



# BOX 4-5-9

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE OF A. A.

Vol. 16 No. 7

Holiday Issue 1971

## One Holiday at a Time

"Do you suppose," one A.A. man writes, "I've now become less childish about holidays and a bit more mature?"

He explains: "I now enjoy them all. Since I came to A.A., I have not had to spoil them (for myself and family) with binges, nor do I get all uptight, tense, anxious or depressed this time of year."

As season's greetings begin again, many members find a new significance in Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and New Year's Day.

Having gone to holiday meetings a few years, we've heard several A.A. approaches to the subject which you might like to share.

### THANKSGIVING



In many areas, A.A.'s think of November as Traditions or Gratitude month, but A.A.'s seem to feel now that

both gratitude and our Traditions are year-round things.

A Los Angeles A.A. veteran said, "Thanksgiving reminds me to express my gratitude to A.A. in specific, concrete acts. Some 12th-Step work, a little extra gift to my group, central office and G.S.O. kitties, and a few extra meetings give me a good start for really enjoying the whole season—one holiday at a time."

"Beginning at 9 a.m. on Thanksgiving, we serve food, coffee, and good A.A. for twenty-four hours, with all nearby groups pitching in.

This Alkathon idea is a lifesaver for lonely newcomers," according to a New Jersey woman.

### HANUKKAH



"Many Jews celebrate this (8-day) festival of lights by giving presents of money, especially to children," a Philadelphian writes.

"Well, it's nice I can once more participate in that custom with my family and friends—but not to show off how well I'm doing, just to express love.

"I manage to put a few extra bucks into some A.A. hats and try  
*(cont'd on p. 3)*

### PHYLLIS MacD. JOINS G.S.O. STAFF

Newest staff member here at G.S.O. is Phyllis MacD., who came aboard as of October 1. She most recently worked at a mental health clinic for alcoholics as Clinic Coordinator.

Phyllis joined A.A. in 1967. She served as secretary of the Rhineland Group in New York City, was on their Hospitality Committee, and worked at the New York Intergroup office about one year.

A native of Boston, Phyllis was graduated from Emerson College there, where she majored in English, French, speech and drama. She has worked in both radio and theatre, and one of her three daughters appears regularly on television.

Phyllis will be working on the Institutions assignment and is very enthusiastic about it.

*Dear Friends,*

*Holiday time can be a bittersweet time—full of nostalgic memories of the excitement and keen anticipation of the childhood years, of sadness and regret for the lost holidays of the drinking years, of loneliness for those we loved who are no longer with us, of longing for peace on earth and among men, and of a great sense of hope and promise.*

*We in A.A. share most of these feelings, and in addition, a great sense of gratitude for the blessings bestowed on us by the power greater than ourselves and the Fellowship of A.A. Truly, we have been granted a chance to move out of darkness into the light, and this awakening of the spirit has brought us a sense of peace within ourselves and of oneness with each other.*

*And so, we greet you at this Holiday time in the joyousness of our hope and in the fullness of our gratitude for our beloved departed, for the Fellowship of A.A., and for all of you.*

*Bob and your General Service Staff*

## GENERAL SERVICE BOARD AND COMMITTEES MEETINGS

The General Service Board held its usual quarterly meeting on Monday evening, Nov. 1. On the Sunday before, the Policy, Nominating and Professional Relations Committees met. The Finance and Literature Committees met on Monday afternoon.

On Monday morning, a regular A.A. meeting was held. The leader was Bill C. (Northeast region); the speakers were George G. (Pacific region), Beth K. of the G.S.O. staff, and Robert R. (Eastern Canada).

Some of the Committee and Board highlights:

- The Board approved Niles P. as a new general service trustee. Niles has been active in service work for many years, has served as a director of A.A.W.S., as chairman of the Board's International Committee (now inactive), on the P.I. Committee, and as a writing consultant on many G.S.O. projects, and on the yearly *Conference Report*.
- The 1972 Conference theme was approved as "Our Primary Purpose."
- The Board was informed that the new pamphlet, called "The Illustrated Traditions," will soon be off the press.
- The next World Service Meeting will be Oct. 5-7, 1972.
- A name change was decided on for trustees at large. From now on, the names will be: "general service trustee, Canada and general service trustee, United States."



Size: 13" x 17" • Price: \$1.00

## NOW AVAILABLE:

We at G.S.O. have been requested by a number of A.A. members to make Bill's last talk to us (read by Lois at Bill's anniversary dinner meeting in New York, October 10, 1970) available in enduring form. In answer to this, a lithograph has been prepared which includes the message and a good line drawing of Bill, suitable for framing.

## PAGING G.S.R.'s

What does *your* group suggest for the 1972 agenda of the (North American) General Service Conference?

Each group supposedly has one member—the general service representative (G.S.R.)—chiefly responsible for linking his or her group to the rest of A.A.

The G.S.R. can originate questions for Conference discussion, or he can inform the rest of us about the group's thinking on Conference issues through consultation with his committeeman.

The annual Conference meeting is dependent on the quality of G.S.R. work. Via (1) his area or state assembly, G.S. committee

and Conference delegate, and (2) direct correspondence, both from and to G.S.O., the G.S.R. keeps open the channels of communication on which A.A. unity depends.

Please keep in touch with your local Third Legacy workers, and let us hear from you, one way or both!

In forthcoming issues of this bulletin, you'll see Conference agenda topics, and also get a report on Conference actions. Please share these and all other *Box 4-5-9* items with your group, and keep us informed about your group's activities and wishes.

## A.A. CALENDAR

### DECEMBER

24-25 — *Rockford, Ill.*, 2nd Annual 27 Hour Christmas Alcolthon. Write: Chmn., Box 550, Byron, Ill.

### JANUARY

- 7-8-9 — *Liberal, Kans.*, 2nd Annual Southwest Kansas Conf. Write: Chmn., Box 702, Ulysses, Kans.
- 28-29 — *Blytheville, Ark.*, 15th Annual Tri-State Coon Super. Write: Chmn., Box 401, Blytheville, Ark.
- 28-30 — *Durham, N.C.*, 5th Tar Heel Mid-Winter Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., Box 18412, Raleigh, N.C.
- 29 — *Bedford, N.H.*, N.H. State Assembly's 5th Annual Mid-Winter Banquet. Write: Chmn., Box 182, Portsmouth, N.H.

### FEBRUARY

25-27 — *Oklahoma City, Okla.*, 8th Annual Natl. AA Woman's Conf. Write: Chmn., Box 66071, N.W. Sta., Oklahoma City, Okla.

## WHILE THEY LAST . . .

Very popular 1970 Convention souvenir book-program, reduced to cost — 50 cents each!

*Box 4-5-9 is published 6 times a year by the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, 468 Park Ave. So., N.Y.C., N.Y. 10016.*

*SUBSCRIPTIONS: Individual, \$1.00 per yr.; Group \$2.50 for each unit of 10 per yr. (Check should accompany order.) Single copies: 10¢ each.*

*Checks payable to A.A. World Services, Inc., Box 459, Grand Central Post Office, N.Y.C., N.Y. 10017.*



# World Directories: Are They Useful?

During the forthcoming General Service Conference, the delegates will be discussing our *World Directories* to help us to find out if there can be an improvement on their usefulness.

To make the discussion relate to current practices, we would like to have some facts. *So, after reading the following, please fill in the questionnaire on the other side and mail to Box 459, Grand Central Station, N.Y. 10017.*

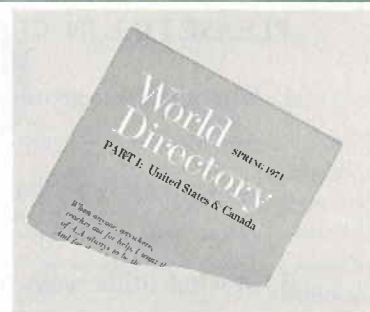
Compiling the directories is an expensive, time-consuming service. Does their present use warrant it?

So far, directories seem to have had four chief values:

1. Travelers use them to find A.A.
2. For 12th Step referral purposes (*for A.A. members only*).
3. As a mailing list for A.A. members and A.A. committees of various kinds, announcing conferences, conventions, anniversaries, special meetings, etc.
4. As a handy reference for number and kinds of groups, group size and location.

Here are some problems:

1. Groups often fail to send in Group Information Cards on time, so directories are apt to be incomplete or inaccurate.
2. Directories carry full names of A.A. contacts, so they cannot be given to nonalcoholics, such as doctors, clinic and information center workers who need to refer alcoholics to A.A.



3. Directories are not meeting lists. Local or state meeting lists are available only at the local level.
4. Since the G.S.R.'s name and address is often the only contact listed for a group in the directory, its use as referral to meetings for travelers or 12th Step work may not be very effective.

Please help us gather accurate information on group use of directories by completing and mailing this questionnaire to us.

(Please turn over) →

## HOLIDAY (from p. 1)

to remember to buy one hungry new A.A. baby a meal without his knowing who did it. . . I benefit most."

## CHRISTMAS



it felt when we first found the love given us in A.A.?" a Texas woman asks.

"A.A. has helped me focus not on what I get in the world, but what I give to it," a Bostonian A.A. declares. "And I mean gifts of love and service, not expensive, gaudy presents."

"Sure, I still find holidays a strain, with lots of temptations, excuses, sad memories and tears," offers a Connecticut woman. "So

"Who in A.A. can think about the birth of this child who was to say 'Love one another,' without feeling again how

I make myself take the whole season one day at a time, go to lots of meetings and try a lot to help newcomers. When all else fails, the 12th Step really is my best medicine."

A Michigan fellow writes: "I read one of the A.A. books again each holiday season. I'm trying to learn to *think* more about the holidays, not just *feel*."

## NEW YEAR'S DAY



"Imagine waking up with no hangover, and remembering where you were at midnight!

"I gave up resolutions. Never could keep them, anyway. So I just take it as one more day to enjoy being sober," a Georgian says.

"The first few days in January I keep my eyes peeled for newcomers. They always turn up, as I did, scared by their holiday drunks," a New York oldtimer says.

## MAYBE YOU DON'T . . .

. . . need or want any more copies of this bulletin, or of A.A. books and pamphlets for your personal use. But maybe some **newcomers**—or veterans—in your group need some of the A.A. experience listed on the two order blanks enclosed with this *Box 4-5-9*.

Please be **sure** your group knows about **all** the help available from its General Service Office.

## DEADLINES!

**Group Information Cards** for U.S. and Canadian groups (basis of the A.A. *World Directories*) must be completed and returned to G.S.O. by December ONE, 1971, if your group is to be properly listed in '72.

**Group contributions** to keep G.S.O. services going must be received no later than December THIRTY-ONE, 1971, to be properly credited to your group for this year.

**PLEASE FILL IN, CLIP, AND MAIL TO G.S.O.**

1. Where is your group's copy of the 1971 World Directory kept? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How many times has it been used? \_\_\_\_\_ For what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. In what other ways have past directories been used? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Does the 1971 directory have correct information about your group?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
5. For 12th-Step referrals, should anyone give out the names in the directory? To A.A.'s:  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ . To Non-A.A.'s: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
6. Does your locality publish a meeting list? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
For what location (city, county, state)? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Considering the present ways directories are used, do you have suggestions to make them  
more useful? If so please list them \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Which group officer filled this in? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Group name and address: \_\_\_\_\_



**Special Gifts to G.S.O.**



ARIZONA	
Sedona: Roundup.....	\$111.00
CALIFORNIA	
Cen. Calif. Conv., Dist. 22 .....	100.00
DELAWARE	
Gen. Serv. Assembly.....	50.00
FLORIDA	
West Palm Beach: Gen. Serv., Dist. 6 .....	25.00
MICHIGAN	
Cen. Mich. Inter-Area Council ...	95.51
MINNESOTA	
Duluth: Annu. Banquet .....	35.00
MISSOURI	
St. Louis: Dists. 1 and 2.....	25.00
Western Mo. Area.....	100.00
MISSISSIPPI	
State Assembly.....	100.00
NEBRASKA	
Omaha: Dinner Meeting .....	7.60
NEW HAMPSHIRE	
Annual Picnic.....	100.00
NEW JERSEY	
From A.A.'s at Rutgers University, Summer School of Alcohol Studies .....	100.00
NEW YORK	
Western N.Y. Gen. Serv. Assembly .....	25.00
OKLAHOMA	
<i>Correction.</i> Contribution in last issue of Box 4-5-9 was credited to "State Conference in Tulsa." Proper credit should read: TULSA and OKLAHOMA CITY State Conferences (1970-1971)..	850.00

RHODE ISLAND	
Roundup .....	105.50
TEXAS	
T.D.C. Central Comm. ....	150.00
State Conference.....	1,420.67
WEST VIRGINIA	
State Committee.....	40.00
CANADA	
Alberta: <i>Medicine Hat</i> , 14th Annu. Roundup .....	38.00
B.C.: <i>Quesnel</i> , Cariboo Gr. Roundup .....	43.80
ONTARIO: Blossom Time Conference.....	326.62
AUSTRALIA	
Sydney: Annu. Council Mtg. ....	224.62

**LAST CALL:  
STORIES WANTED**

Publication of both "A.A. in the Armed Services" and "Came to Believe" awaits more personal experience accounts from A.A. members.

Please send us your own version of A.A. spiritual experience or growth *in your own words*.

And if you are now, or ever have been, an A.A. member in any armed service, please write us about that, too. Address: Literature Committee, Box 459, Grand Central Sta., New York, N.Y. 10017.

**GRAPEVINE TREATS**

The December issue will contain several heartwarming Christmas stories and advice on getting through the joyous season with joy instead of grief.

Of special significance will be a nine-page section on "Anonymity," featuring one of Bill's last messages to the Fellowship as pre-

sented by Lois at the New York Intergroup Dinner celebrating his 36th A.A. birthday.

Also, in the section, a reprint of a classic piece on anonymity by a nonalcoholic who asks to remain anonymous, and the position paper on anonymity as prepared by the G.S.C. and the Board.