

## More Questions About Anonymity

In the Fall 2012 issue of *Box 4-5-9* there were several questions and answers about anonymity at the personal level, such as within A.A. meetings, and at the public level, as addressed by A.A.'s Tradition Eleven. As the introductory paragraph indicated, those were just a few of the types of inquiries that arrive at the General Service Office. In this article, additional types of inquiries are addressed.

**Q.** "Recently there was an A.A. member identified by full name in a newspaper (or Internet or video) article. Will G.S.O. write a letter to the newspaper telling them they are breaking A.A.'s Tradition of Anonymity?"

**A.** A typical response from an A.A. General Service staff member on the Public Information assignment might go like this: "Let me take a moment to share with you how anonymity breaks are handled here at G.S.O. When G.S.O. receives a copy of an anonymity break, and the area where the A.A. member resides can be identified, the procedure we follow is to send a notification letter to the delegate, along with copies of the article or transcript and sample response letters that can be adapted for the particular situation. Usually, the delegate will write to the A.A. member in their area. This is a process that resulted from a General Service Conference Advisory Action.

"We generally do not contact media professionals regarding anonymity breaks when they are reporting information given to them by an A.A. member. While we ask the cooperation of the press in maintaining our Tradition of anonymity, they are not bound by it, and are free to report the news as they see fit. It is the responsibility of the individual A.A. member, and not the media professional, to observe our Tradition of anonymity.

"In all cases, we try to make sure that our communications are not punitive, and cannot be interpreted that way, and that we do not cause further controversy by writing something that may then appear in a newspaper, magazine, etc. as 'A.A.'s opinion.'"

**Q.** "What about an obituary where the deceased's membership in A.A. was mentioned along with the names of several other A.A. members? Does G.S.O. send the same 'Anonymity Break' letter to the delegate?"

**A.** "A.A. members generally think it unwise to break the anonymity of the member even after his or her death, but in each situation, the final decision must rest with the family. A.A. members, though, are in agreement that the anonymity of still living A.A. members should be respected in obituaries or in any type of printed remembrance or death notice." ("Understanding Anonymity," p. 11)

**Q.** "Does A.A. as a whole have a general policy about posthumous anonymity of co-founders Bill W. and Dr. Bob?"

**A.** "No. However, in 2001 the General Service Board approved the following policy to be used as guidance in any Public Information activity surrounding A.A.'s co-founders:

"The G.S.O. Public Information policy should maintain the anonymity of all A.A. members living or dead, including the co-founders, to the maximum extent possible.

"The Public Information desk of G.S.O. exists in relation to the general public as a source of information regarding the recovery program and Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, not as a source of information regarding individual members of Alcoholics Anonymous, living or dead.

"To the extent that nonanonymous information concerning our co-founders exists in A.A. literature, which is already available to the general public, inquiries may be directed to that information. The Public Information desk can also provide copies of such information to the media. Additional information should not be volunteered or provided, out of respect for A.A.'s traditional principles of personal anonymity, and the honor accorded those principles by the co-founders themselves as members of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"No information should be provided regarding any other A.A. members, past or present, under any circumstances."

**Q.** "Did A.A.'s co-founders ever have anything to say themselves about posthumous anonymity?"

**Understanding Anonymity**

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.

*This pamphlet was last updated by the 61st General Service Conference in May 2011. Last fall the trustees' Public Information Committee requested that the cover be updated to better communicate to members that it contains a broad range of information on anonymity, including electronic media and social networking, as well as posthumous anonymity and how to talk about anonymity with your family members.*

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**A.** In the book *A.A. Comes of Age*, pp. 136-137, Bill wrote: “Dr. Bob was essentially a far more humble person than I. In some ways he was a sort of spiritual ‘natural,’ and this anonymity business came rather easily to him. He could not understand why some people would want so much publicity. In the years before he died, his personal example respecting anonymity did much to help me keep my own lid on. I think of one affecting instance in particular, one that every A.A. ought to know. When it was sure that Dr. Bob was mortally afflicted, some of his friends suggested that there should be a monument or mausoleum erected in honor of him and his wife, Anne — befitting a founder and his lady.... Telling me about this, Dr. Bob grinned broadly and said, ‘God bless ’em. They mean well. But for heaven’s sake, Bill, let’s you and I get buried just like other folks.’”

“A year after his passing, I visited the Akron cemetery where Dr. Bob and Anne lie. The simple stone says not a word about Alcoholics Anonymous. Some people may think that this wonderful couple carried personal anonymity too far when they so firmly refused to use the words ‘Alcoholics Anonymous’ even on their own burial stone. For one, I do not think so. I think that this moving and final example of self-effacement will prove of more permanent worth to A.A. than any amount of public attention or any great monument.”

**Q.** “I know that Bill W. wrote extensively about anonymity in A.A. literature, but I am sure that he couldn’t have foreseen the explosion of modern technology. How do we guard anonymity online?”

**A.** “Modern communication in A.A. is flowing from one alcoholic to another in ways that are high-tech, relatively open-ended and evolving quickly. Protecting anonymity is a major concern for members, who are accessing the Internet in ever-growing numbers.

“A guiding resource of shared A.A. experience regarding Web sites is the G.S.O. service piece ‘Frequently Asked Questions About A.A. Web Sites,’ question seven: Q. What about anonymity? We observe all A.A.’s principles and Traditions on our Web sites. Since anonymity is ‘the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions,’ we practice

anonymity on A.A. Web sites at all times. An A.A. Web site is a public medium, which has the potential for reaching the broadest possible audience and, therefore, requires the same safeguards that we use at the level of press, radio and film.

“When we use digital media, we are responsible for our own anonymity and that of others. When we post, text, or blog, we should assume that we are publishing at the public level. When we break our anonymity in these forums, we may inadvertently break the anonymity of others.” (A.A. Guidelines on Internet)

For more information on anonymity online see the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity,” which has been given a new cover with graphics to represent the wide diversity of media in which A.A. members guard their own and others’ anonymity.

## ■ India’s ‘Jack Alexander Moment’

Many A.A.s know the story of Jack Alexander, the nonalcoholic journalist who investigated A.A. in the early 1940s and wrote a seminal article about the Fellowship for the *Saturday Evening Post* in March 1941. Its publication launched a flood of inquiries about A.A. and generated thousands of Twelfth Step calls, putting the fledgling Fellowship “on the map,” according to some, and spreading the message of recovery far and wide.

In July 2012, A.A. in India underwent a similar explosion of interest, launched by yet another nonalcoholic journalist who brought to the general public critical information about alcoholism and endorsed the role played by Alcoholics Anonymous in recovery from the disease.

Aamir Khan, a popular Indian television personality and host of the investigative series *Satyamev Jayate* (translated as *Truth Alone Prevails*) — a show comparable in scope to America’s *Oprah Winfrey Show* — dedicated one entire episode titled “Alcohol Abuse—Think Before You Drink” to the topic of alcoholism. *Satyamev Jayate* has received overwhelming popular support since the first season of the show premiered in May 2012 and has garnered critical acclaim for its research, format and presentation highlighting sensitive social issues prevalent in India. Aired in Hindi, the primary language of the show, it is also dubbed and simulcast in other Indian languages, such as Bengali, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu.

In India, there are presently more than 1,100 A.A. groups with approximately 30,000 members and, according to the general manager of A.A.’s General Service Office in India, “After a lot of groundwork, the show’s research team came to the conclusion that the A.A. program is a reliable recovery source for alcoholism that is available in pan-India and completely free of cost.”

The show featured interviews with recovering alcoholics and medical experts, including one of India's Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees, and flashed A.A.'s helpline numbers and Web site details on air. India's G.S.O. worked closely with the producers of the show and, in anticipation, A.A. members worked feverishly for some time behind the scenes to prepare for what proved to be a rising tide of inquiries, the biggest boost A.A. in India had ever received.

A nationwide campaign was established to handle the influx of calls from suffering alcoholics, family members, and those interested in recovery, with temporary call centers set up in numerous cities across the country. Volunteer members answered all queries and connected callers to A.A. members on a local level who followed up with a personal Twelfth Step call.

A past trustee of India's General Service Board, who was at the A.A. service office in Mumbai when the show aired, said "The number was first flashed on the show at 11:37 a.m. and at 11:40 a.m. we received the first call. Within 20 minutes, the A.A. Web site had crashed. At 12:30 all telephone lines were jammed." By 4:00 p.m., A.A. centers across India had received 13,000 calls, which jumped to 28,000 by 7:00 p.m. in the evening after the show aired. The total rose in the following days to more than 90,000 calls, 18,000 text messages, 700 letters and an avalanche of unrecorded calls to G.S.O.

"It seems that at last A.A. India has found its own Jack Alexander," said the chairman of India's A.A. Public Information committee, categorizing the show as a "once in a lifetime opportunity."

One of the greatest challenges recognized by the A.A. Fellowship in India was the fact that calls would come from where A.A. exists *and* from where it doesn't. Said a past trustee, "Many areas such as Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Bihar and large parts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh do not have A.A. groups. Once we receive calls from a place where a group is missing, we will send a team of A.A. members who will help the locals set up a group to conduct regular meetings and help alcoholics practice the recovery program."

Interestingly, Aamir Khan generously offered the entire proceeds of the show to A.A. to help in its Twelfth Step work, an offer that was politely declined, in accordance with A.A.'s Traditions, with the understanding that while A.A. help is free, only A.A. members may contribute toward the Fellowship's expenses. To defray some of the expected costs to the Fellowship, however the treasurer of India's board of trustees communicated with all Indian A.A. groups, informing them of the upcoming show and urging them, in the spirit of self-support, to help shoulder the responsibility to "ensure the possibility of every call for help getting this life-saving message."

Ultimately, many members in India felt that the greatest impact of the show was in creating awareness that alcoholism is not just a "bad habit," but a full-fledged illness which has a reliable antidote: the program of A.A.

"All of us need to be made aware of the dangers of drinking alcohol and to what extent alcoholism has affected our country and society," said writer Vikram Karve in a review of the show. "I hope this program will highlight the dangers of alcoholism, both in our rural and urban society. Making people aware of a problem is the first step forward solving it," he said, and in this regard "Satyamev Jayate has done yeoman's service."

"Ultimately, it all depends now on us," said India's Public Information chair in a letter to Indian groups, "whether we will convert this show into our Jack Alexander article of India or just another show with a social cause."

Said the general manager of G.S.O. India, "The calls are not stopping yet. With every retelecast, newspaper article, and talk show on TV channels, the influx of calls increases."

Wherever in the world it happens to be, when it comes to A.A., it seems our work is never done.

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## ■ 2013 General Service Conference

A well-known shipping and delivery company has recently been running a national ad campaign focused on the word "logistics," a campaign highlighting the challenges in moving a multiplicity of items — of all shapes, sizes and descriptions — effectively from point A to point B, citing the catchphrase, "We love logistics."

In many respects, A.A.'s annual General Service Conference could also be defined by the word "logistics," as noted in the Encarta World English Dictionary to mean: the planning and implementation of a complex task.

In session for just a single week in April, the Conference process is actually a year-round endeavor connecting the A.A. Fellowship. Facing many complexities in this task throughout the year, perhaps the most impressive logistic of all — as will be seen this April 21-27 — is the rounding up of 93 delegates from across the U.S. and Canada, along with the 21 trustees of the General Service Board, and the directors and staff members of A.A.W.S. and the Grapevine, as well as the many support staff who assist throughout the week, and placing them all together at the Crowne Plaza Times Square, New York, NY to address what will be the 2013 Conference theme: "The General Service Conference Takes Its Inventory — Our Solution in Action."

Getting to this point will be the culmination of many months of hard work throughout the U.S./Canada Fellowship, from the election of new delegates to fill nearly half of the two delegate panels represented this year, to groups forwarding potential Conference agenda items for discussion through the service structure, to G.S.O. collecting and preparing background material to send to all Conference members, and so much more.

Starting back in 1951 with the first General Service



Conference and continuing this year with the 63rd, the annual journey from one Conference to another touches all aspects of the Fellowship, linking individual members, groups, districts, areas, regions and A.A.'s service boards and General Service Office together in search of the collective voice and vision that will guide the Fellowship provisionally through good times and bad.

As suggested by this year's theme, taking inventory, in the best sense of the word, is a key aspect of the A.A. program of recovery and doing so at the level of A.A.'s General Service Conference is a natural outgrowth of that which is done to maintain individual sobriety. As stipulated by the 2012 Conference, therefore, a series of inventory questions aimed at developing a better understanding and improvement of the underlying logistics of the General Service Conference will be discussed, engaging Conference members in a consideration of the overall effectiveness of the Conference and the Conference process; the composition of the Conference; the committee system; the effectiveness of the yearlong process; Conference preparation, in terms of background, content, delivery, etc.; the Conference week schedule; the General Service Board and corporate boards; and the question of leadership and what might be the most desirable qualities for leaders in A.A. The inventory process will continue in subsequent years, with additional aspects of these same elements to be looked at in 2014 and 2015 as well.

From start to finish, the Conference is a team effort, "an enormous, fascinating and absorbing challenge," says one G.S.O. staff member and former Conference coordinator. "Like putting together the myriad pieces of a giant puzzle."

Yet, the Conference is much more than just the challenging logistics that go into its preparation; it is ultimately the embodiment of A.A.'s co-founders Bill W. and Dr. Bob, and the early members of the Fellowship.

As Bill W. described it in a 1958 article in the A.A. Grapevine ("Guardian of A.A.: Our General Service Conference," *The Language of the Heart*, pp.168-169), "During the year 1948 we workers at A.A.'s Headquarters got a terrific jolt. Dr. Bob was stricken with a consuming and slowly fatal malady. This created a severe crisis in our affairs because it made us face up to the fact that the old-time parents of our Society weren't going to last forever.

"We were filled with foreboding as we realized how insecure were the existing links between our Headquarters and the vast sprawling Fellowship that it served.... Thousands of our members went serenely about their business. They knew little or nothing about A.A.'s overall problems. They vaguely supposed that God, with maybe a slight assist from Dr. Bob and me, would go right on handling them...."

"It was a racking dilemma. Somehow A.A. as such — A.A. as a whole — would have to take over the full responsibility."

Making the jump from a handful of oldtimers and those generally unknown trustees of the then Alcoholic

Foundation as the principal decision makers for A.A. as a whole to a group of duly elected and informed delegates was no small feat. "But after a couple of years of agitation and education," wrote Bill, "our Fellowship clearly realized that the ultrasimplicity of the early days could be no more. Direct family responsibility there would have to be, or else A.A. would fold up at its very center. The erstwhile elders, fathers, and founders would have to be taken off the hook and replaced by delegates. There was no other way. The family would have to 'come of age' or suffer the dire penalties for the failure to do so."

Such awareness throughout the Fellowship set the stage then, at A.A.'s 20th Anniversary celebration in St. Louis in 1955, after a five-year experimental phase, for broad acceptance of the General Service Conference by the Fellowship. Standing before several thousand A.A.s and their families at the last session of the three-day celebration, Bill W. asked the membership to "take its destiny by the hand" and approve a Resolution stating, in part: "A.A.'s General Service Conference should now become the permanent successor to the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, inheriting from them all their former duties and special responsibilities, thus avoiding in future time all possible strivings for individual prestige or personal power; and also providing our Society with the means of functioning on a permanent basis." With a resounding "aye!" those present — including A.A.s from Bermuda, Brazil, England, France, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, as well as the U.S. and Canada — adopted the Resolution.

So, the Conference, from that day to this, belongs to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. And, while the prospect of bringing together so many people each year from so many distant parts of our U.S./Canada service structure can seem daunting, we, too, can say with complete sincerity, "We love logistics."

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## ■ French Big Book Celebrates 50 Years

Another A.A. oldtimer has reached a major milestone. March of 2013 marks 50 years since the Big Book was first published in French, a critical development in A.A.'s long history that opened the doors to sobriety for countless alcoholics around the world.

Filling the auditorium of the Montreal Botanical Gardens on March 2, 1963, Canadian A.A.s welcomed the debut of the "Gros Livre" with a regular A.A. meeting and an official ceremony. Attended by more than 350 people, when the long-awaited volume was finally displayed, the entire hall echoed with applause. The mayor of Montreal sent a representative who expressed the mayor's official greetings, and in his name wished the book — and the Fellowship itself — the best of success.



Eve M., a staff member at G.S.O., accepted a copy of the French Big Book on behalf of Bill W., and Dave B., the founder of A.A. in Canada, read a congratulatory telegram sent by Bill. It read: “Dear Friends, With this please have my everlasting gratitude for your great work now completed — the translation of our A.A. book into the French language.

“This is a new and magnificent evidence that A.A. can cross every barrier, can speak in the language of the heart to all who suffer our strange and fearsome malady.

“A.A.’s whole Fellowship will soon say ‘May God bless you forever.’

“Devotedly, Bill W.”

The translation of *Alcooliques Anonymes* was many years in the making, with broad involvement and a few false starts. However, over the course of nearly twelve years, with the inclusion of eight stories from members in Canada and Europe, the book made its debut in Quebec. Quickly finding its way overseas to France and to Belgium and Switzerland, the book sparked A.A. growth across Europe.

In February 1978, in Quebec, the first steps were taken to publish a second edition of the book to better reflect the membership at that time. A search for stories was undertaken by the delegates of the four Quebec Areas and through the French-speaking General Services in Europe. It took seven years to finalize the second edition, which was ultimately published in 1985 to coincide with A.A.’s 50th Anniversary International Convention, held in Montreal.

However, as A.A. continued developing throughout the French-speaking world—in Belgium, France, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Switzerland, Tahiti, and, more recently, Africa—it became more and more essential to have literature published in international French, as opposed to French Canadian.

At this time, A.A. World Services was preparing the Fourth Edition of the Big Book in English, and French-speaking A.A. members considered a number of different options: produce an exact translation of the English version of the Fourth Edition; find new stories from French-

speaking members in Canada and French European countries and publish a French Fourth Edition; or continue to publish the Third Edition of the French Big Book and have the stories of the Fourth Edition translated into French and published in a booklet format.

The delegates of the four Quebec areas submitted these choices to their areas and after long discussion, and in support of having uniformity in the translation of A.A. Conference-approved literature, it was decided to publish an exact translation in French of the English-language Fourth Edition. Revised to reflect an updated international French, *Les Alcooliques Anonymes* was published some eighteen months after the Fourth Edition in English came off the press in October 2001.

Counting all formats, including abridged and paperback, nearly half a million French versions of the Big Book have been sold.

So, congratulations to another A.A. oldtimer! *Bon anniversaire.*

## ■ G.S.O. Welcomes New Publishing Director

Publishing is “a part of my DNA” acknowledges Greg T., the Fellowship’s newly-hired publishing director who began work at G.S.O. on January 2, 2013, taking over for Valerie O’N., who retired in December 2012. Reporting directly to G.S.O.’s general manager, Greg now will be responsible for the planning, publishing and distribution of A.A.’s broad catalogue of materials, including books, pamphlets, newsletters, videos, e-books and other formats, in multiple languages that reach, literally, around the world.

Recognizing the breadth and scope of A.A.’s publishing efforts, Greg expresses his readiness to take on the challenge: “I’ve spent most of my working life over the past 30-plus years in book, magazine and newspaper publishing as an editor, publisher and writer,” says Greg. “Most recently I worked in the nonprofit field in church and higher education institutions,” he notes, “which added a new dimension, I hope, to my professional background.”

Greg comes to G.S.O. after eight years at a major New Jersey university, where he served as vice president for advancement, overseeing the university’s communications and marketing functions and a publications department producing over 500 publications annually, in all formats, including print and digital. His responsibilities also included management of the university’s Web site and the development and execution of the university’s day-to-day integrated strategic communications. During his time at the university Greg held a number of other titles, including director of publications and senior adviser for strategic communications, where he served as speechwriter, adviser and chief researcher for the University’s president.

A graduate of Yale University with a B.A. in philosophy, Greg also received an M.A. degree in theology in 2006 from Seton Hall University. Having written and edited a number of books, both novels and nonfiction, Greg began his executive career in publishing as a senior manager at the Bertelsman/Doubleday Book Clubs in New York City in the early 1980s. Moving on through the ranks of the New York publishing world, with a seven-year stint at Time Warner's Book-of-the-Month Club where he became vice president and editor in chief, Greg eventually found himself as the senior vice president and editor in chief at Bertelsman/Random House, Inc. From there he wrote full time for two years and took on a position as editor and associate publisher of *The Catholic Advocate*, the principal communications vehicle of the Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey before moving to the university setting.

Along with such diverse experience and broad publishing background, Greg is no stranger to A.A. Sober since 1986, Greg has served the Fellowship in a number of capacities, most enjoyably, perhaps, as coffeemaker at his home group in South Orange, New Jersey. From the beginning, however, given his background and proclivities, A.A. literature has played a key role in his early and ongoing sobriety.

"From my very first meeting on a Friday evening I took home a fistful of A.A. pamphlets, which I actually read over that weekend! I remember only that I felt an immediate sense of identification and it seemed that the message of A.A. had been clearly articulated. At the next meeting I attended, which became my home group, I received my first copy of the Big Book, which I consumed in a few sittings, quickly followed by the Twelve and Twelve from my first Step-study meeting. Those two books whetted my appetite for more, so I ran the gamut all the way through *A.A. Comes of Age*. Additionally, I kept a copy of *Living Sober* handy, especially during my first couple of years of sobriety.

"But, that was me. Everyone is probably a bit different in terms of what they need and their tastes and methods of consuming literature. So it is up to us to continue keeping the message of recovery in A.A. as widely available in as many print and electronic formats as possible. And, no doubt, more will be revealed in terms of formats and distribution methods we haven't even yet conceived of."

A former member of the Grapevine Editorial Advisory Board, Greg joined the Grapevine Corporate Board as a nontrustee director in April 1996 and was later selected as a general service trustee from April 1999 to May 2003. He chaired the Grapevine Corporate Board for one year, as well as serving on a number of trustees committees, including Archives, Correctional Facilities, Finance and Budgetary, International Conventions/Regional Forums, Public Information, Nominating, Retirement, and Legal Affairs. Having attended numerous General Service Conferences as a voting member, Greg notes "I feel my service as a member of the General Service Conference will

continue to be most helpful to me in this new position. The role of publishing director is far different than that of a trustee or corporate board director, but there is a lot of communication and exchange of information between those functions that I am quite familiar with. Now I am sitting at the other side of the desk, so to speak. Also, though the position does not bring with it a vote at the Conference, I will be required to be present as a resource and to follow the debates on issues pertaining to our Fellowship, especially regarding literature."

Greg remains active in his home group as greeter and coffeemaker, is active in Step and service sponsorship and continues to participate in district, area, and regional functions. "A.A. service is unique in my experience," he says, and when asked if he ever thought he'd have an opportunity like this to share his experience, strength and hope when he first got sober, Greg responds "No. Never. Not in a million years. It's been one day at a time," he concludes, "and I am especially grateful and humbled by the opportunity."

"For someone today," he adds, "the Big Book is a brand-new, life-changing experience, just like it was for me. The same with *Living Sober* or one of the pamphlets. And so, there is a need to 'get it right' on the page and to document the text properly, as well as to produce a quality 'product' that will become a part of the reader's life.

"We publish to support the mission and to disseminate the message, as well as to generate revenue to be self-sustaining according to our Traditions and to support the services for which A.A.W.S. is responsible. And, just as in commercial publishing, there is real satisfaction in bringing a book of quality and importance to a new audience, no matter how old the book is or what format it may be in."

So, for Greg, while A.A. may have captured his heart, publishing still flows in his veins.

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## ■ Spanish P.S.A. Is a Labor of Love

Reaching out to those who are still suffering is one of the most fundamental aspects of Alcoholics Anonymous, and since the mid-1960s the General Service Conference has been doing so steadily through specially produced Public Service Announcements (P.S.A.s) prepared for the express purpose of letting the general public know what A.A. is and how it can be contacted. In 1966, the General Service Conference approved the first public service announcements for A.A., and in the 47 years since it's likely that thousands of men and women have found A.A. from broadcast information dispensed via P.S.A.s.

Over the years the General Service Office in New York has produced A.A.'s Conference-approved TV spots, as well as prerecorded public service announcements for



radio stations, in English, French and Spanish. The trustees' Public Information Committee and the General Service Conference Committee on Public Information guide the process, and review the progress of all P.S.A.s. Recently, in the spirit of reaching out the hand of A.A. as far and as widely as possible, the 2010 Conference Committee on P.I. came up with a suggestion that particular consideration be given to developing a more effective distribution of Spanish and French language P.S.A.s to Spanish and French language media outlets.

A subcommittee of the trustees' P.I. Committee looked at the suggestion from the Conference and after consulting a number of media experts and talking things over reported their conclusion that in order to increase the effectiveness of foreign language P.S.A.s, the P.S.A.s should be made in the native languages of those they are meant to reach, rather than the standard practice of making a P.S.A. in English and simply translating it into Spanish or French.

This report, in turn, led to a 2011 General Service Conference Advisory Action stating that "A culturally sensitive Spanish-language Public Service Announcement be developed by the trustees' Public Information Committee, independent of any English language P.S.A.... to better ensure the hand of A.A. is there whenever anyone anywhere reaches out."

After much discussion within the trustees' P.I. Committee, the project got underway with the development of a script. Graciously, the La Viña Editorial Board, which meets regularly to provide editorial guidance and direction for A.A.'s Spanish language periodical and is composed of four Spanish-speaking A.A. members who are media professionals, along with the La Viña editor, generously shared their time and expertise to assist in the project. Two G.S.O. publications department Spanish editors, who translate the majority of A.A. literature and Conference-approved material into Spanish, also reviewed the script and provided valuable input.

As secretary to the trustees' P.I. Committee, G.S.O. staff member Mary C. coordinated the project and reported back to the committee when filming actually began. "Bright and early on December 14th, I met with the director, his crew and the actor for the P.S.A. We filmed at several locations and I spent a lot of the time looking at the shots with the director and camera crew to make sure that all filming was in accordance with A.A. guidelines and policies, particularly the 'Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates,' which was approved at the 2011 General Service Conference.

"It was a long and thoroughly enjoyable day, and it is evident that the film company hired to produce the spot values its relationship with A.A. They were truly a joy to work with."

Now, as "Tengo Esperanza" is beginning to air on Spanish language TV, the committee has provided the

Fellowship with yet another effective tool for carrying the A.A. message. The new P.S.A. may also be viewed, along with all of G.S.O.'s videos, on [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org). As Bill W. noted regarding public information work, "We are trying our best to reach more of those 25 million alcoholics who today inhabit the world. We have to reach them directly or indirectly. In order to accomplish this it will be necessary that understanding of A.A. and public good will toward A.A. go on growing everywhere."

It is the hope of the trustees' P.I. Committee and all those who provided their expertise and input that this Spanish language P.S.A. will continue that growth.

A copy of "Tengo Esperanza" has been sent to over 100 of the larger Spanish language TV stations and networks in the United States and Canada. This in no way replaces the work of local P.I. committees, which have been sent a list of the stations that received the P.S.A. from the distributor. A.A. committees are free to make follow-up contacts with these stations and to approach other local outlets as well.

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## ■ Gayle S. R. to Retire After a Decade of Being a 'Special Worker'

After more than ten years of working for the Fellowship, G.S.O. staff member Gayle S. R. will be retiring at the end of February 2013. "My husband and I are moving to Colorado Springs, Colorado," says Gayle, "to an area at the base of the Rocky Mountains known as Old Colorado City. It is filled with character — and characters. I look forward to perfecting my knitting skills and making new acquaintances with fellow knitters at the local yarn store, spending time with my brother and sister-in-law, taking classes at local colleges, and finding interesting ways to volunteer my time."

A former delegate from Central New York, Gayle began her tour of duty as a staff member at G.S.O. in October 2002. "I was hired at G.S.O. when Susan U. was retiring after 28 years of working in the office," says Gayle, "and I had the benefit of working with her for a couple of months before she left." With that introduction to G.S.O., Gayle stepped right into the Cooperation With the Professional Community assignment for the remaining six months until the next rotation of staff members came about.

"Then I went to Public Information," says Gayle, "where, in rapid succession, I helped to follow through on a new public service announcement from development through evaluation, conducted a triennial Membership Survey, and worked as G.S.O. liaison on public relations for the 2005 International Convention."

At that point in time, a new staff position — Nominating — was created from parts of other assignments, and Gayle had the opportunity to be the first staff member on that assignment. From Nominating, she went to Corrections, Treatment Facilities (as it became a permanent home for Special Needs), and also had responsibility for Remote Communities and the *Loners-Internationalist Meeting (LIM)*. She will finish out her career on Literature, which she requested as her final assignment.

Born into a military family in St. Paul, Minnesota, Gayle moved around a lot, had many interests, and came to alcoholic drinking in her mid-twenties. “First I drank socially,” she remembers, “but not many years passed before I crossed over the invisible line to alcoholism.” Still, she managed to collect a B.A. and an M.S. in psychology from the State University of New York at Cortland, and completed a course load toward a doctorate in Psychology at SUNY, Binghamton. Her drinking, however, intervened and it was a degree she never did get.

Sober since April 1988, Gayle first came into contact with A.A. through a boss who had sent her to see a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist, she noted in a *Box 4-5-9* article announcing her hiring at G.S.O., “diagnosed me as self-medicating with alcohol and prescribed medication to help me ‘manage my feelings.’”

“The best thing he did, however,” she continued “was send me to A.A. I don’t remember much about my first — and brief — A.A. experience, but they gave me a white chip, which kept reappearing during the next several years of my drinking, no matter how many times I threw it away.”

Now with ten-plus years’ experience in working at G.S.O., Gayle has seen some changes in the Fellowship and, in turn, has been changed by her experience as a staff member. “Our membership,” she says, “much like the society in which we live, appears to be getting more and more polarized. I hear from A.A. groups that want to let anyone with any sort of problem come to meetings and share, with the reasoning that ‘a drug is a drug,’ and I hear from other A.A. groups that want to change our literature or institute ‘rules’ so that no nonalcoholic is ever referred to a meeting, or no one who hasn’t worked a particular Step is allowed to share.”

This increasing polarization can generate a certain reactivity on the part of some in the Fellowship, says Gayle, noting “the willingness of so many members of A.A. to believe that we make decisions here at G.S.O. that would go against the best interests of A.A. as a whole. Staff members are also members of A.A., so we care just as much as anyone about the integrity of decisions made by the delegates and the trustees.”

There are many groups in the middle, of course, says Gayle, “who are focusing on carrying the message with patience, love and tolerance for the newcomer. I have attended many of those meetings. But we don’t hear

from them in the office as much because they aren’t necessarily having any problems.”

Over the years, Gayle has developed a great fondness for the dedicated and hardy band of nonalcoholic employees who serve the Fellowship at G.S.O., who also care about providing the best possible service to A.A. members in terms of fulfilling literature orders, keeping accurate records of group and member contributions, working on the ever-changing details of group records, providing answers about A.A. history, and giving tours to office visitors. “Maybe best of all,” says Gayle, “have been the staff assistants, who have such patience ‘training’ a new staff member every two years and helping us to find all the most important bits of our new assignments.

“I will leave this job much more familiar with, and appreciative of, A.A. Conference-approved literature,” she says, “as well as our service material and our Web site. I may never be able to quote from the huge library of literature that we have, but I have become much better at knowing where to find answers to the questions that people ask. My two favorite resources for this job have been ‘The A.A. Group’ pamphlet, and the Archives section of G.S.O.’s A.A. Web site under ‘Frequently Asked Questions About A.A. History.’”

Working at G.S.O. is an experience she’s extremely grateful for, though nothing in her previous experience truly prepared her for many aspects of the job. She notes, however, with characteristic wryness, “I did work for twelve years previously as a counselor for acting out adolescents and their families.” Many of the listening skills so critical on that job were “incalculably useful” at G.S.O.

Summing up, she acknowledges, “I especially loved answering letters from alcoholic inmates who often had no access to A.A. meetings, literature, or sponsorship, and who were desperate for any suggestions on how to get or stay sober. And sometimes we heard from an inmate who had no option of ever getting out of prison, and yet was living ‘happy, joyous and free’ with the help of the Twelve Steps. That made all the other efforts immensely worthwhile.” Gayle notes that there are many prisons in Colorado, and hopes for A.A. service opportunities in that arena.

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## ■ The Hurricane Heard ‘Round The World’

When the delegates from A.A.’s 22nd World Service Meeting (WSM), held at the Hilton Rye Town, October 21-25, in Rye Brook, New York, closed the meeting in the customary fashion with the Serenity Prayer in the languages of each country represented, many of them had no idea just how soon they would actually need it.



With Hurricane Sandy lumbering up the east coast and bearing down on New York City, many of the delegates were able to return home as planned. Yet for some who remained in the New York area following the close of the meeting, the hurricane provided yet another set of unforgettable circumstances.

As Marcos P., first-term delegate to the WSM from Brazil, put it, “I traveled to New York with my wife, my daughter and my grandson — practically my whole family. While I attended the World Service Meeting, they took many tours, either by themselves or with the help of the support staff and volunteers. Our visit to the General Service Office and to the incredible Stepping Stones [Bill W.’s home in Bedford, N.Y.] was a dream come true for me, or rather, two dreams: the first was getting to see these two places; the second was having the opportunity of bringing my family along.

“But, the trip was coming to an end. It was Sunday, October 28 and our flight was scheduled for the next morning.”

That flight, however, like all others in the metro area, was cancelled overnight as the city began to shut down in anticipation of Sandy’s unprecedented onslaught. Broadway shows were cancelled. The New York Stock Exchange closed. Mass transit came to a halt.

Unaware of the magnitude of Sandy’s impact, however, Marcos and his family headed out to the airport in the early morning hours, hoping against hope. “Once we got there, after paying the cab and getting our luggage out of the trunk, we walked into a deserted terminal. The word ‘cancelled’ appeared next to all the flights on the schedule board.

“A feeling of desperation began creeping in. There we were: my wife, my daughter, my grandson and I, along with six suitcases, with no information and no idea about what to do.”

Speaking little English, Marcos and his family encountered a series of other travelers in much the same boat. One such group was a collection of young people who had just come out of one of the airport’s bars who were also on their way back to Brazil. “When we explained what we knew,” said Marcos, “and that the flight had been cancelled, they seemed happy with the news and headed back into the bar.”

Meeting another Brazilian, however, Marcos and his family decided to return with her to the city, finding a hotel near the United Nations.

“We had no idea what a hurricane would be like,” said Marcos, “though around 6:00 p.m. we felt that our room, on the 36th floor, was swaying, and the hotel staff said it would be safer to stay on the lower floors until the wind subsided.

“Eventually, the hurricane swept by and left, and we finally went back to our rooms around midnight. The following day we saw the damage Sandy had wrought all over the city and we thanked God for our safety.”

It was yet another four days — highlighted by addi-

tional cancellations and the miraculous negotiation of Marcos’s daughter with an airline representative — before the family was confirmed on a nearly 24-hour odyssey of flights from Newark, New Jersey to Miami, and on to Rio de Janeiro.

Said Marcos wryly of the ordeal, “After having attended the 22nd WSM in Rye Brook, having visited the wonderful General Service Office in New York, and having fulfilled my dream of visiting Stepping Stones, the General Service Board of U.S./Canada arranged for my family and I to have another extraordinary experience: a hurricane. And once again, I had an opportunity to experience the practice of the A.A. program in my life, in all its splendor. In this particular case, it was all about the Third Step: ‘Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him.*’

Of course, Marcos was not the only WSM traveler to encounter numerous opportunities for spiritual growth as the result of Hurricane Sandy. Brigid O’B., the first-term delegate from Dutch-speaking Belgium, found herself marooned at the Hilton Rye Town for a number of days, during the peak and the aftermath of the hurricane, along with a group of others. The days — and nights — she said, were filled with A.A. sharing and “magical moments.” Like the impromptu meeting they had that was lit by a flashlight and a candle in the middle of the table when the electricity went out. Sitting in the dark, they began to sing — “Even me,” said Brigid, adding “and I can’t sing to save my life. I’d frighten the crows, honestly.”

But with some persuasion, she sang the song “One Day At a Time.” “They loved it,” said Brigid. “Pilar, the nonalcoholic Class A delegate from Chile, recorded it on her phone for her son who is at Notre Dame. John, the second-term delegate from Australia, sang his Aussie numbers and we all went back to our rooms to collect any food we had — crisps, fruit, yogurt — and had a picnic table, a sort of campfire ’round a candle. It was lovely.”

With the hotel cleared of all guests, save hotel staff and A.A.’s band of international travelers, Brigid and Pilar one evening encountered a hundred or so new guests filing into the hotel — linemen from neighboring states who had come to help restore electricity throughout the area.

“Dressed in workmen’s clothes, full of tattoos, and many of them with bottles of beer in their hands,” noted Brigid, the linemen asked who they were.

“When they found out, there were cries of ‘No kidding?’ ‘For real?’ and ‘No way.’ They nearly killed us with shaking our hands and repeatedly apologized for their bottles, trying to hide them from us. But the respect they offered us was incredible. One lad even drawled, ‘So you guys are the *crème de la crème* of the world’s drunks.’

“They gave us food, charged our mobile phones in their vans, and were delighted to see us each evening.”

At one point, Brigid related, she and Pilar were outside smoking cigarettes with some of the linemen when they heard a huge booming noise — the sound of a tree whose roots were ripping up. One of the linemen shouted, “There she goes,” and before they knew it, Brigid and Pilar had been scooped up by a few of the linemen and deposited safely inside the lobby. Moments later, the electricity went off.

“So many things happened,” said Brigid, “so much sharing was done. We walked and talked A.A. all the time with humor, love and service around every corner. We hardly even noticed Sandy!”

Bolivar Z., the first-term delegate from Ecuador, concurred. “I had to stay eight more days at the hotel,” he reported, “but I will never forget the enthusiasm and companionship of all the A.A. fellows present, the evening sharing and a wonderful meeting we had one night.

“We sat around in a big circle, illuminated with a flashlight in the center, and we all proceeded to share stories, experiences and feelings. It was truly unforgettable.”

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While the above article addresses a special situation, G.S.O. has a service piece outlining how they normally respond to disasters, which reads, in part: “The General Service Office is ready to support the efforts of local A.A. members in all types of disasters.... Our experience suggests that many local A.A. groups and offices view the situation as a Twelfth Step opportunity 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.... G.S.O. contacts and offers support to intergroups, central offices, General Service delegates and trustees in their affected communities. We wait to hear back from these offices and trusted servants, and gladly respond to their requests for help.”

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## ■ Who Does Prison Service Help?

Taking A.A. meetings into prisons, jails, and institutions has been a primary focus of A.A. service throughout the Fellowship for many years — and one greatly appreciated, not only by inmates inside who need the message and those outside A.A.s who are willing to bring it in, but quite often most notably by those nonalcoholic professionals charged with running such institutions.

What to do with alcoholics has long been an issue for professionals in the corrections field, as this April 1963 excerpt from the Grapevine article “Keep A.A. Alive in Our Jails!” by Austin H. MacCormick, former nonalcoholic Class A trustee on the A.A. General Service Board, expresses: “There can be no denying the fact that American jails

are places into which little light ever penetrates.... In most of the county jails of the country, no ameliorating influence of any sort, no application of either humanity or science, no effort to salvage the inmates is ever seen, with one exception — when A.A. comes in and stays in.... A.A. has brought some light into this dark picture, and must steadily bring more and more.”

It is a sentiment similar to that expressed by Clinton H. Duffy, Warden of San Quentin Prison, one of the first penal institutions to open its doors to A.A., who wrote about that adventure in a 1942 paper titled “A Prison Program for the Rehabilitation of Alcoholics”: “It was with some trepidation that this was done. We knew very little about the organization or how it could be adapted as part of our rehabilitation program. None of the Prison Administration were associated with A.A. We were therefore forced to go into the matter without benefit of any experience whatsoever.”

As the experiment proceeded, wrote the Warden, “Into the room comes a group of outsiders — smiling, happy, well-dressed men, some of whom had motored from distances as great as 100 miles from the prison. One by one, these men told the inmates, in words that only real alcoholics could use and understand, of their experiences with the program which was being studied.

“The Chinese say a picture is worth one thousand words. That was a picture. For the inmates it meant a new vision of real help when they needed it most, *before* the first drink, for these men were not preaching something out of books. They were pouring out their hearts and souls. They were not preaching. They were assuring and re-assuring.

“I attended many of the meetings. I heard Mr. Anonymous Lawyer, Doctor, Banker, Truck driver, Ship fitter publicly acknowledge his former state of absolute degradation. I heard him state he had been able to regain his self-respect and the respect of his fellow citizens as a result of the influence and application of the program our men are studying, together with a fellow Alcoholics Anonymous member. I received letters from men and women offering to help in any way to rehabilitate an Alcoholics Anonymous member of San Quentin. Their offers were active promises, fulfilled whenever called upon....

“The unselfishness of the A.A.s is an inspiration not only to the inmates of the institution, but to the Prison Administration as well. Their wholehearted cooperation has enabled us to expand the program here in California. Recently the first inmate secretary of the A.A. group in San Quentin volunteered for transfer to Folsom Prison, the maximum security prison in this state, in order to organize an Alcoholics Anonymous group there. It is contemplated that similar groups will be started at the California Institution for Men at Chino, California, in the near future, for we here in California believe we have found the solution to one phase of our problem of rehabilitation.”

Simply put, prison service helps us all.

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.

March

- 1-3—Boise, Idaho. PRAASA. Write: Ch., Box 140132, Boise, ID 83714-0132; www.praasa.org
- 1-3—Dearborn, Michigan. Area 33 March Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 185, Roseville, MI 48066; www.aa-semi.org
- 1-3—Alexandria, Minnesota. 9<sup>th</sup> Big Ole Roundup. Info: bigoleroundup@yahoo.com
- 1-3—Rochester, New York. 34<sup>th</sup> Flower City Fellowship Conv. Info: www.rochester-ny-aa.org
- 1-3—Rapid City, South Dakota. West Central Region Srv. Conf. Write: Ch., Box 841, Rapid City, SD 57701; www.area63aa.org
- 1-3—Trujillo, Peru. V Conv. Nacional. Inf: Com. Org., 627 Palermo, Trujillo; convenciona2013@hotmail.com
- 8-10—Albany, Georgia. Flint River Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 7461, Bainbridge, GA 39818; www.flintriverroundup.org
- 8-10—Arecibo, Puerto Rico. Conv. De PR. Inf: Com. Org., Box 7075, Caguas, PR 00726-7075; convencion2013pr@hotmail.com
- 8-10—Houston, Texas. 50<sup>th</sup> Houston Intergroup Assoc. Conv. Write: Ch., 4140 Directors Row, Ste D & E, Houston, TX 77092; www.aa.houston.org
- 8-10—Houston, Texas. 1<sup>er</sup> Foro Estatal Hispano de TX. Inf: Com. Org., 4800 W. 34<sup>th</sup> St., Ste C-5, Houston, TX 77092
- 8-10—St. George, Utah. 16<sup>th</sup> Dixie Winterfest. Write: Ch., 165 N. 100 E., #6, St. George, UT 84770; www.dixiewinterfest.org
- 8-10—Spokane Valley, Washington. 19<sup>th</sup> NW Pockets of Enthusiasm. Write: Ch., Box 8474, Spokane, WA 99203; www.nwpockets.org
- 9-10—Calxico, California. 10<sup>th</sup> Congreso Valle Imperial. Inf: Com. Org., 2324 Monroe Ave., Calxico, CA 92231
- 15-16—Wichita, Kansas. Wichita Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 1814, Wichita, KS 67201; www.wichitaspringroundup.com
- 15-16—Québec, Québec, Canada. Congrès de Québec. Écrire: 14, rue Soumande, local 0-19, Québec, QC G1L 0A4; www.aa-quebec.org/region89

- 15-17—Virginia, Minnesota. 34<sup>th</sup> Winter Rap Up. Write: Ch., Box 227, Gilbert, MN 55741
- 15-17—Aberdeen, North Carolina. Area 51 Corrections Conf. Info: ffb@ec.rr.com
- 22-24—Colorado Springs, Colorado. Area 10 Assembly. Write: Ch., 12081 W. Alameda Pkwy, #418, Lakewood, CO 80228; www.coloradoaa.org
- 22-24—Ames, Iowa. Aim for Ames. Write: Ch., Box 2522, Ames, IA 50010
- 22-24—Cherry Hill, New Jersey. 49<sup>th</sup> Area 45 Gen. Svc. Conv. Write: Ch., Box 686, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054-9998; www.snjaaconvention.org
- 22-24—Tarrytown, New York. 45<sup>th</sup> SENY Conv. Write: Ch., Box 610105, Bayside, NY 11361; convention@aaseny.org
- 22-24—Morehead City, North Carolina. Crystal Coast Roundup. Info: ccr@ec.rr.com
- 28-30—Managua, Nicaragua. V Convención Nacional. Inf: aaosgdenicaragua@hotmail.com
- 28-30—Masaya, Nicaragua. Décimo Centro Centro Americano de Oficinas Centrales é Intergrupos. Inf: comitepasodoce@hotmail.com
- 28-1—Twin Waters, Queensland, Australia. Australian National Conv. Write: Ch., Box 776, Caloundra, Qld 4451; www.natcon2013.com.au
- 29-31—Columbus, Ohio. 20<sup>th</sup> Columbus Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 164222, Columbus, OH 43216; www.columbuspringroundup.com

April

- 4-6—Mitchell, South Dakota. Area 63 Spring Conf. Write: Ch., 319 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Miller, SD 57362; www.area63aa.org
- 5-7—Lafayette, Louisiana. 7<sup>th</sup> Fellowship of the Spirit South. Write: Ch., Box 53312, Lafayette, LA 70505; www.fotssouth.com
- 5-7—Nashua, New Hampshire. Area 43 Conv. Write: Ch., 1330 Hookset Rd., Hookset, NH 03106; www.nhaa.net
- 5-7—North Olmstead, Ohio. 38<sup>th</sup> Area 54 Gen. Svc. Mini-Conf. Write: Ch., Box 20660, Beachwood, OH 44122; www.area54.org
- 5-7—Tahlequah, Oklahoma. 14<sup>th</sup> Promises Men's Wknd. Write: Ch., Box 342, Guthrie, OK 73044; promisesweekend@gmail.com
- 5-7—Ripley, West Virginia. Area 73 Spring Assembly. Write: Ch., 24 Spring St., Morgantown, WV 26501; www.aawv.org
- 12-14—Cottonwood, Arizona. 9<sup>th</sup> Verde Valley Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 908, Cornville, AZ 86325; www.verdevalleyroundup.com
- 12-14—Cape May, New Jersey. SE PA Intergroup Assoc. Roundup. Write: Ch., 444 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Box A-2, Philadelphia, PA 19123; www.sepennaa.org
- 12-14—Erie, Pennsylvania. 38<sup>th</sup> Erie Area Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 1357, Erie, PA 16512-1357; www.aaeriepa.org
- 12-14—Toronto, Ontario, Canada. ON Reg. Conf. Write: Ch., 41 Medina Cres., Toronto, ON M1K 4B9; www.aatoronto.org/orc

Planning a Future Event?

To be included in the Box 4-5-9 Calendar, information must be received at G.S.O. three months prior to the event. We list events of two or more days. For your convenience and ours — please type or print the information to be listed on the Bulletin Board page, and mail to 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

Address to list: \_\_\_\_\_ 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 E-MAIL

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



- 17-19—*Rehoboth Beach, Delaware*. 53rd DE State Conv. Write: Ch, I Lindsay Ln, Ocean View, DE 19970; area12convention@gmail.com
- 17-19—*Crestview, Florida*. 3rd Sunshine Conv. Write: Ch, Box 1404, Crestview, FL 32536; www.sunshineconvention.org
- 17-19—*Macon, Georgia*. GA Sr. Assembly. Write: Ch, Box 7325, Macon, GA 31209; gssa@aagorgia.org
- 17-19—*Marquette, Michigan*. Area 74 Spring Conf. and Assembly. Write: Ch, 302 W. Clark St., #1, Negaunee, MI 49866; www.area74.org
- 17-19—*Norman, Oklahoma*. OK State Conf. Write: Ch, Box 20857, Oklahoma City, OK 73156; www.aaklahoma.org
- 17-19—*Jamesville, Wisconsin*. 62nd Area 75 Conf. Write: Ch, Box 8483, Jamesville, WI 53547; www.area75.org
- 17-19—*Little Current, Manitowish Island, Ontario, Canada*. 42nd Rainbow Roundup. Info: rainbow.roundup@yahoo.ca
- 17-19—*Regensburg, Germany*. Deutschsprachiges Ländertreffen. Info: www.anonym-alkoholiker.de
- 18-19—*West Springfield, Massachusetts*. Western MA Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 186, West Springfield, MA 01090; www.area31aa.org
- 24-26—*Rosemont, Illinois*. 31 Conv. Hispana de IL. Int. Com. Org., 2257 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60609
- 24-26—*Grayling, Michigan*. Northern MI InterArea Spring Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 260, East Jordan, MI 49727
- 22-24—*Bloomington, Minnesota*. Gopher State Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 65295, St. Paul, MN 55165-0295; www.gopherstateroundup.org
- 24-26—*Saint Louis, Missouri*. Spring Fling Conv. Write: Ch, Box 22454, St. Louis, MO 63126
- 31-June 2—*Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada*. WRAASA. Write: Ch, Box 488, Esterhazy, SK S0A 0X0; www.wraasa2013.org
- 7-9—*Sioux Center, Iowa*. Area 24 Spring Conf. Write: Ch, Box 53, LeMars, IA 51031; area24springconference@gmail.com
- 7-9—*New Orleans, Louisiana*. Big Deep South Conv. Write: Ch, 638 Papworth Ave, Ste. A, Metairie, LA 70005; www.bigdeepsouth.org
- 7-9—*Taos, New Mexico*. Area 46 State Conv. Write: Ch, Box 2383, Taos, NM 87571; www.mmaasateconvention2013.org
- 7-9—*Akron, Ohio*. 78th Founder's Day. Write: Ch, Box 12, Akron, OH 44309; www.akronaa.org
- 7-9—*Houston, Texas*. 67th TX State Conv. Write: Ch, Box 8189, Galveston, TX 77553; www.txaaconvention.org
- 7-9—*Westville, Nova Scotia, Canada*. NS Provincial Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 722, Trenton, NS B0K 1X0; 2013nspr@gmail.com
- 13-16—*Hagerstown, Maryland*. 43rd Area 29 State Conv. Write: Ch, Box 1339, Frederick, MD 21702; www.mngconventions.org
- 14-15—*Richmond, Québec, Canada*. 31ème Congrès du Dist. 88-10. Info: http://ipdistric110.wordpress.com/con-gres2013/
- 28-30—*Essington, Pennsylvania*. Liberty Bell Roundup. Write: Ch, 2817 Bowman Ave., Bristol, PA 19007; www.libertybellroundup.com
- 5-6—*Koanoke, Virginia*. Spring Into Action Workshop. Write: Ch, Box 8609, Koanoke, VA 24014; www.sprtingintoactionroanoke.com
- 11-14—*Phoenix, Arizona*. 55th ICYVA. Write: Ch, Box 80116, Phoenix, AZ 85060; www.icyvaa.org
- 12-14—*Martinsburg, West Virginia*. 61st Area 73 State Conv. Write: Ch, 1337 Loop Rd., Franklin, WV 26807; www.aawv.org
- 24-28—*Jacksonville, Florida*. 57th Florida State Conv. Write: Ch, 1650 Margaret St., Ste 302-136; Jacksonville, FL 32204; http://57.flstateconvention.com
- 26-28—*Langley, British Columbia, Canada*. BC Yukon Conv. Info: www.bcycconvention2013.ca
- August
- 2-4—*Worthington, Ohio*. 57th OH State Conv. Write: Ch, Box 2131, Columbus, OH 43216; www.area53aa.org
- 8-11—*Columbia, South Carolina*. 69th Southeastern Conf. Write: Ch, Box 541, Irmo, SC 29063; www.e2conven@area62.org
- 9-11—*Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada*. 25th Course Roundup. Info: www.halifaxgayararoundup.org

June

- 17-19—*Kailua-Kona, Hawaii*. Big Island Bash. Write: Ch, Box 390727, Kailua-Kona, HI 96739; www.bigislandbash.com
- 19-21—*Fairmont, Minnesota*. 19th Sunlight in the Spirit K'nd. Write: Ch, Box 748, Fairmont, MN 56031-0748; soitsweekend@gmail.com
- 19-21—*Dauphin, Manitoba, Canada*. Dauphin Roundup. Write: Ch, 21-4th Ave. NW, Dauphin, MB R7N 1H9
- 26-28—*Ridgecrest, California*. 25th Indian Wells Valley Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 2021, Ridgecrest, CA 93556; iwroundup@gmail.com
- 26-28—*Northglenn, Colorado*. Area 10 Corrections Conf. Write: Ch, Box 12534, Denver, CO 80212; www.coloradaaa.org
- 26-28—*Chipley, Florida*. 18th Country Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 677, Chipley, FL 32428; chipley\_countryroundup@hotmail.com
- 26-28—*Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 33rd NE Indiana Conv. Write: Ch, 2118 Inwood Dr., Ft. Wayne, IN 46815; www.aafwayne.org
- 26-28—*Oliver, British Columbia, Canada*. South Okanagan Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 392, Oliver, BC V0H 1T0
- 3-5—*Yuba City, California*. Butter Buttes CA 95992 Write: Ch, Box 564, Yuba City, 32812; www.woodstockkofaa.com
- 3-5—*Albuquerque, New Mexico*. Red Road Conv. Write: Ch, Box 20292, Albuquerque, NM 87154; www.nm-redroad.org
- 3-5—*St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada*. All Atlantic Conv. of YPA. Info: aacyvaa@gmail.com
- 3-5—*Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada*. 48th Blossom Time Conv. Write: Ch, Box 831, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6V6; www.blossomtimeconvention.com
- 3-5—*Longueil, Québec, Canada*. 31e Grand Congrès de Longueil, Rive-Sud. Ecrire: CP Vogelew-Rheinland Plaza Roundup. Write: Ch, PSC 2, Box 9666, APO, AE, 09012
- 3-5—*Kaiserslautern, Germany*. 36th QC J4J 5J4; congressivesud@yahoo.com
- 10-12—*Rutland, Vermont*. 50th Area 70 Conv. Write: Ch, Box 4111, Burlington, VT 05406; www.aavt.org
- 16-19—*Laguhim, Nevada*. Tri-State Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 2850, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86405; www.tristate-roundup.com

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