

■ Does Your Group Have a Literature Chair?

Since the Big Book was published in 1939, A.A. literature has carried the message to untold numbers of alcoholics around the world — and all this without the conventional advertising and marketing techniques routinely employed by “outside” publishing companies, techniques considered fundamental to any successful publishing enterprise.

So, how has this come about? Books, pamphlets, service materials all working their way into the hands of needy and appreciative alcoholics. Our basic printed message, carried effectively from one A.A. community to another. The literature, clear and distinct, providing solutions to sufferers caught in alcoholism’s grip.

Many would say it begins — like most things in A.A. — with the group, where skeptical and shaky newcomers are introduced to A.A.’s many helpful resources. So, does your group have a literature chair? Someone to show members the wide variety of Conference-approved materials, to recommend pamphlets to interested newcomers looking for a means of instant identification, to set up literature displays or put packets together of materials especially helpful for beginners?

The General Service Conference felt it was important that groups be encouraged to appoint literature chairs back in 1968 and passed an Advisory Action stating: “In an effort to strengthen our network of literature representatives to ensure that A.A. literature is available at meetings, as well as catalog order forms for books and cassettes that individuals are likely to want, it is suggested that groups appoint literature coordinators.”

For some groups, though, it’s not always easy to get a literature chair in place. At a recent area assembly, Laura V. (Panel 61, Area 38) described the current situation at her home group in Sikeston, Missouri — one that she hopes will change.

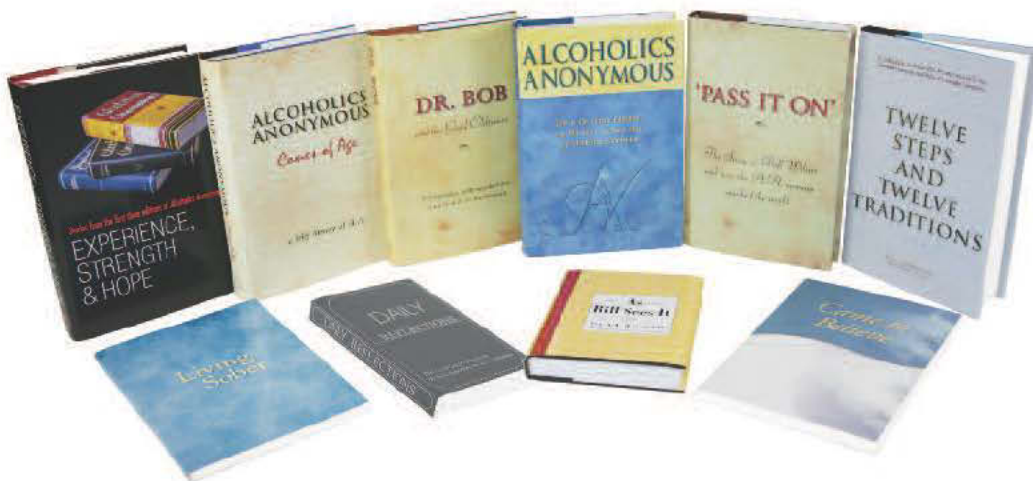
“Let me start by telling you about my home group. We have anywhere from 20-25 home group members and are fortunate if we have six to eight people show up at our monthly business meetings. When elections roll around, we are usually hard pressed to fill all of our positions and electing a literature chair is not a top priority. It is difficult for us to buy literature since the closest intergroup office is 150 miles away, so we

sometimes try to piggyback our orders onto another group’s or the district’s order. We are also often short on funds and do well just to pay our rent and other expenses, so must wait to place an order until we have the money available.

“I do not tell you this to garner your sympathy, but to give you what I believe is a realistic picture of the struggles faced by many rural groups in our area, and perhaps some of the smaller metro groups.”

But Laura is not satisfied with that picture of A.A. in her hometown and continues on. “Now, what if my group had a literature chair that was able to participate in a local literature committee at the district, where they could coordinate a literature order with the other group chairs? And what if those group and district literature chairs were able to participate in an area literature committee with their peers, helping members to learn about available Conference-approved literature and get involved in area service? I believe literature would become a more accessible and vibrant part of our groups,” she says.

As Laura notes, ordering A.A. Conference-approved books, pamphlets and materials from the General Service Office or the local intergroup and making sure they are properly displayed at meetings is just one aspect of the literature service. Such activities can be expanded at the district and area level to include service-oriented literature displays for all kinds of events, including district assemblies, forums and workshops. Some group and district literature chairs have even joined together to host literature-focused workshops or sharing sessions on a particular aspect of the Fellowship. An afternoon of sharing on A.A. history, as written in *A.A. Comes of Age* or *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*, is one idea. Some groups have even hosted an afternoon or evening of A.A. videos or films to celebrate their group’s anniversary, as noted in this



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account in the January 2001 Grapevine from the Acceptance Group in Montreal:

"A few years ago, for our group's ninth anniversary, the last Wednesday in May, we decided we'd celebrate in a special manner, different from what the other groups in the Montreal area ordinarily do. So, instead of buying a huge cake and inviting a special speaker with umpteen years of sobriety, we invited our co-founder Bill W. to come tell us his story himself.

"We got a 16-mm copy of the one-hour film *Bill's Own Story* from G.S.O. in New York, rented a large room for the occasion, and served chips, popcorn, soft drinks, tea, and coffee to a crowd of the seventy-five to one hundred fellow alcoholics we had invited through our Area News Bulletin. The following week, the film was our topic for discussion. Several members found this experience moving. Seeing and hearing the man to whom we owe our lives, many were brought to tears.

"Encouraged by the success of that experience, the next year we showed the short video *Rap With Us*, a Conference-approved film produced specifically for young people in A.A. And the following year, we presented the film *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous*. Each time, the projection was followed by a discussion, where members were invited to comment on the film."

Clearly, there are many different ways to carry the message through A.A. literature, and having a literature chair simply opens the door.

For more information about the position of literature chair, see the pamphlet "The A.A. Group... Where It All Begins," or visit G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site at www.aa.org for the A.A. Guidelines on Literature.



■ Opening for Grapevine Nontrustee Director

A.A. Grapevine has started its search to fill a vacancy for one nontrustee director, which will open following the 2014 General Service Conference. Interested A.A. members are encouraged to submit a résumé. In seeking applications for all vacancies in Alcoholics Anonymous, the Fellowship is committed to creating a large applicant file of qualified persons, which reflects the inclusiveness and diversity of A.A. itself.

For this position, familiarity with and ties to the Spanish-speaking community are of particular interest and prior service on a nonprofit board is helpful.

Basic qualifications for this position are: a minimum of seven years of continuous sobriety; a sound business or professional background is preferable, but not limited to the following areas — management, publishing, media, or information technology; the ability to work with others; availability to attend all regular meetings of the Grapevine Board (currently, up to eight per year), three weekend meetings of trustees' committees (to which corporate board directors are appointed), and the Conference, for one week in April.

In addition, directors may be called upon to attend subcommittee or other meetings and to represent Grapevine at Regional Forums or other A.A. functions. Résumés should be sent to Janet Bryan at jbryan@aa Grapevine.org no later than September 9, 2013.

■ Central Office/Intergroup Seminar

Palm Springs, California, will be the site of the 28th Annual Central Office/Intergroup Seminar, October 25–27, 2013. Hosted by the Central Intergroup Office of the Desert, Cathedral City, California, the event will be held at Hilton Palm Springs Resort in Palm Springs.

This annual Seminar provides a forum, through workshops, discussions, and the exchange of ideas and shared experience, for those who are on A.A.'s front line. Attendees are Intergroup/Central office managers, Intergroup representatives, G.S.O. and Grapevine staff members, and representatives from the A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Boards.

Please make your reservations, at special seminar rates, by October 10, by calling 1-760-320-6868, or online at www.hilton.com.

Registration fee is \$30.00. For any questions, or for a Seminar registration/questionnaire, contact Jim K., office manager, (760) 324-4880; manager@aainthedesert.org.

■ Board Selects New Chairperson

A longtime friend of Alcoholics Anonymous, Terrance M. Bedient, of Albany, New York, was selected as chairperson of the General Service Board following the 63rd General Service Conference in April.

Terry, as he is known, has been involved in the A.A. service structure since his selection in 2008 as a Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee. Replacing outgoing chairperson The Very Rev. Ward Ewing, D.D., Terry served most recently as treasurer for the General Service Board.



First introduced to A.A. in 1975 when he was in charge of an E.A.P. program, Terry attended his first open A.A. meeting over 35 years ago. There he became good friends with “a couple of guys in recovery who swore by A.A.,” he says, and began the long association that brought him to A.A.’s General Service Board, an association,

he claims, that has benefited him in many ways.

“The spirituality of A.A. is so rich, and I am fulfilled in my own spirit by contact with those who have suffered things much more serious than I and who have grasped the Steps and Traditions, made a life for themselves, and are now spreading that throughout their groups, their areas, and their regions. That’s humbling.”

Terry first came to the board with many years of experience in the medical field, working in medical administration — “working around sick people,” he says. But, in his work with A.A., he reports, “it’s refreshing to see people who have a chronic illness grab onto the things that they can grab onto to be healthy.”

With a baccalaureate degree in music, a masters degree in counseling/psychology, and a post graduate degree in healthcare administration from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., Terry seems uniquely qualified to lend a helping hand to the Fellowship he so admires. Having served on the General Service Board for five years as treasurer and participating on most of the trustees’ service committees has provided Terry with a broad view of the opportunities and challenges that the board needs to be looking at. “Of particular value,” he notes, “was service on the trustees’ Public Information Committee. Our recent Membership Survey show that about two-thirds of new members come to A.A. through non-A.A. sources. Therefore, that is the challenge of Public Information.”

Asked what Terry thinks are some of the greatest chal-

lenges facing A.A. right now, he responds, “The key issue facing A.A. is membership growth and engagement. There are enormous opportunities worldwide to share the lifesaving message of A.A. as the Fellowship engages in the many aspects of service — A.A.’s Third Legacy.”

As chairperson of the General Service Board, Terry will be one of seven nonalcoholic trustees, friends of the Fellowship selected for their professional expertise, business backgrounds and the unique skills they can bring to the board’s work of carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous. Additionally, and importantly, A.A.’s seven Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees can do certain things the 14 Class B (alcoholic) trustees cannot do, such as facing the camera head-on or using their last names without violating the Traditions and principles of anonymity that are designed to keep A.A. members out of the public eye.

For Terry, becoming chairperson provides an opportunity to help spread the particular hope he has witnessed in the eyes of A.A. members as they recover. Most impressed with A.A.’s Responsibility Declaration, “When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible,” Terry cites the sentiments expressed therein as “the core” of what keeps him coming back and why he wants to be involved in this kind of service. “Anytime, anywhere — If we’re not making it available to people who need help, then what’s all this stuff for?”

■ Board Welcomes New Class A Trustees

Following the 63rd General Service Conference, the General Service Board officially selected two new Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees to serve the Fellowship over the next six years: the Honorable Ivan Lemelle, a U.S. District Court Judge from New Orleans, Louisiana, and David M. Morris, a financial consultant from New York City. They will replace rotating Class A trustees Ward Ewing and the Honorable Rogelio Flores, who have served the Fellowship since 2004 and 2007, respectively.

Chosen for their professional or business backgrounds and the unique personal experience they can bring to A.A., the seven Class A trustees on the General Service Board have always provided the Fellowship with critical service as it carries out its business, communicates with the Fellowship, and carries the message of recovery to the suffering alcoholic.

The part played by such nonalcoholic trustees is, according to A.A. co-founder Bill W., “quite beyond reckoning.” Says Bill in a January 1966 article for the Grapevine: “In the days when A.A. was unknown, it was the nonalcoholic trustees who held up our hands before the general public.... Their very presence on our board

was quite able to command full confidence and the respect of many faraway groups. Meanwhile, they assured the world around us of A.A.'s worth. These are



The Honorable Ivan Lamelle.

the unusual services which indeed they still render."

For the Honorable Ivan Lemelle, his 2013 selection to the General Service Board offers an opportunity to give something back to those in need and to help spread the message of recovery. "In a general way, A.A. is known as a service organization providing assistance to alcoholics and, in a broader sense,

to society as a whole," he says. "From a personal perspective, however, my awareness of A.A.'s mission and, moreover, its effectiveness, was enhanced when it literally rescued a number of my friends and relatives from destroying themselves. For that and more," he notes, "I am eternally grateful."

An attorney who has served both the city of New Orleans as an assistant district attorney and the state of Louisiana as assistant attorney general, Ivan has seen alcoholism close up while working with others in the legal system to develop alternative approaches for the treatment, education and job development of offenders with substance abuse issues.

"We learn from our professional and personal experiences ways to help others in need of help. Whether part of some organized effort like A.A., reentry court programs, or through a more individualized contact with those who seek the means to sobriety, love for all humankind strengthens our resolve to do more," says Ivan.

In Ivan's case, "more" meant the willingness to stand for the position of Class A trustee — "I needed to do more than just being a fan of A.A.'s Legacy of Service," he says.

With his selection to the board, Ivan hopes "to serve the Fellowship by continuously working with the Conference and other trustees on being trustworthy guardians of A.A. traditions, principles and concepts. The overall challenge in that service," he says, "will involve constant education and assessment of new and old methods of maintaining and fulfilling the legacy without deviating from the conscience and will of the Fellowship."

David M. Morris, whose business experience is in the financial realm, was also drawn to A.A. through the benefits it had for a close family member who joined A.A. and has stayed sober for over 30 years. "I've seen what wonderful blessings A.A. can bring to a person," he says. "I've also gotten to know a number of other people in the

program over the years, and it has changed my life for the better, too."

Currently a consultant providing financial and accounting guidance to a wide variety of clients, David is a former Senior Vice President for Accounting Policies at JPMorgan Chase Bank and prior to that worked at Price Waterhouse in New York City managing accounting and auditing services in the publishing, petroleum, advertising and marine transportation fields, among others.

As he begins his service on the board, David will be stepping into the position of treasurer, taking over for Terry Bedient, who has been selected as board chairperson.

Quite familiar with bank regulators and fiscal constraints, David has been an accountant for many years and is well-prepared to address A.A.'s unique approach to finance, an approach that revolves around the traditional policy of self-support and the concept of corporate poverty. "I have seen a little bit of everything in my business experience, from multi-billion organizations to small not-for-profits, to dealing with customers and bank regulators. All of that I think will allow me to fit nicely into A.A.'s financial picture and help guide things in the direction that A.A. wants to go."

When asked what challenges he feels the future holds for A.A., David talks about the changing paradigm of publishing and the impact of today's digital environment. "As the world in general moves toward less print material, whether it's newspapers, magazines, or the Big Book, organizations such as A.A. are going to have to come up with new ways to survive with less print being sold. Whether that's going to be a problem or not, only time will tell. But it's certainly going to be on my radar."

"Luckily," David notes, "change will come when we're ready for it.... Bill W. set it up that way."



David M. Morris.

■ Regional Forums

There are three remaining Regional Forums in 2013. Check www.aa.org for information and online registration.

- Sept. 6–8, West Central, Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, Bloomington, Minnesota
- Oct. 11–13, Southwest, Biltmore Hotel Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- Nov. 15–17, East Central, Hilton Ft. Wayne/Grand Wayne Convention Center, Fort Wayne, Indiana

■ Five New Class B Trustees

Following their selection in April at the 63rd General Service Conference, the General Service Board of A.A. welcomed five new Class B (alcoholic) trustees: William F., East Central regional; Chet P., Southeast regional; Bob W., trustee-at-large/U.S.; and Albin Z. and Bill N., general service trustees. While all trustees represent the Fellowship as a whole and no trustee can be said to “represent” a geographical section, these newly-selected A.A. members will bring extensive service experience to the board’s deliberations and an invaluable regional A.A. point of view.

William F., of Marietta, Ohio, sober since 1980, succeeds Pam R. as East Central regional trustee. Informed by the Area 53 delegate of his selection shortly after the Conference voting, Bill asked, “What do I do?” Answered the delegate: “Don’t drink!”

A 1997-98 (Panel 47) delegate to the General Service Conference, Bill was “very surprised” to be selected. “I have watched our regional delegates, our regional trustees,” he notes, “admiring their poise, hard work and concern for their fellows,” attributes he will strive to emulate as a regional trustee himself.

In his life outside of A.A., Bill has worked in law enforcement and the social services, with a BA degree in Human Service Administration and an MA degree in Conflict Resolution. He has been the director of a community food pantry, served on a county board for developmental disabilities, and worked as a divorce mediator. He has also been involved on the county board of mental health, given time to the community Hunger Initiative and served as a member of the county health council.

Bill has been involved in A.A. service work since early in his sobriety, “beginning as a group rep, D.C.M. and an area delegate.” His involvement in service, he says, “ultimately brought me to the point of returning to college, then finishing graduate school. I developed a thirst for learning — a change from the days when I had the thirst for a drink and couldn’t make it to class.”

His professional background, when combined with his A.A. experience, has provided Bill with a mix he believes will be helpful as a regional trustee. “I have worked with so many people and experienced so much by listening to the stories that people share with me. I really want to take the time to listen to what others can tell me. I think everyone has a story to tell. People really want someone to listen to them. That is what I experienced when I sat with the man who helped me. He said ‘I understand.’”

Chet P., of Orlando, Florida, is also a past delegate, serving from 2009-2010 (Panel 59). Selected to replace outgoing Southeast regional trustee Eleanor N., Chet sees his upcoming tenure on the board as a new adventure in service. “As a delegate I felt that I stood at the intersection of the history of A.A. and its future. As a trustee I will be allowed to continue participating in that process in whatever capacity or areas I am asked to serve.”

Sober since 1984, Chet is an attorney with a law degree from Tulane University. He served for a number of years as assistant state attorney, with four years of service in the U.S. Navy in the Judge Advocate General Corps. He has served on numerous local and community boards and has been an adjunct instructor and professor at two different Florida institutions.

As for his coming term as regional trustee, “It is my hope that I will participate in leaving A.A. with a stronger future,” he says, recognizing however, that if nothing else “I will be changed for the better by the experience.”

Bob W., (past delegate Panel 52) of Westfield, Massachusetts, will replace Don M. as the new trustee-at-large/U.S. For Bob, sober since 1993, service to the Fellowship represents an opportunity “to meet new people and build relationships with them. I am a people person,” says Bob, “and have always enjoyed that part of A.A. service. I suppose this can also be one of the challenges,” he notes wryly.

“My hope for this upcoming service opportunity is to enjoy being part of the process and allow God to direct me to be a kind, peaceful and tolerant member of the board,” he adds. “I’m reminded of a phrase that I often heard when I was a delegate, ‘Trust the Process.’”

Currently the president of his own insurance agency, specializing in auto, homeowner and business insurance, Bob has also been active in many local professional organizations, which has given him a good sense of operating under pressure. “My business life has had many busy moments, especially during some of the growth phases it’s gone through. I have worked very hard and been forced to learn and to practice good time management and its offshoot, prioritization. I have learned to use these tools to keep a balanced life, making sure I never lose sight of my A.A. program and my role as a husband and a father.

“Our disease,” Bob notes, “is rampant in my family.... This has filled me with a true zeal to serve the Fellowship. I strongly believe in the singleness of purpose and in preserving and protecting the message of our Fellowship so if my children or future generations of my family ever need A.A. they will have the same chance of sobriety that I did.”

Albin Z., of Long Beach, New York, selected to serve as general service trustee on the Grapevine Board, has been active in local service since getting sober in 1989, most recently as a group literature chair and clean-up person, while fulfilling a monthly commitment as chairperson for two hospital meetings at a New York City rehab and a local detox. “My first home group in Mt. Vernon, NY, became my classroom for life and is where I was taught by my sponsor and the men and women who came before me how to live without drinking, one day at a time.”

A publishing professional who served on the Grapevine’s Editorial Advisory Board from 2006-08 and as a nontrustee director on the Grapevine Board from 2009-13, Albin has over 30 years’ experience in the newspaper publishing industry, starting out as an advertising sales

account executive, moving on to become director of communications for a weekly newspaper in the Bronx, and ultimately taking a position as publisher for a large New York City communications company managing a staff of nearly 50 employees and four community weeklies, a Spanish-language daily and a real estate trade weekly.

“The depth of my professional experience in publishing will be a great asset in this new opportunity for service on the board, and I hope to draw on the wonderful experiences I have had as a nontrustee director on the Grapevine and my participation in a number of trustees committees I have had the privilege to serve on. The Literature, P.L., C.P.C./Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities and Corrections committee work has been nothing short of inspiring and has enhanced my sobriety greatly.”

Recognizing the changing nature of publishing and how it relates to his A.A. experience is one of the challenges Albin will face in his time on the board. “Our responsibility of carrying the A.A. message in this ever-changing digital world without forsaking our Traditions, diluting our message to the still-suffering alcoholic, or losing sight of A.A.’s primary purpose, will be one of our greatest challenges.”

Bill N., of Spring Lake Heights, New Jersey, selected to serve as general service trustee on the A.A. World Services Board, has been sober since 1990, with his early sobriety rooted in a number of meetings in Manhattan “that seem to reach out to low bottom newcomers and treat them with compassion and respect. The places were real live examples of the chapter ‘Working with Others’ in our basic text, which warns against speaking to the newcomer from a spiritual hilltop.”

Involved early on in his sobriety with young people’s groups, Bill was very active with the International Conference of Young People in A.A. and at one time served as chairperson of the ICYPAA Advisory Council. Throughout his experience with young people’s groups he was encouraged to stay involved in general service and ultimately served as an Area 19 (Panel 49) delegate.

Working in the risk management field for nearly 20 years, Bill is currently vice president of financial risk management/chief risk officer for a major international construction company and has also volunteered for a number of local organizations.

In terms of blending his professional expertise with the work of the board, Bill says, “Risk management professionals are always looking for creative solutions to business problems, as well as working in a corporate environment which promotes lack of personal credit and focuses on working in collaboration with others to solve problems” — characteristics tailor made for a general service trustee.

When asked what in his A.A. life most prepared him for service as a trustee, Bill says, “Having a service sponsor who did not give me answers but directed me to our literature to find my own answer, even if it was not the same as his.... For teaching me that the true sign of success with

a service sponsee is when they are willing to have a completely different view of something than I do, but embrace the group conscience regardless of the outcome.”

As for the challenges ahead? “I hope we can follow Bill W.’s example and find ways to embrace new communication technology while observing our Traditions so that we remain relevant in today’s world and continue to reach the suffering alcoholic.”

A.A.’s five new Class B trustees, plus the other nine already on the board, each serve one four-year term; the seven Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees serve for six years.

■ Staff Rotation at G.S.O.

Staff rotation is an important part of G.S.O.’s service to the Fellowship, making manifest the spirit of Tradition Twelve and “ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.”

Rotation occurs throughout the A.A. service world — from the group level to the trustees of the General Service Board — re-emphasizing the importance of the message over the messenger. Begun in 1951 as a means of broadening the pool of knowledge and experience among staff members, providing a chance for each staff member to contribute, and minimizing any competitiveness among staff members, staff rotation has become a fixture at G.S.O. every two years since.

This year, staff rotation occurred on July 15, 2013. Because we had some new staff members come on board in early 2013, a few staff were already in place for their two-year stint on an assignment; these include:

Cooperation With the Professional Community, Clay R.: co-secretary of the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities; secretary of the Conference Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community; handles West Central regional correspondence; liaison with other Twelve Step Fellowships; responsible for *About A.A.*, the newsletter for non-A.A. professionals.

Literature, Mary D.: secretary of trustees’ and Conference Committees on Literature; secretary, A.A.W.S. Publishing Committee; handles Southeast regional correspondence; responsible for *Box 4-5-9*.

Nominating, Adrienne B.: secretary of trustees’ Committee on Nominating and Conference Committee on Trustees; handles Northeast regional correspondence; liaison with Remote Communities. Adrienne will retire this November and a staff member to fill the vacancy will be selected in the near future.

Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities, Steve S.: co-secretary of trustees’ Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities; secretary of the Conference Committee on

Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities; handles Eastern Canada regional correspondence and *Loners/Internationalist* correspondence and *Loners/Internationalist Meeting (LIM)* newsletter.

The new staff assignments as of July 15th are as follows:

Conference, Mary C.: secretary to the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference and the Conference Agenda Committee; handles Southwest regional correspondence, June-November; responsible for *Final Conference Report* and the Conference issue of *Box 4-5-9*.

Corrections, Eva S.: secretary of trustees' and Conference Committees on Corrections; handles Western Canada regional correspondence; responsible for *Sharing From Behind the Walls* and the Corrections Correspondence Service; 2015 International Convention Coordinator; co-secretary of trustees' and Conference Committees on International Conventions/A.A. Regional Forums.

Group Services/Web Services, Tracey O.: secretary of the Conference Committee on Report and Charter; secretary A.A.W.S. Services Committee; handles Pacific regional correspondence; Intergroup/Central Offices liaison; responsible for Service Material and A.A. Guidelines.

International, Rick W.: secretary of the trustees' International Committee; handles international (outside U.S./Canada) correspondence; coordinator of the World Service Meeting and responsible for the *World Service Meeting Report*.

Public Information, Jim M.: secretary of the trustees' and Conference Committees on Public Information; handles the public service announcements (PSAs) and the A.A. Membership Survey.

Regional Forums, Mary Clare L.: co-secretary of trustees' and Conference Committees on International Conventions/A.A. Regional Forums; handles East Central regional correspondence; responsible for Regional Forum reports.

Staff Coordinator, Julio E.: secretary of Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions; A.A.W.S. director; responsible for G.S.O. *Quarterly Report* and A.A.W.S. Highlights; handles Southwest regional correspondence Dec.-May; alternate 2015 International Convention Coordinator.

■ Group Contact Information

The General Service Office wants to stay in contact with you and your groups; to keep up-to-date we need your current/correct address.

Please remember to advise G.S.O. Records department of your new contact information when you move. Send your new information to records@aa.org or call 212-870-3132.

■ Two New A.A.s Join G.S.O. Staff

Early in 2013, the General Service Office welcomed two new staff members: Steve S., of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Clay R., of Boyertown, Pennsylvania. Professionally, Steve comes to G.S.O. from the Minneapolis Intergroup, where most recently he was the office manager; Clay, a past delegate, comes to G.S.O. with a strong background in customer service, employed most recently at a family-owned tire supply company serving commercial, wholesale and retail customers. Steve is currently handling the Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities assignment and Clay is serving on the Cooperation With the Professional Community desk.

Sober since October 1998, Steve graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in English, working in the education field for a number of years in the Shakopee Mdewakanton Dakota Community as a student support teacher and liaison to children and families, local public schools, and the tribe. Steve also worked as a self-employed artist/educator, running a production company developing business plans for various arts projects, while acting, writing and publishing his own poetry, short stories, plays and screenplays. In 2007, he began working at the Minneapolis Intergroup as a staff assistant, before becoming office manager in 2010.

Getting involved in local service helped Steve prepare for his new position at G.S.O. "Service to my home group," he says, "sponsorship, going on Twelfth Step calls, carrying the message to non-A.A. facilities, serving as a G.S.R. and a treatment committee chair for the district. All these experiences together have given me a better understanding of A.A.'s Legacy of Service." Further putting things into perspective has been his work at the Minneapolis Intergroup, as Steve learned more about the A.A. service structure and the sometimes delicate interactions between A.A. members and their service organizations.

In terms of his expectations on coming to G.S.O., Steven notes that every day has been full of surprises. "As far as the tasks and general office patterns of activity, the staff who interviewed me were quite open and explicit about what it would be like day-to-day at G.S.O., sharing that every day is full of surprises — and that has been true!

"Aside from the usual challenges of showing up, paying attention, listening, and following through, like other staff members, I receive daily inquiries and concerns from A.A. members and nonalcoholic friends of the Fellowship. A daily challenge is to respond to each in a concise, helpful manner that is thorough, honors our Traditions, and expresses the language of the heart."

Helping in this effort and in preparing him for this new experience are a few things Steve learned early on in his sober life: "Conscious contact with God as I understand Him and participation in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Clay R. comes to G.S.O. with a long background in A.A. general service, having served as a Panel 47 delegate from Area 59, Eastern Pennsylvania. His experience in service runs the gamut from greeter and group coffeemaker in his early years of sobriety to being the current treasurer for NER-AASA 2013, the northeast regional service assembly. Having taken his last drink in September 1987, Clay has learned a lot from his A.A. service. "From my first efforts as a coffeemaker, I learned how to cooperate, to learn and to admit when I don't know something. The safety and support I found allowed me to put down the facade of self-reliance and self-confidence and to become a part of instead of the person at the center. In short, my character has been tested and molded by my A.A. experience in service."

An attendee at the University of Pennsylvania in a business program, Clay bounced around for a while working as a bartender at a Philadelphia tavern before picking up work in the automotive industry as a tire changer and sales clerk. With a brief stop working for a day labor program in Hartford, Connecticut, Clay landed at the tire supply company where he stayed for over 24 years, ultimately becoming the manager responsible for all technology purchases, supervising production systems and staff, and negotiating labor issues.

"As my responsibilities evolved," says Clay, "I found myself more and more self-directed in my work. I sought out new policies and practices to help our business. I was also the company spokesman in many situations, representing the company with professionals, government agencies and vendors. This helped me grow in my ability to listen and communicate."

About coming to G.S.O., Clay says, "I have faith in the process that selected me for the position and a belief that I would have the energy, persistence and dedication to do the job. While I didn't know what to expect at first, I knew I would have the support necessary to succeed. This has certainly been true for me."

"One of the biggest challenges has been grasping the enormous amount of information available and being able to find and utilize it properly. The other challenge is managing the wide variety of responsibilities in a timely and orderly way. To be on the phone, reading and writing correspondence while preparing for the Conference can be a bit of a juggling act."

Nevertheless, Clay recognizes that it all comes down to the fact that he is sober and because of it has a far greater opportunity at living a life filled with positive outcomes rather than negative projections. "There have been many events of importance in my life during my time in A.A.; however, it is all founded on what I've learned in practicing the Steps, Traditions and Concepts in my everyday life."

"The experience of sobriety — getting sober, staying sober, sharing sobriety — this is the ongoing path of my life. This process has helped me overcome fear and insecurity, has taught me dedication, commitment and perseverance."

G.S.O. warmly welcomes its two newest staff members.

■ Special Needs Pamphlet Now in Other Formats

In 2012 the Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities suggested that the pamphlet "A.A. for the Alcoholic With Special Needs" be produced in formats for alcoholics who are deaf, blind, or have learning challenges.

An ASL (American Sign Language) translation of that pamphlet is now available on DVD. A new audio CD, in English, French and Spanish, of this pamphlet is also available for the blind and for those who are learning challenged. The ASL DVD also includes English subtitles.

The DVD and CDs are complete translations of the A.A. pamphlet and feature 11 personal stories of members with 11 different special circumstances, which present particular challenges to members in receiving the A.A. message.

The ASL translated "A.A. for the Alcoholic With Special Needs," is the third A.A. literature item translated into ASL, joining *Alcoholics Anonymous* and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. Members and groups can utilize ASL and CD literature in the same ways print items are used to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

John, a deaf and blind member, says in the pamphlet: "I understand how important it is for people who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind to stay sober, and they have a greater chance of relapse if they don't have interpreters. Communication between deaf and hearing members is vital. I'm grateful to God and A.A. for the restoration of my sobriety and a new life."

The audio CDs and the ASL DVD are available from G.S.O. for \$5 each. To order these items, contact your local Intergroup/Central Office or call G.S.O.'s order entry department at (212) 870-3312.

■ 'How Can We Help?'

Disaster is a fact of life for thousands of people around the world. Tornadoes, torrential rain storms, earthquakes, hurricanes, acts of war, all with the power to change life as we know it. Families can be uprooted, communities shattered, physical landscapes altered forever. And for those of us in A.A., much of what we hold dear can also be lost — our meeting places can be destroyed, our connections with other sober alcoholics severed, our literature damaged beyond repair.

Following such disasters, the General Service Office is often inundated with questions about how to help A.A. members in distressed areas — areas like Oklahoma, where tornadoes recently touched down, leaving a swath of destruction in their path. Each situation has its own set of circumstances, of course, and it is often difficult to

establish what is needed immediately. In many cases, the most pressing needs are for survival items — food, water, shelter and medicine — items that A.A. does not provide, and often it takes time for the local A.A. community to determine precisely what is needed so that A.A. groups can get back on their feet.

According to Harold C., delegate from Area 57, Oklahoma had eight members lose their homes and, tragically, one member was killed in the recent tornadoes. No stranger to disaster himself, having survived a house fire just weeks before the tornadoes hit, Harold is awed by the spirit of giving so evident throughout the A.A. community. “My wife and I received calls, cards, letters, and most importantly, prayers,” he says in relation to the fire. “Not only from our home state, but from all over the U.S. and Canada.”

Ironically, he continues, “About the time we started getting back on our feet, the tornadoes hit. And the same members who had so graciously reached out to us on a personal level, contacted us again and asked how they could help the larger A.A. community, offering the same support of love and prayers.”

A.A.’s shared experience suggests that local A.A. offices and groups often require very few contributions of money or complimentary literature. In many cases, local groups and offices view disastrous circumstances as an opportunity for Twelfth Step work and try to meet the needs of the local A.A. community before asking for help from G.S.O. or other A.A. entities. Additionally, due to local conditions, many affected areas may not even have mail delivery, electricity or appropriate storage space to accommodate any contributed materials.

“Luckily,” says Harold, “the nearest club house to the disaster was spared and became the clearinghouse for finding out our friends’ needs.”

In the aftermath of such disasters, many A.A. members want to send money to G.S.O. specifically to support particular relief activities, but G.S.O. does not accept A.A. funds that are earmarked for any specific project. Instead, in a more general way, thanks to the continuous and generous contributions from A.A. groups in the U.S. and Canada year round, G.S.O. responds wherever and whenever there is an expressed need to replace literature that has been lost or damaged during a disaster.

On a personal level, as private citizens and individuals, many A.A. members choose to support non-A.A. relief organizations in the wake of particular disasters, feeling compelled to reach out and assist with efforts to bring food, water, shelter and medicine into affected areas. In keeping with A.A.’s Traditions, these members donate under their own names and do not credit A.A. in any way.

In Oklahoma, says Harold, “The local groups have sponsored the displaced with clothing, food, and shelter. I know of at least two members staying with friends in the Fellowship until they can get more permanent housing.”

Additionally, he notes, “Our local intergroup has

offered to replace any literature to displaced members, free of charge, and I have also been contacted by several areas offering to stock local groups with literature.

“All in all,” says Harold, “the spirit of giving is alive and well in Oklahoma.”

■ The Pot Belly Stove Group: The Spark of Attraction

After a lifetime of drinking in the small town of Raymond, Alberta, Canada—no easy task since it’s a “dry” town—Gordon L. got sober on May 15, 2000. The only problem was that there were no meetings in Raymond. The nearest one was a 12 and 12 group in the town of Lethbridge, twenty miles away.

This didn’t stop Gordon, a local carpenter and builder. “I have made the round trip to that meeting every Sunday and Tuesday for 14 years,” he says. He’s even become the group’s G.S.R. But one Wednesday night in November 2008, he sat in front of the brick-lined 100-year-old pot belly stove in his garage—a stove that radiates so much warmth that it heats the place quite nicely, even in sub-zero temperatures—and desperately desired a meeting. He called a sponsee, who showed up for “a cup of coffee and some fellowship,” as Gordon puts it, and thus, with two people, the Pot Belly Stove Group began.

The Pot Belly Stove Group provides the perfect example of the principle of attraction, not promotion. “The meeting went from two people to twenty within three weeks,” Gordon says. It began with his (at the time) five sponsees, most of whom were from neighboring small towns. They spread the word to others in these towns, who in turn spread the word even farther. Gordon went back to the Lethbridge meeting and posted a card on their bulletin board announcing the new meeting in Raymond and adding a picture of the pot belly stove.

The group now has 32 regular members, whose ages range from mid-20s to mid-70s. It meets on Wednesdays at 8:00 pm. A fire is built in the backyard fire pit at 6:30 and people start arriving to stand by the fire and drink coffee and hot chocolate and eat soup, stew, buns baked fresh by a member, and other delicious food. “People often say to me, I’ll be back next week, I like your soup,” Gordon says. “There is a message in the soup and the hot chocolate.” Gordon has also built a tree house in the copse of fir trees in back of his house. Before meetings, 12 feet above the ground, he does Step work there with his nine sponsees. (The flattened top of the tree poking through the floor functions as a convenient table for Fourth Step inventory lists.)

At 8:00, a cast-iron bell is rung and everyone heads into the garage, where folding chairs are arranged around the stove. The electric lights are turned off and the only illumination comes from a 17 candle candelabra hanging from

a deer pulley and the pot belly stove itself. The meeting kicks off with a reading from *As Bill Sees It*, then continues with round-robin sharing until 9:00, although often people stick around informally talking for hours afterwards.

Having a meeting like this in your backyard, once a week, every week, is no small amount of trouble, but Gordon quotes Bill W. in answer: "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics." It's estimated that 3,500 people have attended the Pot Belly Stove meetings since that November night in 2008. It may be the unusual format of the meeting that attracts people—or perhaps it's the soup—but once they arrive, they tend to stay.

"People just kept coming," Gordon says. "They get the spark."

■ Working Together

Working together is an essential ingredient of A.A. service, yet anyone who has served on committees, from group to area levels, knows how difficult this can sometimes be.

A great example of working together takes place in the California Northern Coastal Area which covers more than 21,000 square miles of coastal counties, from Oregon in the north to San Luis Obispo County in the south, and includes 57,000 A.A. members in 23 districts.

Every fourth Saturday, in the town of Petaluma, Area 6 holds a Joint Communications meeting between the Bridging the Gap (BTG), Hospitals and Institutions (H&I) and Public Information/Cooperation With the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committees. The goals of all these committees mesh: to provide help to alcoholics within the prison system or outreach to anyone who has just been released from a hospital, treatment center or correctional facility.

But how to coordinate efforts so that maximum effect is gained from scarce resources, both human and otherwise?

"The idea for the meetings started in 2009," says Padee M., CNCA Panel 63 delegate. "Our common purpose was to share information from Bridging the Gap with entities like H&I and P.I./C.P.C. in order to foster communication and avoid cross-scheduling. We wanted to open up our minds and eyes to working together."

For instance, Padee says, the BTG people have a card that provides information to alcoholics about to leave the prison system—those "behind the wire," as she puts it. But since H&I people actually take meetings into prisons, they have connections that BTG lacks. Because of the Joint Committee meetings, the two groups are able to work together to help each other in their primary goal of helping other alcoholics. This is especially crucial in the work done by BTG because statistics show that people just exiting an institution have a much greater chance of staying sober if they can attend a meeting immediately, which means the information provided on these cards as to who to contact is crucial.

The California Northern Coastal's Joint Committee meetings in Petaluma combine both practical as well as philosophical approaches to working together. People are encouraged to work with facility schedules; reach out to other areas via Web sites to find out what they're doing; and accept road blocks placed in their way because of things that can't be controlled—especially facility rules and regulations or red tape. It's also important to work together by checking at each facility to see who else from the Fellowship may be volunteering there, to avoid duplicating efforts or stepping on toes.

"We're very organized and dedicated," Padee M. says. "We come to the meetings with ideas and goals and put them on the wall and try to follow them. The great part is that districts are modeling some of their own communications meetings after our Joint Communications meetings in Petaluma. The idea is very basic, really. In A.A., it's not that we don't like each other, just that we don't know how to communicate with each other. Sharing our message with other dedicated people makes us all so much stronger and the work that we do is now so much more transparent."



■ 2015 International Convention

Meet us at the Georgia Dome

When: July 2-5, 2015.

Where: Atlanta, Georgia.

Why: To celebrate the 80th Anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Watch coming issues of *Box* 4-5-9 for more information.

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.

September

30-1—Tucson, Arizona. Area 3 State Conv. Info: www.area03.org

30-1—Fortuna, California. Redwood Coast Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 6943, Eureka, CA 95502; www.redwoodcoastroundup.org

30-1—Denver, Colorado. Colorado State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 1012, Loveland, CO 80539; www.a10conv.org

30-1—Tampa, Florida. XLI Conv. Nacional Hispana de Estados Unidos y Canada. Inf: Com. Org., Box 260815, Tampa, FL 33685-0815; www.xlconvencionnacionalhispana.talkspot.com

30-1—St. Louis, Missouri. Fall Classic. Write: Ch., Box 16872, St. Louis, MO 63105; info@fall-classic.com

30-1—Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada. Dist. 35 Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 2813, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2R1; district35@hotmail.com

30-1—Jonquière, Québec, Canada. Congrès du Saguenay. Infos: www.aa-quebec.org

30-2—Tampa, Florida. 27th Tampa Bay Fall Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 262545, Tampa, FL 33685-2545

5-8—San Diego, California. 8th Internat'l Seniors In Sobriety Conf. Write: Ch., Box 1833, Lemon Grove, CA 91946; sisconferencesd@gmail.com

6-8—Waterbury, Connecticut. 55th Area 11 Conv. Write: Ch., Box 526, Vernon, CT 06066

6-8—Schaumburg, Illinois. 23rd Bridging The Gap Workshop Wknd. Write: Ch., 12070 Hierba Plc., San Diego, CA 92128; www.btgwww.org

6-8—Tonopah, Nevada. Area 42 Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 70171, Las Vegas, NV 89170; www.nevadaarea42.org

6-8—Petaling Jaya, Huala Lumpur, Malaysia. 3rd Malaysian Internat'l Roundup. Info: www.aamalaysia.org

13-15—Kenora, Ontario, Canada. Kenora Sunset Country Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 375, Keewatin, ON P0X 1C0

13-15—Rimini, Italy. 27th Conv. Info: www.alcolisti-anonimi.it

20-22—Mountain Home, Arkansas. Autumn In The Ozarks. Write: Ch., 408 Cone St., Mountain Home, AR 72653; www.autumnintheozarks.com

20-22—Macon, Georgia. GA Service Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 7325, Macon, GA 31209; gssa@aageorgia.org

20-22—Wichita, Kansas. 56th Area 25 State Conf. Write: Ch., Box 48391, Wichita, KS 67201; www.kansas-aa.org

20-22—Taos, New Mexico. 30th Taos Mtn Fiesta. Write: Ch., Box 750, El Prado, NM 87529; www.taosmountainfiesta.org

20-22—Pittman Center, Tennessee. 55th Great Smoky Mtn Recovery Campout. Info: gsmrc.greenbrier@gmail.com

20-22—Minocqua, Wisconsin. Area 74 Fall Conf. Write: Ch., Box 72, Rhineland, WI 54501

20-22—Gatineau, Québec, Canada. 16 Congrès Du 90-22. Infos: www.aa-quebec.org/region90

21-22—Kingman, Arizona. Hualapai Mtn Roundup. Write: Ch., 3239 E. Potter Ave., Kingman, AZ 86409; hualapaimtnroundup@gmail.com

27-28—Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Autumn Leaf Roundup. Info: info@aahamilton.com

27-29—Crescent City, California. Sobriety By The Sea. Write: Ch., Box 871, Crescent City, CA 95531; www.sobrietybythesea.com

27-29—Plymouth, California. Gold Country Roundup. Info: www.goldcountryroundup.com

27-29—Grand Junction, Colorado. ColorDaze. Write: Ch., 1005 N. 12th St., #107, Grand Junction, CO 81501; www.colordaze.com

27-29—Sioux City, Iowa. Sioux City Tri-State Roundup. Write: Ch., 411 33rd St., Sioux

City, IA 51104; www.siouxcitytristateroundup.com

27-29—Lafayette, Louisiana. Cajun Country Conf. Write: Ch., Box 3160, Lafayette, LA 70502; www.cajunaa.org

27-29—Somerset, New Jersey. 57th Area 44 Conv. Write: Ch., Box 45, Stanhope, NJ 07874-0679

27-29—Colville, Washington. 5th Roundup of Recovery. Write: Ch., Box 355, Loon Lake, WA 99148

28-30—San Diego, California. 38th Woman To Woman SD Conf. Write: Ch., 19700 Fairchild, Ste. 300, Irvine, CA 92612; www.womantowomansandiego.com

October

3-6—Rancho Mirage, California. So. CA Conv. Write: Ch., 710 S. Myrtle Ave., #121, Monrovia, CA 91016; www.aasocal.com

4-6—Troy, Michigan. Tri-County Conf. Write: Ch., Box 4324, Troy, MI 48099; tri.countyconference@ymail.com

4-6—Tacoma, Washington. Western WA Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 1822, Auburn, WA 98071; www.assembly2013.com

5-6—Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. Area 35 Fall Assembly. Info: areachair@area35.org

11-12—Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada. Congrès du Dist. 88-02, 88-15. Écrire: Prés., 1621 rue Yvan Gosselin, Sherbrooke, QC J1E 3C5

11-13—San Bernardino, California. 26th Inland Empire Conv. Write: Ch., Box 12056, San Bernardino, CA 92423-2056; www.ieaac.org

11-13—Mason City, Iowa. Area 24 Fall Conf. Write: Ch., 308 12th St. SE, Mason City, IA 50401; www.aa-iowa.org

Planning a Future Event?

To be included in the Box 4-5-9 Calendar, information must be received at G.S.O. four 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 Editor: Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 or literature@aa.org

Date of event: from _____ to _____, 20____

Name of event: _____

Location: _____ CITY _____ STATE OR PROVINCE _____

Planning Committee address: _____ P.O. BOX (OR NUMBER AND STREET) _____

CITY _____ STATE OR PROVINCE _____ ZIP CODE _____

Web site or E-mail: _____ (NO PERSONAL E-MAIL ADDRESSES)

Contact person: _____ NAME _____ PHONE # AND/OR E-MAIL _____

11-13—*Alexandria, Louisiana*. Cenla Sober Mania. Write: Ch., Box 13513, Alexandria, LA 71315-3513; www.aa-cenla.com

11-13—*Cadillac, Michigan*. MI Women's Conf. Write: Ch., Box 504, Comstock Park, MI 49321; www.miwcaa.com

11-13—*Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines*. 18th Internat'l Fall Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 308, Manila 1099, Philippines; angelescityaa@yahoo.com

17-20—*Atlanta, Georgia*. 60th GA Pre-paid Conv. Write: Ch., 4780 Ashford Dunwoody Rd., Ste. A, PMB #161, Atlanta, GA 30338-5004; www.aageorgia.org

18-20—*Mackinac Island, Michigan*. 25th Mackinac Island Fall Wknd. Write: Ch., 1915 E. Michigan Ave., Ste. D, Lansing, MI 48912; www.aalansingmi.org

18-20—*Melville, New York*. 25th NE Woman to Woman Conf. Write: Ch., Box 1005, Rockville Centre, NY 11571; www.newomantowoman.org

18-20—*Bouctouche, New Brunswick, Canada*. Area 81 Fall Assembly & Roundup. Write: Ch., 4 Kilburn Ave., Moncton, NB E1A 3N6; www.area81aa.ca

18-20—*Ottawa, Ontario, Canada*. 62nd Eastern ON Fall Conf. Info: www.ottawa-aa.org

18-20—*Rocky Point, Sonora, México*. Rocky Point Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 10756, Glendale, AZ 85318; www.rocky-pointroundup.org

24-27—*Hagerstown, Maryland*. 29th MD Fall Conv. Write: Ch., Box 20177, Baltimore, MD 21284; www.marylandaa.org

25-27—*Mesa, Arizona*. ASCYPAA. Write: Ch., Box 40124, Mesa, AZ 85274; www.ascypaa.org

25-27—*Panama City Beach, Florida*. Area One Conv. Write: Ch., Box 35502, Panama City, FL 32412; 2013areaconvention@gmail.com

25-27—*Buffalo, New York*. 72nd Buffalo Fall Conv. Write: Ch., Box 798, Buffalo, NY 14207; www.buffaloaaany.org

25-27—*Cincinnati, Ohio*. 21st Buckeye Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 17843, Ft. Mitchell, KY 41017; buckeyeroundup13@aol.com

25-27—*Greensburg, Pennsylvania*. 73rd Laurel Highlands Conf. Write: Ch., Box 6, Bovard, PA 15619

25-27—*Pughtown, Pennsylvania*. Downingtown Young People's Conf. Info: www.dypcaa.org

25-27—*San Antonio, Texas*. TX State Conf. of YPAA. Info: www.txscypaa.org

November

1-2—*Johnston, Iowa*. Capital City Conf. Write: Ch., Box 30135, Des Moines, IA 50310; www.capitalcityconference.org

1-2—*Cornwall, Ontario, Canada*. Cornwall Dist. 50 Conf. Write: Ch., Box 1984, Cornwall, ON K6J 1B6; www.cornwallaa.com

1-3—*Traverse City, Michigan*. Fall Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 4, Traverse City, MI 49684; tcroundup@gmail.com

8-10—*Santa Maria, California*. 52nd Dist. Central Coast Roundup. Info: www.centralcoastroundup.org

8-10—*Framingham, Massachusetts*. 50th MA State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 121, Blanford, MA 01008

8-10—*San Antonio, Texas*. Asamblea Hispana Zona Sur De TX. Inf.: Com. Org., Box 830434, San Antonio, TX 78283; asambleazonazur@yahoo.com

14-17—*Honolulu, Hawaii*. HI Conv. Write: Ch., Box 23434, Honolulu, HI 96823; www.annualhawaiiconvention.com

15-17—*Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada*. 35th Lighthouse Roundup. Write: Ch., RR1 Box 5, Site 1, Meteghan, NS B0W 2J0; www.area82aa.org

22-24—*Louisville, Kentucky*. KY Conf. of YPAA. Info: www.kcypaa2013.org

22-24—*Manchester, Vermont*. Woman to Woman New England. Info: www.woman2womanne.org

22-24—*Lake Geneva, Wisconsin*. McHenry's Soberfest. Write: Ch., Box 717, McHenry, IL 60051; www.soberfest.org

29-30—*Newark, New Jersey*. XXVI Conv. Hispana de NJ. Inf: www.convencionaanj.org

29-1—*St. Louis Park, Minnesota*. Founder's Day Wknd LXXIII. Write: Ch., Box 8327, Minneapolis, MN 55408-9998; www.foundersdaymn.org

29-1—*Diamondhead, Mississippi*. 23rd Gratitude Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 7851, Gulfport, MS 39507; www.aagulfcoast.org

January

3-5—*Mankato, Minnesota*. 33rd Recovery, Unity & Svc Conf. Write: Ch., Box 2812, Minneapolis, MN 55402; altchairperson@area36.org

17-19—*Annapolis, Maryland*. 3rd Annapolis Area Intergroup Conv. Write: Ch., Box 2267, Annapolis, MD 21404; www.annapolis-areaintergroup.org

17-19—*Dunedin, New Zealand*. New Zealand Conv. Write: Ch., Box 6115, Dunedin, 9059, New Zealand

31-2—*El Paso, Texas*. XXX Reunión Zona Norte TX. Inf., Com. Org., Box 10325, El Paso, TX 79905

31-2—*Oostende, Belgium*. 25th North Sea Conv. Info: www.aa-europe.net