many of whom have been admitted owing to breakdowns due to alcoholic indulgence. The average time a patient remains here is two months. Our chief objects are to first get members interested while they are here, then to put them in touch with the nearest group upon discharge. Although still in its infancy, the group has already done much good."

#### VISIT WARDS

At Longview State Hospital, Cincinnati, Ohio, members not only attend A.A. meetings but are now permitted to "take meetings" to ward patients, Floyd L. points out in a recent letter to G.S.H.

Each Sunday afternoon, A.A. members are allowed to enter the alcoholic wards of male patients whose length of residence in the hospital is not sufficient to permit them to attend regular Tuesday night meetings.

"After five weeks we look back on these efforts and find that out of the ten original alcoholics to whom we spoke, nine are now members of the regular Tuesday Night Group," Roy points out.

Following a recent change in attitude toward A.A. therapy at the hospital, patient supervision no longer includes meetings.

# 400 Celebrate 10th Anniversary Of 'Key' Group

## NEW GROUP

Camp Group  
Flambeau State Forestry  
Camp  
HAWKINS, WISCONSIN

More than 400 visitors attended the tenth anniversary meeting of the Golden Key Group at Draper, Utah, State Prison, in late September, John M., secretary, reported to G.S.H. recently. Visitors included members from eleven Western states and Georgia who were attending the Skyline Conference of A.A. in nearby Salt Lake City. The group is believed to be the second oldest prison unit in the country.

John recently completed editing a three-hour tape recording of the anniversary meeting down to a compact 90-minute presentation, available to any institutional group with a  $3\frac{3}{4}$  speed recorder. Groups requesting the recording should send along a standard 1200-foot reel of tape, on which the program will be dubbed from John's master tape.

The group's magazine, *New Target*, has been revived after a lapse of nine months. It features a policy of printing 90% original material and only 10% reprint material. John says a recent survey showed that most penal A.A. magazines contain roughly 80% reprint material and 20% original material.

Local groups in various parts of Australia are increasingly interested in developing effective sponsorship programs for members released from prisons "down under," Midge M., of Armidale, New South Wales, reports. Groups in his area are anxious to obtain all available suggestions from the States and elsewhere, he suggests.

Directory and Registration cards have been mailed recently to all known Hospital and Penal groups to obtain up-to-date information for the 1957 A.A. World Directory.

## INSTITUTIONAL

### Better Days Come True

"Quite a few members" have left the Better Days (correctional) Group at Nashville Tennessee for the free world during the past six months, Herman C., informs G.S.H.

"The wonderful part of it is that all who have left are still on the program in their home towns," he notes. Present membership of the Better Days Group is 27, an increase of seven since the latest previous report.

### Priest Notes

#### Aid To Inmates

"Both from the standpoint of better prison adjustment and a successful creative living on the outside, A.A. stands out as having made an extraordinarily good contribution to our institution," Father R. J. Walsh, Catholic Chaplain at the Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, State Penitentiary, declared in a recent letter to A.A.s who have supported the institutional group.

The letter marked the second anniversary of the founding of the prison group at Bellefonte.

Membership in the Future Outlook and Fellowship Groups at the Pendeton, Indiana, Reformatory has increased from 200 to 230 since the most recent report, Jim H., secretary, reports.

### Candidate for 'Smallest A.A. Town'

What is the smallest village in the world with an established A.A. group?

Orr, Minnesota, is a candidate for the title, according to a recent note from Orlin O., local group secretary. Orr, with a total population of 300 has had an A.A. group for eight years.

"At present we have only four members but over the past eight years we have had a score

## JAILED 43 YEARS, CREDITS A.A. FOR NEW OUTLOOK & RELEASE

G.S.H. is indebted to Earl R. of Joliet, an "outside" member, for the following inspirational report on how A.A. works in penal institutions.

One of the members at Stateville was granted a parole last week after having served 43 years.

When he came to A.A. five years ago, he was a bitter, morose, suspicious fellow with a record of being an incorrigible. He had absolutely no belief in a Power greater than himself. After being in A.A. two years, he was given a pay job, something he had been denied previously because of his record. As time went on, he changed altogether.

He has never been one to talk a lot but I've seen him sit down with some of the younger

members and do all he could to show them that it was useless to fight the officials. When I had to go to the hospital for surgery, he came to me and said he would have me in his prayers.)

The other day he said he would have been given parole 23 years ago if he had "given up" to the kind of principles we practice in A.A. He said: "God didn't keep me here these 23 years, nor did the parole board. I kept myself here. God kept me alive and A.A. has made it possible to leave here."

If he is the only one we will ever help, and of course he isn't and will not be, I think our time has been well spent. How can we be interested in percentages when we have indirectly helped a man to find his freedom and his God?

### Group 'Intact' At Idaho Base

The Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho now has an A.A. group with three members, Roy U., reports. "All that we can expect to do at present is to remain intact, in hopes of helping someone passing through, and of course, to look for those who get reassigned here," Roy writes.

Patients at the Metropolitan Hospital in New York City recently conducted their first A.A. meeting "on their own," Joe M., group secretary reports.

### Army Doctors Back Program

A lengthy description of the operations of the Munich, Germany, A.A. group, composed almost entirely of military personnel, highlighted a mid-Summer issue of the European edition of "Stars & Stripes," recently received at G.S.H.

Founded in 1953 by "an old master sergeant and a young private," the group meets twice weekly and now has 23 members, the report says. Several races and all three major faiths are included in the membership. There is one woman member.

"Army medical authorities (at Munich) cooperate fully with the A.A. program," the U. S. Army publication notes. "Capt. Alfred Kamm, a ward psychologist, says: 'By bringing their troubles out in the open and discussing them frankly, these people succeed in desensitizing the problem of alcoholism—a major step toward recovery.'"

The article points out that alcoholics in the Munich area who need help may telephone Luftgau Military (224) 400 at any time of day or night.

## SHORT SHOTS

Forty-two new groups and eleven Loners were registered at General Service Headquarters during the period from September 14 to October 18. All five continents were represented.

Two Dutch pamphlets on A. A. are available through groups in Amsterdam. For information or copies of the pamphlets, groups are invited to write to Stichting Werkgroepen A.A., P. O. Box 1594, Amsterdam, Holland,

In our last issue we erred in referring to Captain Jack S. as the "first" Internationalist. Other seamen preceded him into A.A. but Captain Jack was the first to develop the idea of the Internationalists as a group.

Dr. J. S. M., one of the founders of A.A. in Australia, was a principal speaker on alcoholism at the recent World Health Conference in Istanbul, Turkey.

### RESULT

Groups in the Greater Detroit, Michigan, area report encouraging results as a result of the television program featuring A. A. members each Sunday afternoon over WWJ-TV. Scores of inquiries have poured into the local service center since the show was inaugurated in August.

Fay Ann P. of Braintree, Mass., a sociology major at Boston College, is writing a special term paper on A.A. She says it's her way of expressing gratitude for her fathers' seven years of sobriety in the Fellowship.

### BULLETIN EDITORS

Ann...Conference, Groups, Loners  
Eve.....Group Relations  
Hazel...Hospital & Prison Groups, Loners  
Anita.....Group Relations Ass't.  
Lib .....Information

## AGNOSTIC SEAMAN IS HELPED; 'NO LONGER ALONE' IN A. A.

*The following excerpts from a recent letter from Bill H., aboard the U. S. N. S. Mission Santa Ynez, "somewhere East of Suez and sober," require no editorial comment:*

"I was about a week dry and having tough sledding in Freeport, Texas, so in desperation I called A.A. and a cheery voice said, "Hold everything, some one will be right down!" Jim drove up shortly and it wasn't long before I was over the rough spot. I shall always have to thank him for that, Jim and many more like him.

"Another time in San Francisco, four months dry, I was walking down the street minding my own business and I passed a bar. I craved a drink so bad I was sick, but I grabbed a taxi and rushed back to a hotel room. I was too sick to even go to the Alano Club right across the street. And I said to myself again: "I have eight more hours to go before these 24 hours are up—and then I'll get drunk." But somehow I got through the night and now I can proudly say I'm five months and 15 days dry. And I never could have done it without A.A.

You see, I am an agnostic and I have no God or Higher Power

(except A.A.). A couple of times when I tried to sober up, I felt like I was fighting the battle all alone. And not having any God, and going to sea, I felt I did not have a chance. But now I have thousands of swell A.A. members behind me, all sitting in the cheering section, and I am no longer alone. I have reinforcements by the thousands and I am determined to make the program.

I am a radio operator and have been talking with another ship for the past four days. She is bound West through the Red Sea and the Suez and the operator on that ship and I have been shooting the breeze. And now tonight I look at my Directory of Internationalists and suddenly discover that there is an A.A. member aboard that ship. All this time I could have been sending him at least a "Best Regards" or an "Easy Does It!" I shall try again tomorrow but think the other ship will be out of range by then. . .

I am living a happiness that I never knew could exist upon this earth. I notice flowers in the gardens. I sit down to eat and the food has taste. Even the air smells good. My mouth is not full of cotton and I don't hear the music that's not there. Why, I have been reincarnated!

## Help To Defray Travel Expense

A.A. Groups in the Eastern Pennsylvania area have voted unanimously to underwrite a Delegates' travel expenses during his term of services at the rate of eight cents per mile. (*Editor's Note: Do any other areas have similar arrangements designed to eliminate the financial burden of Delegates' travel expenses?*)

The "Arctic Lights Group of Sunny Southern Greenland" has three members these days who are "on the ball," Sgt. Woody W. writes. A fourth prospect is still doing "preliminary research," he notes.

## INTERNATIONALISTS

## Ship Contacts Help This A. A. On Great Lakes

*Bill M. recently transferred from the S.S. Perseus to the S. S. Henry Ford, plying the Great Lakes area:*

Already on the "Ford," contact has been made with: (1) a fellow A.A. of many months' sobriety; (2) a young fellow who recognized me from a meeting at Detroit where I spoke; (He announced that he had the problem and needed to do something about it; we two have talked with him and are rather pleased that he has been on two trips and has been ashore and has come back sober; needless to say, the young fellow is pleased, too); (3) a former shipmate of mine who left the "Perseus" and has signed on the "Ford;" last winter he called me, attended some meetings, got sober and stayed so for a while but this season on the "Perseus" he had trouble. We are hoping that between us—with our informal meetings and our mutual needs—that we will help each other to stay with "this new way of life" and thus be ready to act as instruments for good if any "who still do not know" show up and want the help we can offer.

## 7 Join Loner In 3 Months

Formation of the "Fort Churchill" Group, Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, has been announced by Bill H. Bill arrived there as a loner in March and by mid-July eight additional alcoholics had joined him and the group even had a club room.

The Stony Mountain Group, Manitoba, Canada, has grown to 62 members and is looking for larger meeting quarters, according to Arthur M., secretary. A French-language affiliate has 17 members.

### ANNIVERSARY

*Bob H. writing aboard the S. S. African Glen off Portugese East Africa, celebrated his fifth anniversary in A.A. in Durban, South Africa, some months ago:*

"It's difficult for me to put on paper how I feel attending meetings 8,000 miles from home, or to describe how I felt when Peter L. walked in with a little cake and five candles.

Each trip I meet new friends and see new places. I spent a wonderful four-day weekend with various members of the Durban groups. Attended meetings in Capetown, Port Elizabeth and East London.

This is what keeps us sea-going A.A.s sober.