



AA EXCHANGE BULLETIN

NEWS AND NOTES ON ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WORLDWIDE

Volume 6 Published by General Service Office of A.A., P. O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York 17 Number 4

April, 1961

1961 CONFERENCE MEETS THIS MONTH

The eleventh annual General Service Conference will meet, April 19 - 23, at the Hotel Roosevelt in New York City. The Hawaiian groups are sending a Delegate this year for the first time and the total number of Area Delegates will now be 84, a new high. Delegates will attend a series of meetings with the General Service Board Trustees and with the Directors and Staffs of GSO and Grapevine. All phases of AA world-wide service will be discussed.

Area Delegates are elected to serve for two years and approximately half of them are new each year. This year all new Delegates will give 3-minute talks that will feature AA highlights in their respective areas. Second year Delegates will join in special presentations on such matters as Sponsorship, Clubs, AA in Smaller Communities, etc. This year's agenda will include special reports on Public Information and on Literature, financial reports on GSO Services in 1960, and discussion of a possible 30th Anniversary Convention in 1965.

Delegates have been asked to bring to the Conference suggestions from their areas and, as is now the custom, an "ask-it basket" will make it easy for Delegates to get answers to any questions they may wish to ask about GSO policies, activities and procedures.

The Conference will conclude its business Saturday evening so the Delegates and their families can spend Sunday morning and have luncheon with Bill and Lois at their home in Bedford Hills.

If you would like to know the name and address of your group's Area Delegate, write to Anita, the Conference Secretary, and she will be glad to send you the information.



AA WORLD DIRECTORY MAILING

The 1961 Directory will be mailed to all groups the end of April.

Will those of you who are receiving mail for your group please remember that the Directory is for the use of all the members of your group. Let them know when it arrives and explain that it contains addresses and phone numbers by which AA groups all around the world can be contacted. Every now and then we hear that the Directory gets stuck away in a drawer and forgotten so that members of the group who travel, or who may want to arrange 12th steps calls in other cities, never know it is on hand for them to use.

When you are writing to an AA member whose name and address is listed in the AA World Directory, be sure to protect his anonymity and do not put on the envelope, wrapper, or post card the words, "Alcoholics Anonymous", or the initials, "AA".

SUGGESTIONS FOR AA TALKS TO NON-AA'S

There is now available at GSO some new material for AA's to use in their talks about the fellowship to other organizations in the community.

"What is AA?" "How does one find it?" "How can a non-alcoholic help an alcoholic make contact with AA?" These are some of the questions most frequently asked by non-alcoholics, according to a recent GSO survey, and suggestions to answer them are now available.

If you would like to have this material, write Hazel, who is handling our Public Information Service, and she will be glad to send it to you.

RADIO BROADCAST IN DENMARK

AA in Denmark had its first radio broadcast over Radio Denmark on March 10th. The Centrum Group in Copenhagen is grateful to Mr. Karl Bjarnhof, of Radio Denmark, for his cooperation in making the broadcast possible.

NEW TRANSLATIONS - GSO has added three Spanish pamphlets to its list of translations: IS AA FOR YOU?, ALCOHOLISM THE ILLNESS, and a reprint of the 1941 SATURDAY EVENING POST article. We now have seven pamphlets in Spanish, as well as an abridged Spanish edition of the AA Book.

Other translations of AA literature are available in Finnish, French, German, Norwegian, Portuguese and Swedish. If you'd like to have a list of these, just write and we'll be glad to send you our new order form.

AA CONVENTIONS OVERSEAS

Ann M., of GSO Staff, has planned her vacation so she can attend the Sixth National Annual Convention of AA in England and Wales. It will be held May 6 and 7 at The Spa Hotel in Buxton, Derbyshire.

The Fifth Annual Scottish AA Convention will be held May 12 - 14, at the Allan Water Hotel, Bridge of Allan, Stirlingshire. A message from Big Bob, the Chairman, reads in part: "Rally round; bring your friends or anyone interested. We guarantee their week-end won't be wasted. The keynote is happiness and good fellowship and we invite you all to share it with us. Dress is informal. To use Jimmy B.'s expression - 'kilt or sari, it matters not!'"

The Fourth All-Ireland AA Convention will meet in Bangor, North Ireland, April 28 - 30. This is its first meeting in the north. The Belfast groups are making the arrangements and extend a cordial invitation to all AA's, particularly those who may be traveling near Belfast the end of April.

CALLING AA RADIO HAMS!

Eddie C., Loner in Harrismith, South Africa, would like contact with other AA radio "hams." His call letters are Z.S.4 M.Z.

Al B., in Brooklyn, New York, has asked us to pass along his call letters, W. 2 P.K. He'd also like to hear from fellow members.

Ed A., in Danbury, New Hampshire, writes: "If I can be of help to other AA's via amateur radio let me know. My call letters are K.1A.P.Q."

AA GRAPEVINE - A Group Sponsorship Plan (details in the April Grapevine, page 47) has been suggested to the Grapevine by a former General Service Conference Delegate. "The Plan" is for a group to give a GV subscription each month to some individual selected by the group - either a doctor, clergyman, old-timer, slipee, law enforcement officer, etc.

Some groups have already adopted the suggestion and others report they have had similar procedures for some time. The hope expressed by the author of the new plan is to encourage all groups to participate in this wonderful message carrying. The GV says Amen!

A presentation of the plan and a return card have been sent to each group secretary. When the card is returned to the GV office, the group will be furnished 12 self-addressed envelopes, stamped, "Group Sponsorship", and 12 subscription blanks to be used for this specific purpose. The Grapevine thanks all groups that have already written that they will participate.

NEWS FROM INMATE GROUPS, COAST TO COAST

"Please accept our thanks for your encouragement and for lining up speakers for the INSIDER GROUP'S tenth anniversary here at the FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION in DANBURY, CONNECTICUT. The meeting was real down-to-earth AA with no attempt on the part of anyone to tell the biggest story. Each man simply gave his own testimony as to what AA had done for him. This was our largest meeting ever. Seventy-seven AA's came from groups all over Connecticut to help celebrate the occasion. There were thirty odd "Insiders" present and each of them was deeply appreciative that so many outside AA's showed up. Ladies were invited to attend for the first time and a number of them did. The Insiders trust this custom will be continued."

THE NEW LIFE GROUP in CANON CITY, COLORADO, is now sending a monthly letter to former group members after their discharge. The January letter closed as follows: "We hope to send out a little newsletter like this every month to our alumni and we also hope you will answer and let us know how you are getting along. We would like to know how many of you will come back to our meetings here and when would be the most convenient time for you to come."

No one can be a member of the new ARGUS GROUP, in WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, unless he is also an active member in another group. This group, comprised entirely of ex-inmates, meets once a week to help sponsor men being released from prison. Argus, it will be remembered, was the son of Zeus and Niobe. He had a hundred eyes and saw everything. The Greeks used to call him "the watchful guardian" and it's good to hear he is now back on the job in Winnipeg.

Officials of the WASHINGTON STATE PENITENTIARY at WALLA WALLA are practicing the program too. A member of the Willshare Group in this institution writes: "AA prisoners are now allowed to attend outside meetings if they are invited by AA groups within a radius of two hundred miles. This is a big step forward in helping prisoners adjust to society when they are released. Furthermore, an inmate serving a life sentence was permitted to attend the Area Assembly in Yakima as the General Service Representative of the Willshare Group. I believe it is a great thing that the authorities had the faith in him and in AA to let him attend."

-*-*-*-*-*-*-*-*-*-

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO GSO 2/15/61 - 3/20/61

Maine	District I	\$ 10.00
Pennsylvania	Eastern Pa. Area #5	6.80
Rhode Island	State Assembly	50.00

FUN IN THE BATH

"Red" R. is one Internationalist who is enjoying his sobriety and keeping his sense of humor at the same time. Red belongs to the "Anchor Clan-kers", as the group of three AA's aboard the S.S. Cotton State calls itself.

"We have meetings around the clock", Red writes, "some scheduled, some not. Henry, George and I now have eighteen years of sobriety between us and this is something we are proud of. We have carried the message to a lot of guys and some were ready but some were not. We have wondered why we couldn't change so and so, or how come this guy won't get on the program, and we have even grabbed a guy by the neck so we could preach the philosophy to him."

"We were in Tokyo recently where we celebrated Henry's fifth birthday with the best cuisine in Japan and held an AA meeting in a steam bath. Now what else could an alcoholic ask for?" Nothing, Red, absolutely nothing.

THE BIG BOOK'S ANNIVERSARY

Published in April, 1939, the book, "ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS", is twenty-two years old this month. During its first sixteen years more than 300,000 copies were sold as AA membership soared. Because the Big Book has helped so many alcoholics recover, it has become the basic text of the fellowship. Most AA's feel that not one word should be changed. So in 1955, when the second edition appeared, the first eleven chapters describing the AA program were reprinted, virtually untouched.

The personal history section in the second edition was revised and considerably expanded. Back in 1939 there were, all told, a scant hundred members. Almost all of these were hopeless cases who clutched at AA as a last straw. But over the years this situation changed. Alcoholics began identifying and coming into AA in the early stages of their illness. Many of these were youngsters in their twenties. It no longer seemed necessary for an alcoholic to take the classic trip to the gutter. Drunks were showing up who had never seen the inside of a jail. Women alcoholics too, once reluctant to come anywhere near AA, were now working the program everywhere, side by side with the men, unremarked because they happened to be women. Thus, the story section of the second edition had to be broadened to provide a chance for these youngsters and "high bottoms" to identify.

With sales approaching the half-million mark, the Big Book has now traveled all over the world. Translated into French, Spanish and Norwegian, it is carrying the message in more than eighty countries outside the U.S. and Canada.

People come by the Big Book in many ways. Some buy it for themselves. Some win it for 25¢ in a group raffle. Some get it from their sponsor when they would much prefer to be given a drink. Some find it placed surreptitiously near at hand by a hopeful member of the family. But no matter how the book reaches an alcoholic it always offers him the opportunity for identification and hope.

One book did find its way to a small town in Austria where Hermann W., now an AA Loner, identified with Bill W.'s story and wrote to GSO: "It is fascinating to read the story of one of the co-founders who returned from World War I where he fought in France as an artillery officer. He had to find a new way of life. It was the same with me. I too was in France as an artillery officer in World War I, but on the opposite side of the front. And, like Bill, I too had to find a new way of life without alcohol. I am sober now and hope to be so until the end of my days."

In May, you'll receive your CONFERENCE DIGEST * 1961. Until then, warmest greetings from Ann, Anita, Beth, Eve, Hazel, Lyb and Herb.

