



AA EXCHANGE BULLETIN

NEWS AND NOTES ON ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WORLDWIDE

VOLUME 3 Published by General Service Office of A.A., P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York 17 NUMBER 9

TRUSTEES APPROVE 1960 CONVENTION

A. A. Is Theme Of TV Drama On CBS Oct. 2

"Playhouse 90," one of the best known and most highly respected dramatic programs on television, will feature a fictional story dealing with A.A. in its telecast of Thursday, October 2nd.

The dramatization, entitled "The Days of Wine and Roses," will be carried over stations affiliated with the Columbia Broadcasting System. Group G. S. R.s and secretaries are urged to determine the time at which the telecast will take place in their areas and to alert members of their groups and others who may be interested in the A.A. recovery program.

Workers at the General Service Office who have had an opportunity to review an advance script have been impressed by the clarity with which A.A. therapy is described and by the dramatic quality of the plot.

The story, which unfolds partly at a typical A.A. meeting and partly through a series of flashbacks, shows how two alcoholics, husband and wife in the play, react to the help offered by the Fellowship.

G.S.O. staff members worked closely with the author, J. P. Miller, to acquaint him with A. A. principles and practices.

Doctors Plan

Thirty-eight men of medicine attended the recent Tenth Annual Convention of "International Doctors in A.A." at Clayton, New York, according to a report from Dr. Herb C. Many of the conventioners had attended all ten meetings held by the doctors and eight "newcomers" joined the group for the first time.

Plans are already under way for next year's meeting, to be held at the Kenwood Country Club, Bethesda, Maryland, near Washington, D. C. The dates tentatively announced are July 12-13-14, 1959.

General Service Briefs

CENSUS

As announced last month, September has been designated as "A. A. Census Month." All groups are urged to fill out the special census form enclosed with this *Bulletin* and return it to General Service Office not later than October 15th.

POST OFFICE BOXES

If one of your neighboring groups complains that it is not receiving mail promptly, it may be that the group has failed to continue paying its post office box rent. Occasionally, when new group officers take over, they neglect this important matter—and mail is returned to the sender.

GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS

To answer a number of inquiries, both individual and group contribution checks may be made payable to "General Service Office" or "Group Fund." Checks should be sent to P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York 17, N. Y.

25th Anniversary To Be Marked In California

The Trustees of the General Service Board of A.A. have approved the 1958 Conference recommendation for a 25th International A.A. Convention at Long Beach, California early in July of 1960.

This action, announced following the midsummer quarterly meeting of the Board, culminated several years of planning—and hoping—by members of many groups in the U.S. Far West.

The three-day session will get under way July 1, 1960. Since it is being held in one of the most populous A.A. areas, it is expected to bring together the largest number of members ever to gather under A.A. auspices.

Previous international conventions were held at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1950 and at St. Louis, Missouri, in 1955. The first meeting was significant for the acceptance by the movement of the "Twelve Traditions" for group survival. The St. Louis convention, hailed as the time when A. A. "came of age," confirmed the charter of the General Service Conference, establishing that body's responsibility for preserving the Third Legacy of worldwide service.

Full details covering all features of the Conference will appear in future issues of the *Exchange Bulletin*.

USPHS Credits A. A. For Help

A.A. was credited as being an outstanding rehabilitation facility for alcoholics during the course of an historic conference on State Alcohol Programs sponsored by the U. S. Public Health Service at Atlanta, Georgia, earlier this year.

The regional meeting, which attracted national experts and alcoholism workers from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Mississippi was the first of its kind in history to be arranged by the U.S.P.H.S. Of the states listed, all but Mississippi have statewide programs in this field.

A second similar regional conference in another area in 1959 was regarded as a virtual certainty by several who attended the Atlanta meeting.

'Baby Parade' Big Success

The Central Office for the Wichita, Kansas, area reports outstanding success with an Inter-group Meeting featuring "newcomers" in A.A. Each participating member had less than a year's sobriety. Three members with an average of six months of sobriety presented ten minute talks, followed by three to five minute talks by a dozen younger members. Billed as an "A.A. Baby Parade," the meeting was attended by many within a 100-mile radius of Wichita and was judged to be one of the most inspiring Inter-group presentations of the past year.

Grapevine

"I don't see how we can avoid taking inventory if continued sobriety is to be attained," writes the anonymous author of an article on Taking Inventory in the September issue of *The A. A. Grapevine*.

Other featured articles include a reprint of an article, I Was Made To Be Me, by novelist Victoria Lincoln and an essay, Words Can't Say Everything.

NEW IN A. A.

New registrations at G. S. O. during July:

- 65 Local groups
- 13 Lone members
- 2 Prison groups
- 2 Hospital groups
- 5 Internationalists
- 3 Clubs

INDIVIDUAL

"BULLETIN"

SUBSCRIPTIONS

NOW AVAILABLE

\$1.00 A YEAR

THE A. A. EXCHANGE BULLETIN



Published monthly by General Service Office of A. A., P. O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York 17, N. Y.

G. S. O. STAFF SERVICE

Within our Fellowship the word "service" is both common and misunderstood. Most members commonly accept the fact that some form of service, from coffee-brewing to Twelfth Step work, is necessary to keep a local group alive. Service is readily apparent as something our friends and neighbors do to help us as individuals and as members of a unique human society. At the group level we recognize service in terms of the people who perform it.

When we talk about the services performed at A.A.'s General Service Office, it is not always easy to remember that the same principle applies: that there can be no service without servants.

Duties Are Listed

That's why we have listed on the facing page the first names and the specific duties of the six Staff Members at G.S.O. who are largely responsible for "carrying the A. A. message" on what is virtually a global basis. Many members already know these gals by name. Thousands of other members still think of G.S.O. service as something vague and not quite clearly defined.

These six gals, all of them alcoholics, all of them highly experienced in A.A. "structural" affairs, rotate their duties on a yearly basis. This means that, over a period of years, each becomes acquainted with distinctive regional problems as well as with special categories within A. A.—Institutional Groups, Loners, Internationalists, etc. The 1958 rotation became effective September 1.

Six Spellings

The outline on the next page shows the particular areas of responsibility assigned to each Staff Member for the coming year. Your group may wish to file it for quick reference if and when some problem requiring correspondence may arise.

At G.S.O., service is spelled six ways: Hazel, Eve, Lyb, Anita, Ann and Jane. The work they do is important to every newcomer seeking personal help and to every old-timer concerned for A.A.'s survival as a Fellowship.

SEPTEMBER

IS

"A. A. CENSUS

MONTH"

Carrying The Message Of '58 Conference

General Service Conference Delegates report that they have been active in recent months in giving members in various Areas first-hand descriptions of G.S.O. activities and needs.

Nearly half the membership in the Province of Alberta, Canada, had heard Delegate Ken P.'s Conference report by mid-July.

Georgia's Delegate, Louis M. addressed approximately sixty General Service workers earlier this Summer at Macon. A study is currently being made of the need for increasing the number of Committeemen in the State.

900 Miles Overnight

Jim H., Alabama Delegate, traveled 900 miles overnight this Summer to report to groups in his Area.

More than 200 persons heard the Conference report by Washington State Delegate Jim O. at Spokane in July.

John F., Delegate for the Springfield, Massachusetts Area, enlists the help of group General Service Representatives in making his local reports. The GSRs are also urged to give four-to-five-minute summaries of *Exchange Bulletin* items each month.

A. A. CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

5-6-7—COOKS FOREST, PA.—(Contact Pittsburgh Central Office)

13—2ND ANNUAL NEW JERSEY CONVENTION—Seton Hall University, South Orange.

27-28—MICHIGAN STATE CONFERENCE—(Contact: P. O. Box 35, Flat Rock, Michigan)

27—ANNIVERSARY MEETING—The Hague, Holland

27-28—KANSAS STATE CONFERENCE—Colby

OCTOBER

3-5—ATLANTIC REGION CONVENTION—Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Canada.

11-12—MISSOURI STATE CONFERENCE—St. Louis, Mo.

11-12—SASKATCHEWAN 9TH ANNUAL ROUNDUP—Bessborough Hotel, Saskatoon (Box 331).

10-12—5TH GEORGIA STATE CONVENTION—Bon Air Hotel, Augusta (Contact: P. O. Box 3454 Augusta)

11-12—MOHAWK-HUDSON CONFERENCE—Hendrick Hudson Hotel, Troy, N. Y.

16—12TH ANNUAL NEW JERSEY BANQUET—Mosque Theater, Newark.

17-19—SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE—SAN LUIS OBISPO.

18-19—9TH STATE CONVENTION—Hi Way House Motel, Phoenix

26—14TH ANNUAL MONTREAL (CANADA) BANQUET—Windsor Hotel.

NOVEMBER

8-9—BRITISH COLUMBIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE—Canadian Legion Hall, Vancouver.

17—N. Y. INTERGROUP BANQUET ("Bill's Anniversary")—Hotel Astor, N. Y. C. (Contact: N. Y. Intergroup Office, 133 East 39th Street).

NEWS & NOTES FROM THE FIELD

The following editorial is reprinted from the July-August issue of *Here's How*, published bi-monthly (\$1 yearly) by the Chicago Central Office of A. A., 205 West Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill.

ANONYMOUS—EVEN BY MAIL

The letter was sent to the man at his office. His office, not his home. And the letter wasn't marked personal.

Naturally the man's secretary opened the envelope; that's part of her job. And naturally, having opened it, she read enough to find out what disposition should be made of the letter.

It happened to be enough to tell her also what she hadn't known before—that her boss was an alcoholic, a member of A. A.

The boss himself had been careful not to break his anonymity. This one careless letter broke it for him, and broke it wide.

There was another letter. This one was sent to a public restaurant where an A. A. group was regularly holding a meeting.

So no one could have any doubts at all, the first line of the address on the envelope shouted it in capital letters: "Alcoholics Anonymous."

That particular letter broke the anonymity, not just of one man, but of an entire group. The envelope itself made it certain that the manager and the assistant manager and the cashier and the waiters and waitresses and the bus boys and anyone else around could know that the meeting group was a bunch of alkie.

Trivial matters? Not in our book, which happens to be the big book.

This fellowship of ours wasn't carelessly named. And what it was named was Alcoholics Anonymous—full stress on both words in the title, the second at least as much as the first.

Reasons For Importance

There's a whole clutch of reasons for the importance of anonymity.

Chief among them are the spiritual reasons. Anonymity is a method of showing forth humility. It's a proper and morally profitable way of guarding against the prideful puffery of publicity-seeking.

But there are practical reasons for this precept, too, and they're weighty.

It's essential for the group protection that no one make public boast—or public apology—for his association with the fellowship. For if he boasts or apologizes and then stumbles, the whole movement will suffer for his stumbling.

It's also essential for personal protection that no one break the anonymity of his fellows—not even by mail.

Someday the public at large may take it for granted that alcoholism is no more reprehensible a disease than diabetes. Someday—but not yet. So a man or woman who wants to keep it quiet that he or she is disease-struck deserves to be permitted to do just that.

No one needs to be ashamed of his affiliation with A.A. Everyone ought, though, to be fully discreet about that affiliation. He should be much more than discreet—he should be quiet—about the affiliation of others, all others.

G.S.O. Staff Assignments For Coming Year

The listing below indicates the primary fields of responsibility of the six Staff Members at G.S.O., as well as the specific territories assigned to each for purposes of group correspondence.

Staff Members normally serve as secretaries of committees of A. A. service entities such as the General Service Board, the General Service Committee and the Conference. In certain cases, to satisfy

practical requirements, they hold titles in corporate structures such as A. A. Publishing Inc.

Service assignments are rotated annually.

Correspondents are urged to consult this listing to be sure that mail relating to a particular territory or category of A. A. is directed to the proper Staff Member.

Hazel R.

COORDINATOR

3rd Vice-President—A.A. Publishing

Secretary, Policy Committee of the General Service Board and of General Service Conference

Assistant Secretary, General Service Board

Secretary—1960 Convention

Group Correspondence:

Alabama
Arkansas
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Louisiana
Maryland
Mississippi
North Carolina
Oklahoma
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Virginia
West Virginia

SAME SERVICE

A few of our correspondents still refer to "The Alcoholic Foundation" and seem puzzled by the term "General Service Office." Briefly, use of the phrase "The Alcoholic Foundation" was dropped several years ago when the body of Trustees for the Fellowship became known as the General Service Board. "General Service Office" is the operating arm of the Board. It is the same unit that used to be referred to as "the Foundation office," "the New York office," "General Service Headquarters" etc.

REPORTS

Final Reports of the G.S. Conferences are marked "Confidential." Does this mean that a member who is not a group (or Area) worker cannot obtain a copy?

Extra copies of Conference Final Reports are available to any interested member at \$1.00 a copy from G.S.O. These Reports are confidential only in the sense that, since they list the names and addresses of Delegates, Trustees and G.S.O. staff members, they should not be circulated outside of the Fellowship or used in any manner that will compromise the anonymity of members.

Eve M.

1959 CONFERENCE

Secretary, General Service Committee

Secretary, A.A. Publishing, Inc.

Secretary, Conference Agenda Committee

Secretary, Conference Report and Charter Committee

Secretary, Conference Admissions Committee

Public Information Service

Secretary, Public Information Committee

Public Relations—Inquiries

Lyb S.

OVERSEAS SERVICES

(Outside United States & Canada, except Hawaii)

Secretary, Literature Committee of the General Service Board

Secretary, Literature Committee, General Service Conference

Correspondence:

Africa
Asia
Australia & Oceania
Europe
United Kingdom
Central America
Caribbean Islands
South America

Jane F.

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

Hospital and Prison Service

Secretary, Nominating Committee of the General Service Board

Secretary, Trustees Committee, General Service Conference

Group Correspondence:

Illinois
Indiana
Kentucky
Michigan
Ohio
Pennsylvania
Wisconsin

Ann M.

GROUP SERVICES

Coordinate Monthly Exchange Bulletin

Coordinate Service Surveys and New Services

Internationalists Service

Group Correspondence:

Internationalists
Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
Rhode Island
Vermont
Atlantic Provinces:
Ontario
Quebec

Anita R.

GROUP DIRECTORY & RECORD SERVICE

Secretary, Finance & Budgetary Committee of the General Service Board

Secretary, Conference Finance Committee

Loner's Listing

Group Fund Appeal

Group Correspondence:

Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Idaho
Iowa
Kansas
Minnesota
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Mexico
North Dakota
South Dakota
Oregon
Utah
Washington
Wyoming
Alberta
British Columbia
Manitoba
Northwest Territory
Saskatchewan
Yukon
Hawaii

Q. & A.

What is your group doing about the two new G.S.O. pamphlets, *Partners in A.A.* and *Questions and Answers on Sponsorship*? The editor of "All Around Ontario," published for Canadian groups, asks the question and then provides one answer: "We know of one group which has ordered a sufficient quantity to enable one of each to be given to each member, with some left over. These will not be put on the table with the rest of the literature but will be kept by the Secretary and a set given to each new member who joins the group."

EDUCATIONAL

The Willow Run Training Group, Erie, Pennsylvania, has the special distinction of meeting in a "little red schoolhouse" owned by one of its members.

APPROVED DEFINITION

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

G.S.O. Helped Keep Sobriety, Writer Says

Bert D., a Loner in California, generously credits the G.S.O. staff with helping him to maintain his sobriety. "Your presence there in New York gives me the assurance that no matter where I go I am no longer alone," he writes.

Bert came into A.A. while in the U. S. Navy. In a recent letter to G.S.O. he recalled his experience in trying to locate another member during his last trip to the Orient.

The closest I came was in Yokosuka when I called a number, but the fellow was out . . . I even searched Hong Kong for some stray member . . . I tried the Police Departments, both English and Chinese, a Catholic priest and, finally, newspaper reporters. I went up to the Press Club and cornered every reporter I could find who would listen . . . Many agreed that there was plenty of use for A.A. in Hong Kong but they didn't know anyone associated with us. However, one fellow got his car and made an attempt to locate a man he thought might be in A.A.

We poked into more sections of Hong Kong than I ever knew existed but the closest we came was one of the most disreputable Oriental dives on the waterfront called, of all things, the A.A. Cafe. I still managed to stay sober and had a wonderful time doing it. Even though I didn't have the pleasure of meeting anyone on your list, just the fact that I could look at it helped!

Correspondence Helps Him

Joe C. of Montreal has an interesting and "selfish" (in the best sense) reason for corresponding with Loners. Joe feels that putting his thoughts about A.A. in writing helps him to appreciate and understand the program better.

"I think that the benefits that come from the actual writing, even before a letter is mailed, are the meat and potatoes of this type of Twelfth Step work," he writes. "The replies I get are the dessert."

DIRECTORY CORRECTION

Fort Lauderdale, Florida—\$25 should have been credited to the Beach Group, rather than to the Group-By-The-Sea.

SOBER ALCOHOLIC CONFUSING TO SOME MEDICAL OFFICERS

From a variety of locations comes increasing evidence that medical officers in the Armed Forces are beginning to appreciate A.A.'s help, even when they do not fully understand how it works.

The following confirmation is an excerpt from a letter from Sgt. Bob E., with the Moehnesse Group at Soest, Germany:

Of the several avenues open to us in seeking a line on pixilated potentials, the medics have proved to be the most cooperative. We have three members who were direct and primary referrals. In all three cases the officers involved made it quite clear that the disease was alcoholism and the therapy would have to be exposure to the A.A. program. So far, by the grace of truly benevolent Providence, they have arrested the disease and even seem to be pleased about it.

In one instance the chappy is on a "return for a look-see every three months" basis. Between the sixth and ninth months there was a change of medical officers in this lad's unit.

The new M. O. appears to have somewhat less knowledge of us than his predecessor. He looked the lad all over and then said, "There is nothing at all wrong with you son."

"Our hero smiled and said, "On the contrary, sir, I am an alcoholic."

The M. O. checked the paper-

work dating back some considerable time and said, "It does show that here but you appear to be in the best of health now: how much are you drinking?"

Tommy said, "As a matter of fact I haven't had a drink in six months."

"Then," said the medic, "we can mark this file, closed. You are cured."

Our boy baited him a bit, "I am with the A.A. group, sir, and they suggest very strongly that I not forget that I AM an alcoholic and in fact that I am, as of now at least, incurable."

The M. O. was patient. "Look, lad; I have to state that you are in excellent health and that there is no further need for you to come here for checks, so that means cured to me, 'Kay?'"

"It's a funny thing, sir," said Tommy, "The medical service spent many months trying to convince me that I was an alcoholic and now that I have come to believe, you start telling me that I'm not. Anyway for safety I better listen to the A.A. group—with your blessing, I hope."

The M. O. smiled and said, "The blessing bit is a little out of my line, but I will mark this case closed for the record. But personally I think you had better keep doing whatever it is that you are doing, because if you ever show up here in the condition that this file shows you were in before, I wouldn't bet on your survival chances."

New Facilities In Australia

The July issue of *The Reviver*, published for A.A. members in Australia, features a special article on "The Government and Alcoholism" by the Hon. W. F. Sheahan, State Minister for Health in New South Wales.

Mr. Sheahan, well known as a friend of A.A., pays tribute to the Fellowship in the course of his description of the new North Ryde Psychiatric Centre which will eventually have facilities for 800 alcoholic patients.

Mary F. and her husband of Buffalo, N. Y., both new A.A. members report that they not only enjoyed their first sober vacation in years in a small Wisconsin town but were also delighted to be able to meet a Loner in town. It was hard to tell who benefitted most, Mary suggests. (Have other members made it a practice to "look up" Loners on their travels?)

'Kas Ir A. A.' -In Latvian

The interest in translations of A.A. literature continues to expand. With G.S.O. translations being limited by lack funds, individual members often are responsible for volunteer efforts.

Latest translation in this category to be sent to G.S.O. is a Latvian version of the pamphlet *This Is A.A.* In Latvian the title is *Kas Ir A.A.* The translation was developed by a young woman in Canada who is physically handicapped and unable to attend many meetings. She has also translated the Twelve Steps into Latvian.

HUSH MONEY

The Norwalk, California, group has a special coffee tin for "small-change" contributions to G. S. O. But the money never jingles. The one-pound tin has been lined carefully with carpeting!

Easy Does It

Dolphin Group Unchallenged As 'Low Bottom'

Who are the "lowest bottom" members in all of A.A.?

Leading challengers for that title right now are the members of a small Internationalist group aboard the U. S. submarine *Dolphin*, which has been engaged in operations in the Atlantic and Mediterranean during the past Summer.

"The Dolphin group is doing fine," Bill O. writes. "Our meetings don't always run according to schedule but A.A. has never needed organization anyway. Some meetings are held as deep as 300 feet when we are engaged in operations. Am I right in believing these are the first A.A. meetings to be conducted beneath the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea? We're probably the first group aboard a U. S. submarine also, but hope it will not be the last."

Bill notes that the inhabitants of Rhodes, Athens, Naples and Malta were astonished to see a group of American sailors who did not drink. "And it's been quite amazing to find out how really interesting these foreign ports can be," he adds.

Writes To Bombay

Laura C. of Richmond, Virginia, does more than merely talk about A.A. Fellowship. About a year ago a speaker at Laura's group mentioned the struggle of three men in Bombay, India, who are trying to spread the A.A. message there. Laura began by writing letters of encouragement to her unknown fellow-members. The result has been that their letters to her "have encouraged me to the point where I do not feel so useless any more . . . It is wonderful to feel that our movement is a large circle around the world, the many members so very close, due to our common purpose."

Likes Bulletins

"Many thanks for the *Exchange Bulletins*," writes Internationalist John R., chief butcher aboard the S. S. Orsova of the Orient Pacific Line. "It is always good to read of others and how they made the grade."

First Meeting

The first meeting of the Area and Group Representative Committee for A.A. in Great Britain was held in Birmingham in late June.