

## ■ Coming in Young and Staying Sober in A.A.

In a trend that extends back decades, ever greater numbers of problem drinkers in their teens are recovering in Alcoholics Anonymous.

In a letter to a fellow A.A. member in 1960, co-founder Bill W. writes: “For us oldtimers the coming of so many younger members into A.A. is one of the deepest satisfactions that we can ever have. To think that so many are to be spared that extra ten years of unmitigated hell that so many of us passed through...”

Because the program of A.A. is dependent on the ability to identify with fellow members, a big age gap may be a hurdle. Nevertheless, there are A.A. members who got sober early and stayed sober.

Bob S., who came into A.A. 34 years ago at age 19, reports to being a blackout drinker from the age of 12. “I dried out in a psych ward when I was 16 years old and a couple of years later at another stay in a psych ward was told I was borderline cirrhosis,” he says.

How he first heard of A.A. he cannot remember. “Nobody told me about A.A. and I can’t say where the idea came from. But when I called A.A. the first time I was sitting on my couch with a rifle, thinking about shooting myself.”

Bob was living in Akron, Ohio, at the time and says one of the people who saved him was a 73-year-old A.A.

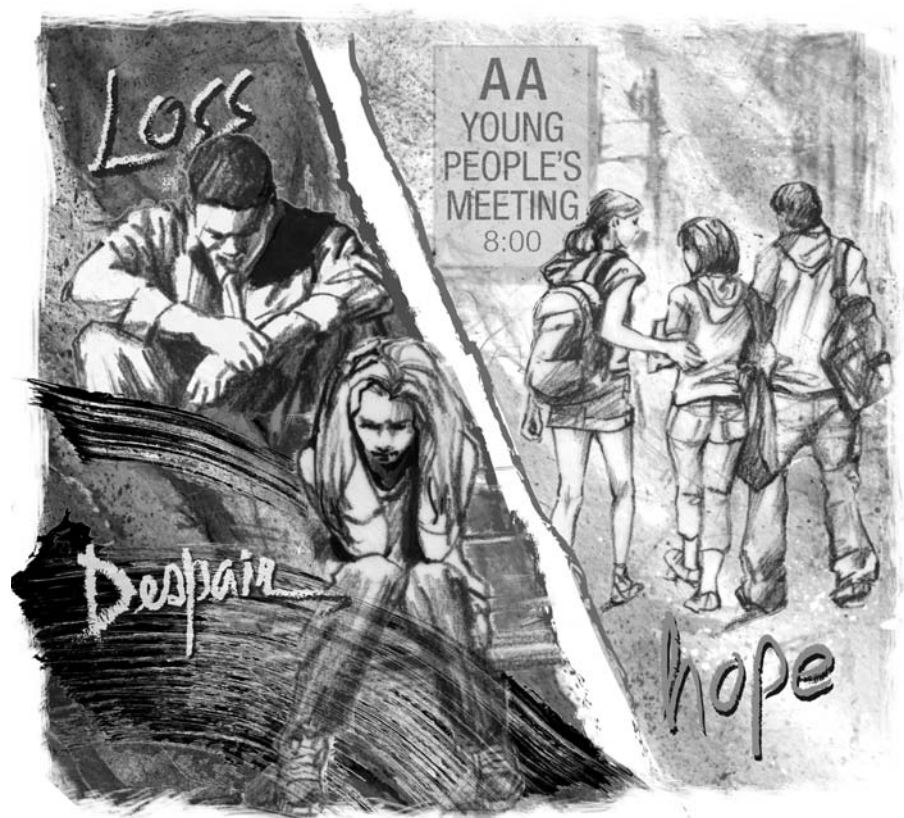
“I didn’t hear any of that stuff about how someone spilled more than I drank. Two men from A.A. picked me up and took me to my first meeting. I had dried blood in my hair and one eye was swollen shut, and no one ever told me I was in the wrong place,” says Bob.

He says A.A. was much more “directed” when he came in, but that

he gives the teenager today a greater chance of getting sober because there are more young people in A.A. to identify with.

“I went to a Young People’s Meeting when I was new, and the youngest person beside me was 10 years older. Everyone else was in their

The newcomer to A.A. is cautioned to steer clear of “people, places, and things.” As Becky sees it, that may be impossible for the teenager whose social world is centered in the local school. “Your peers are in the hallways, the classrooms; there is no avoiding them,” she says.



late 30s or in their 40s,” says Bob. “Nowadays young people don’t have to go so far down.”

Becky P., who got sober 17 years ago when she was just 14 years old, believes that getting sober for a young person is still tough. “I have not seen anything to say that it is easier to come into A.A. at 14 years old. The peer pressure is the same today,” says Becky, who got sober in Billings, Montana.

“They don’t understand that you are trying to get sober.”

She also notices that the A.A. that swept her up when she got sober may not exist everywhere. Speaking of the members of her original home group, Becky says: “If we weren’t going out for coffee, we went bowling or to the movies. These were people in their thirties and forties, and they seemed ancient to me. I was embarrassed to be seen by my peers hanging out with

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them, but my sobriety had to be more important than my social life.”

Nowadays, though, she believes that as a newcomer “you have to be more willing to put out your hand. Back when I came in you were carried along.”

When Becky first got sober, her father was an A.A. member and her mother was a member of Al-Anon. She notes that others of her age group getting sober often had a parent in recovery.

Though only 14 when she got sober, she describes herself as having gotten “plenty drunk.” Inevitably, though, there would be aspects of the stories of older members who got sober later in life that would be very different from hers. She had never lost a home or wrecked a marriage. Her home group members suggested she relate to the feelings, which, she says, presented no problem. “I was able to relate completely, absolutely.”

Sal B., who got sober 11 years ago at 19 years old, remembers going to A.A. meetings with his grandmother for a number of years, starting when he was about seven. “I loved it. We went to ballgames, the race track, to restaurants with A.A. members. It was my extended family,” says Sal.

He wasn’t learning chiefly about recovery, though. “I heard those stories and thought ‘I can’t wait to grow up and do those things.’” As it turned out, he did not have to wait long. Sal started drinking at about 14, and in his short career had alcohol poisoning a few times, a stint in a rehab, an order of protection taken out against him, and an arrest for drug possession.

“At 16 years old I thought I probably had a problem, but for some reason I tried other things to stop, but not A.A. I don’t know why,” says Sal. Finally, though, after months at a therapeutic community, “I went to the place I knew as a kid—A.A.—and it clicked.”

He was the youngest person in his home group in New York, but, as Sal says, he “got involved, got a sponsor, and got into the Steps.”

From his perspective, “A.A. is now a lot different, with young people coming in more often and younger.

The Fellowship is better known, it’s on television, it’s part of what you might see on a sitcom. It’s more acceptable and mainstream, and it offers more of a welcome to someone young.”

When Nate T. got sober, which he did six years ago at 16, he initially “felt more uncomfortable than before, because now I did not fit in anywhere.” He first came to A.A. when he was 14, but “everybody was at least 10 years older” and he did not stay. “I kept getting into trouble, though, including getting arrested for possession.”

At 16 years old, he had had enough. “I didn’t think I was an alcoholic but I knew I needed to be where sober people were,” says Nate. “I could not hang around with my old friends, the drinking and drugging ones or even those who did not drink but were not in recovery; I knew that sooner or later I’d end up at a gathering, a party where there would be drinking and I’d drink.”

He sought out a Young People’s meeting where he lived in Bethesda, Maryland, and, “as I started to go regularly I found myself getting more and more comfortable. Coming into A.A. early is not a handicap because the spiritual malady is as real at 16 as at an older age.”

Sheila S. was 16 years old when she got sober in 1981, and at her first meeting “there were people there I knew my whole life, neighbors who had known me since I was a baby. I felt welcome. It was a relief to know that there was a reason for how I was feeling and what I was doing.”

It was not until she had been around in A.A. for a couple of years that she ran into anyone close to her age. “What bothered me the most was hearing people tell me, ‘I spilt more than you drank.’ Your bottom was a credibility thing just because you were young,” says Sheila.

But the women in her home group accepted her, she says, which was crucial because, “I could not hang out with the people I’d been drinking with, the people my own age.”

Sheila, who lives in a college town in Florida, says “A.A. is more available and acceptable today for young people. They can come in and get the help they need, and with more of them, there is a comfort level. The issues at 16 are much different than the issues at 30.”

Lizz H. started drinking when she was nine years old and got sober five years later at age 14. Now sober 12 years, she reports that her drinking years were often horribly lonely. “Not many kids in the fifth grade are putting vodka in a water bottle and taking it to school,” says Lizz, who spent the first two years of her sobriety living in an all-girls treatment facility.

Her biggest problem in getting sober when she was going to regular A.A. meetings back home in California was the ways in which other A.A. members failed to take her seriously as an alcoholic. Despite having a story that included heavy drinking, institutionalization for alcoholism, and four arrests (including two for possession of a controlled substance), “it was a long time before people in

the rooms accepted me as a real member.” Laughing, she says, “for two years I think I stayed sober out of spite.”

Even the sponsor-sponsee relationship was distorted by the age gap. “Instead of being treated as a regular sponsee, I got mothered a lot,” says Lizz. Nowadays she is sometimes asked her advice on how to talk to the teenage newcomer. “The answer is we are all alcoholics, we all have the same disease and we don’t have to tailor A.A.’s message for any age group or demographic,” says Lizz.

Recovery is for those who want it, of course, and many teenagers with stories that would seem to qualify them as problem drinkers want no part of Alcoholics Anonymous.

John P. is 18 years old and has been drinking for less than two years. In that time, though, the police have found him passed out from alcohol in public twice and taken him to hospitals. The first time was in the Times Square subway station in New York in the middle of the night. He also has been arrested twice, once for possession.

Both John’s parents are sober in A.A., and he has been exposed to meetings since he was a child. Nevertheless, when contemplating what it would mean to give up drinking in A.A., he says, “I feel if I were to go to A.A. and stay sober, I wouldn’t be part of the scene. To go to A.A., what I value would have to change. I’d have to decide that going to someone’s house to hang out and maybe drink is not worth it. I’d have to see something in A.A., something that would be more important.”

For the younger problem drinker, the General Service Conference has produced literature directed toward younger alcoholics.

Young People’s Groups began appearing as early as 1945 in Los Angeles, Cleveland, and Philadelphia and now can be found all across the country. In 1957, a group of young U.S./Canada A.A.s started the International Conference of Young People in A.A. (I.C.Y.P.A.A.) to provide a setting for a yearly celebration of sobriety among young people in A.A. This September it held its 49th annual conference.

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## ■ Reminder: Résumés for Trustees Election due Jan. 1, 2008

Two new Class B (alcoholic) trustees—from the West Central U.S. and Western Canada—will be nominated at the General Service Conference in April 2008. Résumés must be received at G.S.O. no later than January 1, 2008, and must be submitted by delegates only.

The new West Central regional trustee will succeed Chuck B., of Iowa; the next trustee from the Western Canada region will follow Tom K., of Saskatchewan.

Please submit your candidate’s résumé to the Secretary, trustees’ Nominating Committee, General Service Office.

## ■ After Six Years in the Works, Hebrew Big Book Makes Its Appearance

A Hebrew translation of the Big Book, a project an Israeli A.A. member embarked on in 2001, has now been published by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services Inc.

Ioni R., an A.A. in Tel Aviv who led what developed into a joint effort with other A.A.s, says that translations from the Big Book that he encountered when he first got sober fell short of fluid, modern Hebrew.

“At first, I made some changes in the Hebrew version of Bill’s story. Looking at it, I thought, ‘not bad,’ which gave me the courage to continue. Something told me I could do this.”

Yoram C., an Israeli A.A. with 21 years of sobriety, saw Ioni’s translation and was favorably impressed. “He was the person I first showed my ‘modifications’ to of the translated

Hebrew Big Book text that existed before. That earlier translation was sent some 15 years ago to G.S.O. for an approval, but it was rejected. Without Yoram’s support and encouragement when starting with the translation, I doubt that I could have pulled it through,” says Ioni.

After discussion with others in his A.A. home group, it was agreed that there was a serious need for a new translation of the Big Book into Hebrew, one that would meet the licensing approval requirements of A.A.W.S.

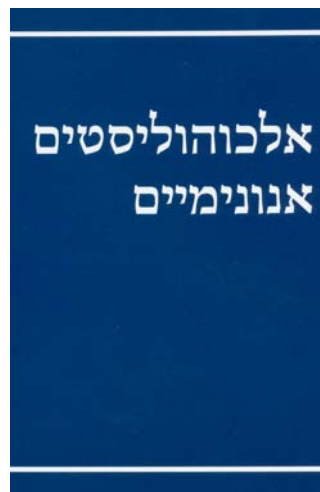
“A few A.A.s got together, some helping with the translation, some doing proofreading,” says Ioni. “The goal was to make it sound good, to flow, and to be true to the original. The work took an effort of concentration and dedication. I’m a perfectionist by nature, and some days I was inspired, some not.”

After a time, sample chapters were sent off to G.S.O., and the green light to proceed came back in February 2002.

According to Liz Lopez, the (nonalcoholic) A.A.W.S. administrator in charge of licensing and copyrighting, “they were well-organized, precise, and I hear the translation has been very well received. This work took longer than usual, and I’ve grown attached to it. In some ways this whole project has felt like a pioneering effort by early A.A.s.”

The work of overseeing translation is handled in a systematic fashion, the goal being to protect the integrity of the A.A. message while producing A.A. literature in foreign languages that is clear, accurate and true to the originals.

Translations come about in two basic ways. Sometimes



A.A. members or nonalcoholic professionals in a country will contact A.A.W.S. to request a translation of literature into that country's language. This is what occurred with the A.A. members in Israel.

With the Hebrew edition of the Big Book, A.A.'s main text is now available in 53 languages. The other Conference-approved material in Hebrew are the pamphlets "This Is A.A.," "Is A.A. for You?," and "A Newcomer Asks."

Ioni has now turned his attention to *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. Speaking from Tel Aviv in August, Ioni said: "We are now starting to work on our new Twelve and Twelve translation project. Today I received from A.A.W.S. my license to translate that work, so I am part of the Israeli translation team.

"I don't know where I would be without A.A., so it is great to be able to give something back," says Ioni. "I think of it as Twelfth Step work, and it's been a great reward, the greatest reward I have ever had."

The Big Book in Hebrew is available from G.S.O. (HEBRB-30, \$5.60)

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## ■ Anonymity Resonates More than Ever in Today's Transparent World

Because A.A. has given thousands of alcoholics their very lives back, some thoughtful people are questioning our continued adherence to anonymity. In an era when the electronic media can be used with lightning speed to reach and inform so many people, they wonder if perhaps our Anonymity Tradition keeps us from connecting with the alcoholic still in pain. But informed by the lessons of our history, most members believe that individual recovery in A.A. comes first; and that the Anonymity Tradition more than ever gives us a way to reign in our drive for power and prestige—in short, the spiritual sacrifice received by anonymity helps us to stay sober.

Far from being just "an A.A. thing," anonymity born of the desire to place principles before personalities has a wealth of precedent in the spiritual traditions of humankind. The craftsmen who designed and built the great architectural wonders of our planet, from the cathedrals of medieval Europe to the Sphinx of ancient Egypt, for the most part have remained anonymous. The actual word *anonymity* comes down to us from the Greeks, who were thinking about it more than 4,000 years ago—*an*, meaning "without," and *onymous*, meaning "name." These same Greeks created a democracy in which elected officials were limited to two-year terms. So we in A.A. owe the idea of rotation to the Greeks as well.

The Fellowship's early history reflects the same selfless commitment to carry a message in order to keep it, before

which ego diminishes—most of the time. A.A. co-founder Bill W. briefly toyed with the idea of signing his name as author of the Big Book and said later that he had even proposed calling it *The B.W. Movement*. ("Pass It On," p. 202) His fellow co-founder Dr. Bob is reported to have said, "There are two ways to break the Anonymity Tradition (1) by giving your name at the public level... or (2) by being so anonymous that you can't be reached by other drunks." (*Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*, p. 264)

Today A.A. is perceived overall as a force for good. The downside is that some well-meaning members, including a raft of high-profile celebrities, seem to be naming A.A. names, both on and off the Internet, and broadcasting their membership in the Fellowship—mostly with the stated intent of helping the suffering alcoholic. Chances are they either do not understand the full significance of the Anonymity Tradition, shrug it off as outmoded, or think it's more important to "get the message out there in print and on the Internet."

These same people all too often have been known to drink again, and that too is reported in the media. As Bill pointed out, "We alcoholics are the biggest rationalizers in the world, and that, fortified with the excuse that we are doing great things for A.A., we can, through broken anonymity, resume our old and disastrous pursuit of personal power and prestige, public honors, and money—the same implacable urges that, when frustrated, once caused us to drink." (*A.A. Comes of Age*, pp. 292-93) Elsewhere Bill noted that "100 percent personal anonymity before the public is just as vital to the life of A.A. as 100 percent sobriety is to the life of each and every member." (*As Bill Sees It*, p. 299)

Each year the trustees' Public Information committee sends out a letter explaining A.A.'s tradition of anonymity at the public level, which includes Internet, to national radio and TV stations, and to newspapers with a circulation of more than 50,000. As befits the computer age, it is crisp, compressed and featured on G.S.O.'s Web site—[www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)—unlike the rather wordy missive that was first sent off in 1949. Yet the message, despite cosmetic trims and tucks, stays the same. First, it expresses A.A.'s appreciation for "the support we have received from our friends in the media." Then, among other things, it asks that the media present A.A. members by their first names only and refrain from using pictures in which their faces might be recognized.

In many areas, local Public Information committees reprint the message on their own stationery and send it to their local media as well. When a specific anonymity break occurs, A.A. members frequently ask the General Service Office to send a letter to the publication or broadcast station involved. But it has long been the consensus of the General Service Board and the A.A. General Service Conference that responsibility for protecting our Traditions at the public level, and for responding to anonymity breaks in the media, rests with the individuals, groups and service committees within the Fellowship.

Many of them do act on their own after arriving at a personal or group conscience.

Can anything be done when members die and their membership in A.A. is revealed, say, in a newspaper obituary? G.S.O., ever a mirror of concerns and wishes voiced by A.A. groups and their members, says the answer is “no.” As the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity” (p. 10) explains, “A.A. members generally think it unwise to break the anonymity of a member even after his or her death, but in each situation the final decision must rest with the family.”

At the 1985 International Convention, marking A.A.’s 50th anniversary, Diane O., the delegate from the California Northern Coastal Area (Panel 35), shared her own experience with anonymity. “Nothing matters more to the future welfare of A.A. than the manner in which we use the colossus of modern communications,” she said. “Used unselfishly and well, it can produce results surpassing our present imagination. Should we handle this great instrument badly, we shall be shattered by the ego manifestations of our own people. Against this peril, our anonymity before the public is our shield.”

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## ■ Guarding Anonymity Online: Questions Members Ask

Sharing one-to-one in sobriety is as old and healing as the Fellowship itself. But in cyberspace, privacy is not to be taken for granted. Because communication flows from one alcoholic to another in ways that are high-tech, relatively open-ended and evolving faster than you can say Alcoholics Anonymous, protecting anonymity is a major concern for members, who are accessing the Internet in ever-growing numbers. Here are some of the questions they most frequently ask the General Service Office, along with responses that reflect the collective experience of A.A.s across the U.S. and Canada:

*Q. I am getting ready to add my profile to MySpace. How do I do this while observing the Anonymity Tradition?*

A. Remember that MySpace, or any similar outlet, is a public Web site. If you do not identify yourself as an A.A. member, there is no conflict of interest. If you do, however, using your full name and/or a likeness of yourself would violate the spirit of the Eleventh Tradition, which states, in the long form, that “our [last] names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed.” Publicly accessible aspects of the Internet, such as Web sites featuring text, graphics, and audio and video features, fall in the same category.

*Q. I recently spoke at an A.A. event, and a friend now tells me that he has since heard the talk on the Internet. I cannot remember being asked about this. Is it allowable?*

A. If you object to having your A.A. story broadcast publicly, you may wish to contact the Web site and request its removal. Owing to the rapid advance of technology, this situation is now occurring more often. But numerous members have acted, with good outcomes, on the following suggestion for speakers at A.A. events that appears in the G.S.O. service piece A.A. Guidelines for Conferences, Conventions and Roundups:

“Experience shows that it is best to encourage speakers not to use full names and not to identify third parties by full names in their talks. The strength of our Anonymity Traditions is reinforced by speakers who do not use their last names and by taping companies whose labels and catalogs do not identify speakers by last names, titles, service jobs or descriptions.”

Members report that speaker tapes increasingly are being disseminated over the Internet. Therefore, before being taped while speaking at meetings, A.A.s are cautioned to think twice about using their full names.

*Q. How can I succinctly explain our Eleventh Tradition to a Web site acquaintance who doesn’t know anything about it?*

A. Many members have turned to the explanation noted in the G.S.O. service piece “Frequently Asked Questions About A.A. Web sites” (query No. 7): “We observe all A.A.’s principles and Traditions on our Web sites. Since anonymity is ‘the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions [Tradition Twelve],’ 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.”

*Q. My service committee chair has asked that the minutes of the meetings be posted on the area Web site so that anyone interested can access them. My concern is about anonymity. Could this be a problem?*

A. While having easy access to information about the Fellowship, including personal contact information, is a great advantage in reaching alcoholics, professionals in the field of alcoholism and others in the community at large, the public nature of Web sites requires careful consideration.

Minutes of meetings, reports and background materials can be made readily available to a broad population, but it is paramount to keep in mind that these documents are being posted in a public medium. Each document would need to be reviewed and edited to ensure that the full names of A.A. members are not included. The nature of the content might also be carefully considered by the group conscience. It might decide, for instance, to let matters discussed in a closed business meeting, or sharing session, stay there and not be posted in a public forum.

## ■ Local Forums to Replace Special Forums

Special Forums, the scaled-down versions of Regional Forums, are being replaced by a new type of gathering called Local Forums. As was the case with Special Forums, the purpose of Local Forums is to provide a Forum experience to A.A. members unable to attend a regular Regional Forum.

A subcommittee of the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums developed the new plan, which was reviewed at this year's General Service Conference. The committee expressed the hope that regions in the U.S. and Canada would organize "Local Forums to meet cultural, accessibility and population considerations within their own A.A. communities...."

Local Forums will provide a greater flexibility to the organizers, who will decide the details of the gathering, including the location, program, venue, and the registration fee, if any. Requests to host a Local Forum may be passed on to the Forums Coordinator at G.S.O.

The expectation is that areas, districts, regions, young people's committees, Native American A.A. communities, or other service entities may wish to create Local Forum committees to present such requests.

According to the same Regional Forums subcommittee: "Local Forums would eliminate the perceived inequity of the current Special Forums scheduling process, while continuing to serve populations previously served by Special Forums."

Two representatives of the General Service Board, usually a trustee and a G.S.O. staff member, will attend Local Forums at the board's expense. The General Service Office will neither coordinate nor fund these usually weekend-long events, but is available to share experience in coordinating or planning them. G.S.O. will also, among other services, provide literature and Forum displays, in addition to helping provide answers to Ask-It-Basket questions related to the General Service Board, G.S.O. and the Grapevine.

If you are interested in more information or in hosting a Local Forum, contact G.S.O. or your area delegate.

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## ■ Corrections

In the Aug./Sept. 2007 issue, page 6, it was stated that Bill W. and Dr. Bob met in Akron on June 10, 1935. Actually, their first meeting was on Mothers Day, May 12, 1935.

In the same issue, page 2, we cited Hank P. as being "the first full-time paid secretary of the New Jersey Intergroup...." Actually, it was Hank T. who served in that position.

## ■ Workshop Promotes Communication Between Spanish A.A. and Area

A major aim of the Spanish Literature Workshop, organized by Area 44 (Northern New Jersey), was to promote contact between Spanish-speaking A.A. members and the area service structure.

"The Spanish A.A. community is a little shy, and I thought the workshop was a good way to bring them into Area 44," says Guadalupe G., who is in her first year as literature chair for the area.

"When the idea first came up," says Guadalupe, whose roots are in the Spanish A.A. community and who chaired the event, "we approached the two local Spanish intergroups here to ask if they were interested in a workshop, and they were."

The workshop was held in the course of an afternoon this past summer, with about 65 attending—"more than we expected," says Guadalupe. In addition to representatives of the two Spanish intergroups, there was the Area 44 past delegate, the current alternate delegate, the Grapevine chair, plus a group of literature chairs, district committee members, and general service reps. An A.A. member from Rhode Island interpreted the proceedings from Spanish into English.

At the invitation of Area 44, a staff member from the General Service Office, New York, attended and gave a presentation on the development of the third edition of the Big Book in Spanish, which is due to be published by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services the end of this year.

"We were all very interested to hear about the new Spanish Big Book," says Guadalupe. "There was a lot of stuff we didn't know."

Also attending was a representative from the AA Grapevine, who spoke about the magazine and about *La Viña*, the Spanish-language magazine. "After the end of the day a lot of members noticed that at the workshop we had together the two Spanish intergroups in New Jersey,



*The door prize, on the speakers' table at the Spanish Literature Workshop, was a basket filled with A.A. literature.*

Area 44, G.S.O., and the Grapevine,” says Guadalupe.

On display was a big selection of A.A. books and pamphlets in Spanish. According to Guadalupe, the Northern New Jersey Area has recently broadened its inventory of Spanish-language A.A. literature, a move which was in part a response to the workshop.

“One of the important points after the workshop is that the Spanish intergroups know they can come to Area 44 to buy their literature, which they did not know before,” she says. “Before this they had to make a trip to G.S.O. in New York.”

Area 44 plans to hold another workshop next year and to make the gathering an annual event. “It was a success,” says Guadalupe. “As a result of the workshop, the Spanish intergroups and Area 44 are closer.”

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## ■ ‘I Am an Alcoholic.’ Who Said it First?

Who was the first to start a meeting or a qualification with the statement, “I am an alcoholic”? How did the worldwide custom begin? As late co-founder Bill W. used to observe, “Nobody invented A.A., it just grew.” And so probably did its classic introduction at meetings.

“Many members ask us these questions,” says a G.S.O. staff member. “Unfortunately, only a few of the early-timers are left, and not many of them are able to provide plausible theories. So we can only speculate.”

According to an early friend of A.A., the late Henrietta Seiberling, the expression dates back to meetings of A.A.’s forerunner, the Oxford Group Movement, which had its heyday in the early 1930s. Mrs. Seiberling, a nonalcoholic who had sought spiritual help in the Oxford Group meetings, introduced Bill to A.A.’s other founder, Dr. Bob, then struggling to get sober in the Oxford Group.

At small meetings, the members knew one another and didn’t need to identify themselves. But in the large, “public” meetings, where there was “witnessing” along the lines of an A.A. talk today, personal identification became necessary. Chances are that someone at some time said, “I am an alcoholic,” but Mrs. Seiberling wasn’t sure. Nor did she remember that the phrase was used at early A.A. meetings in Akron, before publication of the Big Book. In fact, she said, the word “alcoholic” was rarely uttered, at least in Akron. People referred to themselves as “drunks” or “rum hounds” or “boozers” or other choice epithets reminiscent of the Temperance Movement that gained adherents during Prohibition.

An early New York A.A. first heard the expression as “I am an alcoholic and my name is. . .” According to his recollection, that was after World War II, in 1945 or 1946. And it is a matter of record that, in 1947, a documentary film entitled, *I Am an Alcoholic*, was produced by RKO Pathe.

From then on, as Bill might say, the custom “just grew.”

## ■ Putting Gratitude into Action

The premium that A.A. members put on gratitude led to the custom of designating November as “gratitude month.” (In Canada, it’s October.)

This practice started in the 1940s, when the General Service Board held small “gratitude dinners,” which were replaced in the 1960s by bigger and more elaborate “gratitude luncheons.” These affairs, which Bill W. would address, were occasions for A.A. members to express their appreciation for the program. More important, it was A.A.’s opportunity to meet with members of the media to thank them for their sympathetic coverage.

Why November became Gratitude Month in the U.S. is uncertain. It may have something to do with Bill W.’s mistaken notion for a time that his sobriety began in November, instead of its actual start date of Dec. 11. Or, it might be that Thanksgiving is in November.

Some groups will hold Traditions meetings in November to remind themselves of the rich heritage of A.A. Others conduct topic meetings on the various aspects of gratitude, such as “gratitude is not passive” or “giving it away.” During the year, many members of the Fellowship send a gratitude gift of one or two dollars for each year of sobriety on their anniversaries to their local intergroup or to the General Service Office.

Of course, individual A.A. members express gratitude for their sobriety in quiet ways throughout the year. Showing up early to set up a meeting or taking a meeting into a detox are ways of demonstrating gratitude for a life-saving program of recovery. The A.A. member who takes a call in the middle of the night from an alcoholic who needs to talk is expressing thanks for Alcoholics Anonymous.

G.S.O. files contain correspondence from A.A. members who have written for no other reason than to talk about why they are grateful for A.A.

Michael M., in Sparks, Nevada, says in one letter: “The program of A.A. has given me the hope and sanity that alcohol had taken from me so many years ago.”

Enclosed in a letter from Bob H. of Neudorf, Saskatchewan, is a quote from Austin R., an alcoholic priest in recovery, who said: “the one imperative to happy, permanent, effective sobriety for any A.A. member is the simple virtue of gratitude.”

As Bill W. wrote in a letter in 1959, “if you carry the message to others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given you.”

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## ■ Regional A.A. Directories

The 2007-2008 Regional A.A. Directories are now available. Canadian Directory (MD-2); Western U.S. (MD-3); Eastern U.S. (MD-4). \$3.60 each, 20% discount applies.

## ■ A.A. Guidelines Reflect Shared A.A. Experience

Information on topics of demonstrated interest to A.A. members is contained in the A.A. Guidelines. These two-to-four-page yellow printed sheets reflect extensive shared A.A. experience. There are Guidelines on 16 topics, ranging from the relationship between A.A. and Al-Anon to Treatment Facilities Committees. They are available in Spanish, French, and English.

Ultimately, the aim of the Guidelines is to help A.A. members maintain viable groups, while carrying the message of recovery to other alcoholics. Interested in information about bank accounts and I.D. numbers for your A.A. group? That can be found in the A.A. Guideline on Finance, which also contains information on insurance as it relates to groups. There are also Guidelines on Corrections Committees, Cooperation With the Professional Community Committees, and Serving Alcoholics With Special Needs, among others.

Exactly when the first A.A. Guideline was produced is uncertain. It might have been when the 1960 General Service Conference set up a committee to look into the relationship between Alcoholics Anonymous and so-called A.A. clubhouses. The decision of the committee was that there was enough interest, and need for clarification, to warrant something in writing on the subject. Drawing on a survey of clubs, A.A. delegates, and other A.A. members—plus material on file at G.S.O.—the Guideline Relationship Between A.A. and Clubs was produced.

Other Guidelines came about in response to queries or comments from A.A. members to G.S.O. When it was clear from the volume of telephone calls and mail to G.S.O. that there was significant interest in a subject, a Guideline would follow. In this way G.S.O. staff members can mail out Guidelines in response to some frequently asked questions, and provide the Fellowship with a consistent and comprehensive response. As service material A.A. Guidelines do not require Conference-approval and are updated as needed. They can be ordered from A.A.W.S., with the first complete set free; additional sets (MG-20) are \$2.40.

Other topics covered are: Central or Intergroup Offices; Conferences, Conventions and Roundups; Public Information; Court, D.W.I., and Similar Programs; Literature Committees; For A.A. Members Employed in the Alcoholism Field; A.A. Answering Services; Archives; and Carrying the A.A. Message to Deaf Alcoholics.

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## ■ Markings Online

*Markings*, the Archives Interchange newsletter, is available on G.S.O.'s Web site at the Archive Portal <http://www.aa.org/markings.cfm>. *Markings* contains preservation information of interest to area and local A.A. archives, as well as articles on A.A. history.

## ■ Head Trauma Facility Site of A.A. Meeting

In A. A. there are no special groups, but there are individuals with special needs. As Pat L., of Albany, New York, chair of the Special Needs Committee of District 1, New York, Hudson/Mohawk/Berkshire Area, has learned firsthand, helping to fulfill such needs has made service in the Fellowship “an incredibly rewarding experience.”

Last May, purely by chance, Pat stumbled upon a crumpled note stuck among the coffee supplies of her home group. “It carried a two-month-old March date,” she says, and had been written by the mother of an A.A. member. Noting that her son had recently suffered a massive stroke, she asked that members of the group visit him.

After ascertaining that nobody in the group had yet visited the injured member, Pat immediately phoned his mother. “I apologized for our having dropped the ball,” she relates, “and the mother was very understanding. She said her son was enrolled in a structural day program for the traumatic brain-injured that was housed in its own building and would still welcome A.A. visitors.”

Pat conferred with the director of the program, who responded enthusiastically when she offered to hold an A.A. meeting on the premises. At almost the same time, she learned that the chair of her district's Special Needs Committee had been vacant for some time and volunteered to fill it.

“At the first meeting, which was open,” Pat recalls, “15 people were on hand.” Ever since, the New Approach Group, as it came to be called, has met every Friday from 12:15 to 1:15. “The members run it entirely,” she explains. “I just stand on the sidelines ready to help when needed. The rehab program purchased about 25 copies of the Big Book and 25 Twelve & Twelves, which has been a big help. Now our members are asking for literature about sponsorship.”

The members range from about 35 to over 70 and have been sober, on average, 6 or 7 months. “They run the show, and very well,” says Pat, “though I had to get used to their thinking in concrete terms. For instance, when I held up a pocket-size copy of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, explaining that it was frequently referred to as the Big Book, the members thought that was very peculiar: How could such a small volume be called a Big Book?”

The New Approach Group decided early on it wanted to have a Step meeting every week. Each Friday, the members pick out someone to lead the meeting. They take turns reading a Step aloud, then share about it in round-robin fashion. “The difference between our meeting and a mainstream one,” says Pat, “is that instead of spending one week on a Step, we'll take three. And sometimes someone who's sharing loses the thought and needs a gentle prompting. But the message of recovery in A.A. shines through.” The group's enthusiasm for the



Steps is spilling over, she notes. “Now they want to do the Traditions.”

The members also hold a business meeting after each week’s regular one. “I never saw so many people show up for a business meeting,” Pat exclaims with a smile. “They have strong opinions and love to argue about whether or not to have coffee, although none is allowed to be served because of the obvious hazards to the patients. And they’re talking about electing a treasurer, though there’s no money to ‘treasure.’” The group also gives out chips honoring members’ anniversary milestones—white, for 24 hours of sobriety; red, 30 days; and blue, 90 days. These Pat furnishes, courtesy of her district.

Twelfth Stepping the brain-injured has led to other A.A. roads less traveled, such as meetings at a local hospice, where “we’ve been well-received,” Pat reports. As for the A.A. member with whom it all began, “he is struggling to walk and is gaining some independence,” she says. “He doesn’t yet realize how much he has done to carry the A.A. message, with a little help from his mother and his friends.”

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## ■ Foreign-Language Big Books Carry Message for Small Group

The display of Big Books in various languages at the Into Action Group in New York City grew over time, and has had an impact in carrying A.A.’s message of recovery.

The Spanish Big Book was the first foreign-language edition added. It was purchased for a group member scheduled to travel to Latin America, and it sat around on the literature table for a few weeks before the member went on his trip.

A few other members of the group with plans to travel or relocate overseas asked whether Big Books could be purchased on their behalf. One at a time, foreign language Big Books were added and the display grew.



The display of Big Books, in various languages, grew slowly, but has demonstrated that the message of recovery translates well.

The group meets in a retreat house, and one day while members were setting up, a Polish-speaking caretaker with limited English timidly asked whether they had the Big Book in Polish. She explained that a relative had a serious drinking problem, and the family did not know what to do. The group gave her the book, and she later confided how much it had helped.

After the meeting, group members have for years gone to a nearby Greek restaurant, where they are known to some of the staff as members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Recently, they gave one of the waiters the Greek Big Book after he expressed interest in A.A., supposedly for a family member.

Currently, there are about 20 Big Books in different languages on display on the group’s literature table, in a small way demonstrating A.A.’s global reach.

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## ■ A.A. Videos for Young People

The trustees’ Committee on Public Information is seeking video/digital submissions from the Fellowship for a video designed to carry the A.A. message of recovery to young people. For guidelines and copyright release forms contact the P.I. desk ([publicinfo@aa.org](mailto:publicinfo@aa.org)); deadline November 30, 2007.

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## ■ Going Out on a LIM Keeps Sobriety High

“Thank God for *LIM*” (the bimonthly *Loners-Internationalist Meeting* in print), says Marty M. of New Brighton, Pennsylvania. “As my husband, Morris, and I learned in A.A., in order to keep our sobriety we need to give away what we learned from [A.A. co-founders] Dr. Bob and Bill. Sobriety gives us many blessings, and being *LIM* correspondents for more than 20 years has contributed hugely to them.”

Marty and Morris, sober 49 and 41 years respectively, are Loner Sponsors for the *LIM*—sharing their experience, strength and hope with A.A. members who are isolated from regular group activities, either by geography or infirmity. The several hundred *LIM* members stay sober by corresponding with each other, with Loners (members who have no A.A. groups nearby), Homers (home-bound members), Internationalists (seagoing A.A.s) and Port Contacts. As with any listing distributed by G.S.O., this is a confidential service for *LIM* members only.

In a recent issue of *LIM*, Marty and Morris wrote, “We first became involved after attending a *LIM* conference in Akron, Ohio, back in 1985, the weekend after the annual Founders Day conference.” Since then they have corresponded with A.A.s near and far—from a man

home-bound in Wisconsin to a member in the Philippines confined by cancer. “People send us letters, tapes, snapshots of themselves and their families,” offers Morris. “They open their hearts and, over time, we share each other’s lives.”

One of the couple’s most moving experiences was with a local *LIM* member, Buff B., whose paralyzed right side kept him from getting to meetings. He was also legally blind. Sober roughly a dozen years, Buff had lived in a nursing home since his stroke several years ago, Marty relates, “so we’d visit and write his letters and take meetings to him.” She vividly remembers how Buff liked to sit out on the patio, made colorful by several sawed-off whiskey barrels the residents had filled with flowers. Offered some half barrels of his own to fill, she says, “Buff just wasn’t into flowers, opting instead for vegetables—he loved to cook and didn’t like institutional food. In his whiskey barrels he planted kind of an A.A. garden—tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers and more.”

Last year, Marty and Morris report, “Buff died sober. He does not need his wheelchair anymore because he is attending the big meeting in the sky. He helped many people with his positive attitude. He never forgot what A.A. had taught him.”

Buff was an ex-Marine, and at his memorial service, Marty says, “a United States flag, folded in the military triangle, was given to his son—who then presented it to Morris in a gesture of thanks.” After pausing a moment, she adds, “We loved Buff so much. And you can see from his story why we feel that as *LIM* members, we get back much more than we give.”

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## Corrections

### ■ Letters Turn Prison Walls Into Windows of Hope

Every Wednesday at 3 o’clock, Bob S. of Stuart, Florida, and the men he corresponds with, in prisons from California to Connecticut, open the A.A. booklet *Living Sober* and read a chapter out loud to themselves. “It’s as though they’re sitting right there with me,” says Bob. “We’ve all been regular in our correspondence, writing three or four times a month, and what each of us has read gives us something specific to talk about in our letters. If the reading rings somebody’s bell, he and I discuss it, and the sharing usually becomes a sobriety touchstone.”

Bob notes that the men he is in touch with “all have said they are alcoholic and want to stay sober in A.A. One fellow had many years of continuous sobriety before he was sent to prison and now has 24 years. Another was

newly sober when sentenced and has four years. Two have more than a year-and-a-half each. Each one knows that I’m writing to others, but otherwise their privacy is preserved.”

The readings began about a year ago, Bob relates. “Each of my correspondents expressed interest in the idea of getting quiet every Monday at 3 o’clock and reading the Serenity Prayer, the A.A. Preamble and the first part of the Big Book chapter “How It Works,” aloud. We found it was fun and made us feel together in fellowship—like having our own meeting together though apart. The feedback was so good that we expanded our readings to Wednesdays as well.”

Bob is one of a growing list of A.A.s who have volunteered for the Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS). Last year they corresponded with 2,059 members (male, 1,534; female, 525) in jails and prisons across the U.S. and Canada. Additionally, the Corrections desk at G.S.O. receives several hundred letters a month from inmates asking to participate in the program. The Corrections desk tries to fill these requests as quickly as possible, primarily through the A.A. network of area, district and local C.F. committees, but still there is a waiting list, especially for male inmates.

Weighing his own experience, Bob says, “I can’t express the joy I get from this wonderful Twelfth Step work. The rewards come when least expected.” Participants can be as anonymous as they wish; G.S.O. offers A.A. experience-proved guidelines and attempts to match A.A. members from different parts of the country.

The Fellowship’s earliest-known letter from an alcoholic inside was written to A.A. co-founder Bill W. in January 1945 by Clinton H., an inmate at Chino, California, who was about to be released. He wrote, “I am confident of my future in the knowledge gained in right thinking through following the Twelve Steps of the A.A. program in my every act, every day, every year of the remainder of my life.”

Bill replied, “I know that your situation...is harder than the lot of the average alcoholic. Yet A.A. has demonstrated that no trouble is too great, no tarnish is too deep for the loving kindness of God to remove—if and when we are willing to do our part.” To a 1948 letter of gratitude from Ken F., in the Philadelphia County Prison, Bill responded, “Please do not be discouraged that the community temporarily has you and your fellows in confinement. I need not have said that for I know you well understand that liberation begins inside of oneself. No masonry walls can confine a liberated spirit.”

The letters from inmates kept coming, and by 1962 the concept of “communication via correspondence” was well-established between A.A. prison groups and outside members. But it wasn’t until 1971, just months after Bill’s death in January, that the Corrections Correspondence Service was established at G.S.O through an Advisory Action of the General Service Conference. The theme of the Conference was “Communication.”

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.

October

- 5-7—*Modesto, California*. NCCAA 60<sup>th</sup> Fall Conf. Write: Ch., 2416 Inglewood Dr., Lodi, CA 95242; www.ncc-aa.org
- 5-7—*Panama City Beach, Florida*. 11<sup>th</sup> Celebration By The Sea. Write: Ch., Box 18726, Panama City Beach, FL 32417
- 5-7—*Troy, Michigan*. 20<sup>th</sup> Tri-County Conf. Write: Ch., 380 Hilton Rd., Ferndale, MI 48220
- 5-7—*Stateline, Nevada*. Lake Tahoe Fall Fest. Write: Ch., Box 19307, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151-0307; www.laketahoeallfestival.com
- 5-7—*Columbus, Ohio*. 10th Area 53 CF Conf. Write: Ch., Box 1201, Columbus, OH 43216-1201; www.area53aa.org
- 5-7—*Bend, Oregon*. High Desert Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 9306, Bend OR. 97708; www.highdesertroundup.com
- 5-7—*Spearfish, South Dakota*. Area 63 Fall Conf. Write: Ch., 810 N. Main St., #297, Spearfish, SD 57783
- 5-7—*Lynnwood, Washington*. 2007 Western Washington Area 72 Assembly. Write: Ch., 10924 Mukilteo Speedway, PMB#169, Mukilteo, WA 98275; www.area72aa.org
- 5-7—*Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, Canada*. Northeastern Area 84 Conv. Write: Ch., Box 20096-150 Churchill Blvd., Sault Ste Marie, ON P6A 6W3
- 5-7—*Toronto, Ontario, Canada*. Gratitude Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 31, 552 Church St., Toronto, ON M4Y 2E3
- 5-7—*Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada*. AA Te Tend La Main. Écrire: Prés., 1205 Cousineau, Sherbrooke, QC J1J 3T2
- 12-14—*Montgomery, Alabama*. Area 1 Assembly. Write: Ch., 23 Van Heuval St., Montgomery, AL 36606
- 12-14—*Petit Jean Mountain, Arkansas*. ARKY-PAA. Write: Ch., Box 250309, Little Rock, AR 72225; www.arkypaa.org
- 12-14—*Santa Barbara, California*. Santa Barbara Conv. Write: Ch., Box 91731, Santa Barbara, CA 93190-1731; www.sbaaconvention.org
- 12-14—*Denver, Colorado*. Southwest Regional Forum. Write: Forum Coordinator, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org

- 12-14—*Mackinac Island, Michigan*. 19<sup>th</sup> Mackinac Island Weekend. Write: Ch., 1915 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48912; www.aalansingmi.org
- 12-14—*Manitowoc, Wisconsin*. 27<sup>th</sup> East Central Reg. Conf. and Area 56<sup>th</sup> Fall Conf. Write: Ch., Box 302, Manitowoc, WI 54220
- 18-21—*Savannah, Georgia*. 54<sup>th</sup> GA Prepaid Conv. Write: Ch., Box 314, 5710 Ogeechee Rd., #200, Savannah, GA 31405; www.aageorgia.org
- 19-21—*Austin, Minnesota*. Hiawathaland Get-Together. Write: Ch., Box 5792, Rochester, MN 55903
- 19-21—*High Falls, New York*. A Spiritual Journey Through The Big Book. Write: Ch., Box 318, West Park, NY 12493
- 19-21—*Salt Lake City, Utah*. 2da Conv. Hispana Del Estado Utah. Inf. Com. Org., 36-46 Redwood Rd, Salt Lake City, UT 84119
- 19-21—*Cornwall, Prince Edward Island, Canada*. Area 81 Fall Assembly and Round-up. Write: Ch., 960 Union Rd, RR #3, Charlottetown, PEI C1A 7J7
- 20-21—*Kalispell, Montana*. Fall Refresher. Write: Ch., 1132 4<sup>th</sup> Ave West, Columbia Falls, MT 59912; www.aa-montana.org
- 20-21—*Jutiapa, Guatemala*. 38a Conv Nacional de Guatemala. Inf. Com. Org.: 11 Avenida "A" 7-62 Zona 2, Ciudad Nueva, Guatemala; osgaa@inteln.net.gt
- 25-28—*Ocean City, Maryland*. 23rd Area 29 Fall Conf. Write: Ch., Box 252, Jessup, MD 20794; www.marylandaa.org
- 26-28—*Shreveport, Louisiana*. 62<sup>nd</sup> Tri-State Conv. Write: Ch., 2800 Youree Dr., Ste 362, Shreveport, LA 71104; aahelp@bellsouth.net

- 26-28—*Saint Cloud, Minnesota*. St. Cloud Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 125, St. Cloud, MN 56302; scr@cybermationinc.com
- 26-28—*Lincoln, New Hampshire*. Loon Mtn 12 Step Fall Fest. Write: Ch., Box 1058, Lincoln, NH 03251; stepfestival@yahoo.com
- 26-28—*Bellingham, Washington*. 19<sup>th</sup> Mt. Baker Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 28231, Bellingham, WA 98228; www.mountbaker-roundup.org
- 26-28—*St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands*. 21<sup>st</sup> Caribbean Conv. Write: Ch., Box 307556, St. Thomas, VI 00803-7556; www.promisesinparadise.com

November

- 1-3—*Ocracoke Island, North Carolina*. 35<sup>th</sup> Kitchen Table Jamboree. Write: Ch., Box 506, Ocracoke, NC 27960; www.aaobx.org
- 1-4—*Honolulu, Hawaii*. Hawaii Conv. Write: Ch. Box 23434, Honolulu, HI 96823-3434; hconv-secretary@hawaii.rr.com
- 2-4—*Ormond Beach, Florida*. 10<sup>th</sup> Jekyll Island Gratitude Weekend. Write: Ch., 34 Glen Falls Dr., Ormond Beach, FL 32174; www.jekyllislandaa.org
- 2-4—*Branson, Missouri*. Colors of Fall Conv. Write: Ch., 2138 Xenia St., Joplin, MO 64801
- 2-4—*Carson City, Nevada*. Northern Nevada Native American Conf. Write: Ch., Box 314, Elk, NV 89803; www.nnnaaa.org
- 2-4—*Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada*. Keystone Conf. Write: Ch., 208-323 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3C1
- 2-4—*Salina Bay, Malta*. 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conv. Write: Ch., 26, Triq Windsor, Sliema SLM1853, Malta.

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

9-11—Lake Havasu Arizona. Lake Havasu City Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 1692, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86405-7692; www.havasuaa.com

9-11—Arlington Heights, Illinois. East Central Regional Forum. Write: Forum Coordinator, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org

9-11—Newton, Massachusetts. 44th MA State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 1820, Westfield, MA 01086; mastateconv@aol.com

9-11—Greensburg, Pennsylvania. 67th Laurel Highlands Conf. Write: Ch., Box 339 Price St., Boverd, PA 15619-0006

9-11—Nice, France. The Road To Freedom. Write: Ch., 11 Rue De La Buffa, 06000 Nice, France; www.aariviera.org

16-18—Jonesboro, Arkansas. 54th Thanksgiving Program. Write: Ch., Box 1925, Jonesboro, AR 72403

16-18—Ardmore, Oklahoma. Red River Valley Rally. Write: Ch., 2715 Chattanooga, #201, Ardmore, OK 73401

16-18—Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada. 24th Moose Jaw & District Round-up. Write: Ch., 85 Daisy Crescent. Moose Jaw, SK S6J 1C2

16-18—Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. BCYPAA Conf. Write: Ch., Box 53613, 984 W. Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Z 1K0; www.bcypaa.ca

22-23—Orlando, Florida. 12va Conv. Estatal de Florida. Inf: Com. Org. Box 592096, Orlando, FL 32809

22-25—Las Vegas, Nevada. 41st Las Vegas Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 14743, Las Vegas, NV 89114; www.lasvegastourdup.com

23-24—Iselin, New Jersey. Conv. Hispana de NJ. Write: Ch., 256 Mulberry St., Newark, NJ 07105

23-24—Trois Rivières, Québec, Canada. 34e Congrès de Trois-Rivières. Ecrire: Pres., 350 rue Chauvigny, Trois Rivières Ouest, QC G9A 6G6

23-25—Oxnard, California. IX Congreso Regional. Inf: Com. Org., 545 B St., Ste B, Oxnard, CA 93033

23-25—Cromwell, Connecticut. 22nd CSCY PAA. Write: Ch., Box 1108, Burlington, CT 06013; cscypaa@ct-aa.org

23-25—St. Louis Park, Minnesota. Founder's Day Weekend LXVII. Write: Ch., Box 8327, Minneapolis, MN 55408; www.founders-daym.net

23-25—Winston-Salem, North Carolina. 2da Conv. Hispana de NC. Inf: Com. Org., 3927 Fountain Village Ln, High Point, NC 27265

**January 2008**

11-13—Dodge City, Kansas. 38th Southwest Conf. Write: Ch., 835 Wichita Dr., Ulysses, KS 67880

18-20—Cocoa Beach, Florida. Big Book Workshop Weekend. Write: Ch., 3822 Oyster Ct. Orlando, FL 32812-7652

18-20—College Station, Texas. 2008 SETA Conv. Write: Ch., Box 3381, Bryan, TX 77805

25-27—Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. Hilton Head Mid-winter Conf. Write: Ch., Box 6256, Hilton Head, SC 29938; www.hiltonheadmidwinterconference.com

25-27—Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico. 6th Sobriety Under The Sun English Conf. Info: www.aapconvention.com

31-3—Cocoa Beach, Florida. Spacecoast Round-up. Write: Ch., 720 E. New Haven, #3, Melbourne, FL 32901