Local Arteries of A.A. Life

In matters affecting other groups, an A.A. group is not autonomous, our Fourth Tradition reminds us.

For example: when group A, the only one in the community, furnishes the service of a telephone number which alcoholics can call for information, that affects only group A itself. But when group B gets started—the second in the community—the local telephone service then affects both groups.

Groups share responsibility for other local services, too—as pointed out in the pamphlet "The A.A. Group." Such services include exchanging speakers for group meetings, publishing up-to-date local meeting lists, contact with hospitals, doctors, clergymen, correctional officials, alcoholism agencies, newspapers, radio and TV, setting up joint public and special open meetings or social affairs; and many other service opportunities.

Just as each member shares with other A.A.'s to strengthen his own sobriety, so are groups strengthened by sharing responsibility for local services. A.A.'s survival depends on A.A. unity—at all levels.

How does it work? Usually a couple of A.A.'s see the need for a specific local service and contact the various groups, explaining and discussing it. If groups approve, each elects an interested member to participate and represent them in cooperative intergroup activities.

These representatives meet and choose whatever officers they need to get the jobs done. Surveying the local needs, they try to establish services to fulfill those needs.

(See p. 2)

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR GROUP MEETINGS

Here are a few items from "Box 4-5-9" just received from G.S.O. — our General Service Office in New York...

THE LEAD ARTICLE IN THIS ISSUE talks about local services, what the needs are and what the responsibilities are as well. Maybe this would be a good article for discussion at our next business meeting; the suggestions might be helpful to our group.

OUR DELEGATE (G.S.R., please use name) WILL BE IN N.Y. for the 18th meeting of the General Service Conference, April 22-27. We'll hear the news on his return.

NEW IVORY-TINTED BOOK PLATE now available to make any A.A. book a handsome, treasured gift.

NEW SPECIAL INSTITUTIONAL TAPE LIBRARY now available on loan from G.S.O.

BLIND ALCOHOLICS seeking A.A. help seem to be on increase. To obtain Braille and taped material, see p. 5.

1968 WORLD DIRECTORY mailed to each group April 1 (earliest ever) now shows overseas meeting places (see p. 3).
YOU Are There

In April when the Conference convenes in New York, YOU will be there although you may be 3,000 miles away. Anyone who has ever chaired a Conference session will tell you that your presence is felt whenever your Delegate gets up to talk about a problem "back home." Whether you are a G.S.R. or a Committee Member, he knows he is speaking for you. In fact, he makes no bones about it.

The problem may have arisen in your group. The problem may be that one or two people are dominating it. Or perhaps some over-zealous A.A. is breaking anonymity in the public press. Or you may need ideas and help on setting up institutional activities. If you have given your Delegate the problem—whatever it is—he becomes YOUR voice at the Conference—and the voice of your group.

If the problem is a serious one, he may even be speaking for the "group conscience." Is it any wonder that the Conference feels that YOU are there?

This all may be peculiarly A.A., we don't know. But the fact is that your being there sets up an atmosphere of responsibility that is unlike any business conference that we know of. Your problem gets full treatment by 89 Delegates representing there sets up an atmosphere of responsibility that is unlike any business conference that we know of. Your problem gets full treatment by 89 Delegates who come from fifty states and nine provinces and Puerto Rico. You couldn't get more attention if you were there yourself.

* * *

18th Conference – April 22-27, 1968

ARTERIES (from p. 1)

Often, the biggest need is for one central A.A. phone listing, supported by all groups.

Usually the cost of an answering service and other Intergroup expenses are shared by all the groups who benefit from the service.

As groups increase in number, the demands for service grow, too. When there are as many as 15 or 20 groups, for example, there often seems to be a need for a Central Office for fulfilling A.A.'s primary purpose.

Such an office really brings A.A. into the community, and wherever the need arises, such a vital link of service should be established.

Sometimes the rotating Intergroup Committee has to look a long time to find a convenient, centralized, clean, economical office quarters which the groups can afford.

Then it has to hire a secretary to handle the daily work load—who is responsible to the Intergroup Committee or Steering Committee.

Often, volunteers take over answering phone calls for help in the Central Office and enjoy the benefits of this kind of 12th Step service.

As the show window of A.A. in the community, the place where both alcoholics and nonalcoholics come for help, the Central Office is truly a vital artery of A.A. life in the community.

In the new Central Office Bulletin, mailed regularly by G.S.O. to Intergroup Committees and offices, such centers share their experience, strength, and hope with each other. You can see in their letters that when they are well supported by local groups—both spiritually and financially—every group flourishes, although each remains completely autonomous in its internal affairs. In addition, the groups participate in the overall A.A. impact on the community through the Intergroup or Central Office Committee in a wonderful big new way—whether its two groups working together, or 400.

MORE SERVICES FOR INSTITUTIONS

First issue of the new A.A. Institutional Bulletin, recently started by G.S.O., was so successful that its frequency has been stepped up. It will be published every four months instead of semi-annually. A copy is sent to each A.A. group in any hospital or rehab center, penal or correctional institution, and to each institutions committee.

In addition, a new Institutional Tape Circulating Library has been set up. Containing 10 special tapes, it is "loaned" to Institutional Groups. First come, first served.

Institutions problems and solutions will get lots of attention at the 18th General Service Conference sessions in April. Latest edition of the Institutional Bulletin asks for suggestions of topics the Conference should consider—such as how to keep groups that meet behind walls supplied with good A.A. reading matter, and share the activities of all other Institutional Committees.
1968 Directory Is Ready

Mailed to each group April 1—earliest ever. It reflects a fellowship of 14,154 groups at the close of 1967.

Confidential

As its new blue cover notes, the Directory is confidential—not to be used as a mailing list for any purpose outside A.A. It is not for use for any commercial venture, either by A.A.'s or non-A.A.'s.

Those who do use the Directory in sending mail for legitimate A.A. purposes are warned to have careful regard for other members' anonymity. The terms Alcoholics Anonymous or A.A. should never appear on an envelope, card, or wrapper which carries a member's name.

Listings are based on group information cards submitted to G.S.O. before Dec. 1, 1967. If your group got its card in late, however, don't worry; address records in the office have been corrected, but it was too late to change Directory addresses.

SPECIAL DELIVERIES

HOW TO TRAVEL IN (A.A.) STYLE

Charles McC., Dallas, travels "south of the border" on business. One trip went like this, he tells us:

First, he attended the Dade County (Fla.) Intergroup dinner. Then in San Juan, P.R., he called Abe F., who brought him a meeting to Charles's hotel room.

In Curacao, he called Erwin—and before midnight 12 members had called Charlie. Next day, Ed picked Charlie up and they went to call on Mario (whose doctor told him four years ago he didn't have six months to live).

The only scheduled meeting was on Fri.—but for Charles the A.A.'s arranged a special Mon. meeting.

"It certainly was a wonderful feeling to be at home some 8,000 miles away from home," writes Charles.

"JOE'S" BUSY IN AUSTRALIA

"On joining A.A. I left behind a very good mate who could not read. As he headed for the inevitable rocks I wished for something to give him that would help.

"Then I received a tattered copy of 'What Happened to Joe,' gave it to him, and in two weeks he was at a meeting. He has taken the bit in his teeth and I can hardly hold him. I'm reading him the Big Book and playing him records, but all this was made possible by 'Joe.'"

"I believe that this comic style pamphlet method has the most potential of all as far as initial motivation goes. "A lot of alcoholics like my mate who either do not or can not read, are I'm sure, standing on the brink, just waiting to catch this simple glimpse of their problem in a manner so suited to their state of mind."

Paul, Queensland, Austr.

TURKEY SHARING

Dudley B. from San Antonio, found himself in Ankara, Turkey—far away from the home group, so he wrote G.S.O.

We put him in touch with Bryan P., also in Ankara, and they made themselves known to chaplains at the American military hospital.

As a result, Hazel S. has been sober nearly 14 weeks. "I was desperate about my drinking but simply couldn't stop; will power and psychiatry were not enough," Hazel writes us, "A.A. is the answer for me. I feel as if I had been reborn. Dudley and Bryan give me their old Grapevines and I read them avidly."

"We have wonderful meetings here," Hazel continues. "Until this week there were only three of us, but now a fourth has joined. I am so happy to be a part of it."

We know just how you feel, Hazel.
CONFERENCE DELEGATES, 1968

What Do Panel Numbers Mean?

Delegates to each Conference are made up of two "panels." One is even-numbered and includes those elected to start serving in an even year. The other is odd-numbered and includes those elected to start serving in an odd year. This 18th Conference is made up of Panel 17—the old delegates—and Panel 18—the new delegates.


 MINI-PIC

When your group is small, in a little rural town, miles away from another group, is there any need for a Public Information Committee (P.I.C.)?

In Iron Mountain, Mich., members decided there is, and a small committee was set up (also involving the Iron River, Spalding, and Escanaba Groups) and promptly dubbed MINI-PIC.

"I'm still a little home-group guy," Al says. But with others from surrounding groups this MINI-PIC has already held three well-planned and publicized public meetings (with nonalcoholic clergymen and doctors as guest speakers, plus A.A.'s) with terrific results.

For sick and shaky newcomers, MINI-PIC has a Rover Group ("If you don't like the canine connotation, call it 'Roving'") which takes a meeting into homes. This provides the newcomer with a meeting on any given night instead of having to wait for the regular, scattered, once-a-week meeting.

"It's another effort at carrying the message, and suddenly everyone is alive with enthusiasm over the idea." It is also, of course, another bond bringing A.A. groups together for our common purpose.

Thanks for sharing this experience with G.S.O. We're sure many other members will use the idea, too.

SPEAKING AT NON-A.A. MEETINGS

Hundreds of A.A.'s get invitations to speak about alcoholism and A.A. before church groups, men's clubs, and youth organizations.

Mistakes made by some members in A.A.'s earlier days have taught us a lot about this method of carrying the message. Now you can get valuable help—the result of all that past experience—in the pamphlet, "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings," free from G.S.O. It tells you:

-5 precautions to take when telling your story at non-A.A. meetings;
-20 questions most frequently asked at non-A.A. meetings (and sources of the answers that have worked);
-4 important topics to consider in preparation: Should such talks be made? Who is qualified to make them? What to talk about? How to keep our amateur standing;
-7 facts to find out about your audience;
-8 suggestions for nonalcoholics who want to help an alcoholic . . .

Plus a good outline for such a talk, which we hope may be helpful.

SIGNS OF SERVICE

"Welcome to Saskatoon!" (or any other city) is not a surprising highway sign. Nor is it unusual for touring motorists to find city limits marked by signs telling of Kiwanis, Lions, Elks, Optimist, Rotary and other service club meetings.

Why not A.A.?

Why not indeed, asked A.A. members in the Saskatchewan city, and they did something about it, as the picture shows. Maybe A.A.'s in other places will follow the Canadians' lead in this new way of carrying the message and welcoming A.A. travelers.
**Anniversary and good wishes, new friends.**

We're sure 350,000 other A. A.'s join us."

a message from the A.A. home office.

In addition, we have our regular list of A.A. tapes and can put anyone in touch with other A.A.'s who exchange tapes regularly.

**A LIGHT IN THE VILLAGE**

His tour guide, Lorenzo, was driving Joe around Guatemala City, when they saw some drunks sleeping in the street.

"I was like that," Lorenzo said, "until I joined A.A. five years ago."

Astonished and delighted, Joe—from Roslyn Heights, N.Y.—told Lorenzo of his nine sober A.A. years.

Next stop: Chichicastenango—where the A.A. group had been founded by—you guessed it, Lorenzo!

Down a cobblestone street on a steep mountainside, a turn on to a dirt road and there lit by one bare electric bulb was the sign: MAYA GRUPO—A.A.

Although some native houses have only candle light, another light bulb hung from the ceiling of the A.A. meeting room. It showed a dirt floor, the Serenity Prayer in Spanish, and eleven Mayan A.A.'s—several barefoot.

Lorenzo translated for the guest. "Their stories are just like yours and mine," Joe writes.

The Guatemalans wanted just one thing from the A.A. home office. We're delighted to say here, "Happy Anniversary and good wishes, new friends. We're sure 350,000 other A.A.'s join us."

**MISTAKE PAYS OFF**

"Our group wound up with two Discount Packages #1."

"As the group was giving me a bad time on this I just got a hat and passed around twice. I ended up with $10!"

"Everything worked out good. Richard was in touch with a priest and a nun in Northern Sask., working with Indians who wanted some literature. So our group sent them one package and a couple of Big Books. Seems it was a great help."

—Chuck M., Coults, Alberta.

**Groups Questions**

Q. Can a stag meeting be considered an A.A. group—or a meeting just for cops, just for priests, etc.? Or must a group have both men and women members?

A. Both men and women, of course, can be members of the A.A. Fellowship—and most of us like it that way! But an A.A. group (provided it has no other affiliation) can be any two or more members, men or women.

**CHRISTMAS CHEER**

Six years ago, writes Lybrand P.S., with the U.S. Army in Okinawa, he was glad to get just one Christmas card, from one of his sisters.

In 1967, there was a pile of cards. Best of all, one from the Leopard Group (Australia) with an individual note from every man in the group!
### A.A. CALENDAR

**MARCH**


**APRIL**

5-7 - Spring Far East Roundup, Tokyo, Japan.

5-7 - 1st Annual Phila. Intergroup Roundup, Atlantic City, N. J. Write: Intergroup Roundup, 2202 St. James St., Phila.

5-7 - So. Ala. Roundup, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, Secy., Box 212 Lethbridge.

6-11 - The Dalles Annual Crab Feed, The Dalles, Oregon. Write: Chm., Box 612, The Dalles, Ore. 97058.


19-21 - 11th All-Ireland Conv., White's Hotel, Wexford, Ireland. Write: Hon. Secretary., White's Hotel, Wexford, Ireland.


**AUGUST**


### GIFTS (from p. 3)

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### A.A. TRANSLATORS NEEDED

G.S.O. receives letters and literature in languages we can't read here. Some A.A.'s are now assisting in translating this material for us—but we could use more. So if you can help us, or know any members who can, please write us. We need help with Polish, Japanese, Italian, Finnish, Swedish, Portuguese, Spanish and Hungarian.

### PLANNING A GET-TOGETHER?

The following items are mailed from G.S.O. for use of committees in the planning of Area A.A. Roundups, Conferences, etc.,

1. **Guidelines** which share the experience of many Conference Planning Committees.
2. **Inside A.A. Display**.
3. **Conference-Approved Literature Display**.
4. Literature Order Blanks for purchasing Literature, Public Information Kit, Public Service Radio and Television Announcements and the colorful "I Am Responsible" Plaques.
5. Also, G.S.O. filmstrips and color film of Bill and Lois have proven of interest.

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