

BOX 4-5-9

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

Vol. 14 No. 1

Winter 1969

Ways to Liven Up Your Meetings In the Dead of Winter (or Summer)

"How can we liven up our meetings and spark new interest in them?" This is probably the question received most frequently at G.S.O. Thus it seems there is no better time than the beginning of the New Year to share some experience on this subject.

Meetings are truly the heart and core of A.A.—where newcomers take their first look at A.A.—where alcoholics learn to grow away from the need for the first drink—it is at meetings that middle-timers begin to enjoy emotional sobriety, where oldtimers continue to grow and serve as an inspiration to others. It is the place where families and non-A.A. friends can best learn about A.A.

How about *your* group meetings? Do they answer all the A.A. needs in your community? If not, here are ways to make your meetings more meaningful in 1969.

Hold Different Kinds of Meetings

1. "Closed" discussion meetings for alcoholics (or prospective members) only. (See Page 15 of the pamphlet, "The A.A. Group." If you don't have a copy handy, get one. Get enough for every member. This booklet, enclosed with every Group Handbook, is truly a gold mine of A.A. information and ideas.)

Closed meetings are sometimes stag or for women only, or mixed. They are also ideal for the color movie of "Bill's Own Story."

2. "Open" meetings—such as the "potluck" described on Page 16 of "The A.A. Group." Or one with guest speakers from outside the group.

3. "Public" meetings really get a group busy carrying the message. Your local P.I.C. can help, and we will, too.

4. "Beginners" meetings build new enthusiasm. If you don't have the "Newcomers' Meeting Kit" yet, we'll send one.

5. "Business" meetings are not necessarily "dull stuff." It takes money to hold meetings and otherwise carry the message, and we have to learn in A.A. to be mature enough to let the A.A. spirit prevail over "problems of money, property, and prestige."

6. "Travel" meetings. Go visit new or struggling groups. In Latin America, A.A. members and families pile into a bus and go junketing off to 12th-Step a faraway fledgling group. Some institution groups want such boosts, too.

7. USE SOME A.A. BOOK OR PAMPHLET AS THE BASIS OF A MEETING. Maybe not everyone has seen "It Happened to Alice," our new color cartoon booklet. Maybe the basic A.A. books ("Alcoholics Anonymous," "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions")

(to p. 4)

THANKS FROM G.S.O.

Thank you so much for the many lovely Christmas cards and letters received at G.S.O. They adorned the offices, cheered our hearts and made the holidays truly merry.



MIAMI BEACH REGISTRATION BEGINS OCT. 15, 1969

A.A.'s in Ireland, California, New York, Germany and England have already chartered planes to fly to Miami Beach, Florida, for the 35th Anniversary International A.A. Convention, July 3-5, 1970.

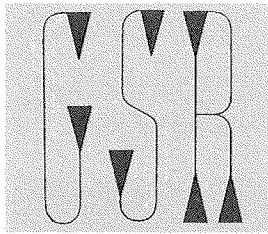
But no one can register until the official Registration and Housing Forms are mailed out by G.S.O. on Oct. 15, 1969.

These forms will go to all Groups, Loners, Internationalists, Delegates, Committee Members and others on G.S.O. mailing lists. (To be sure you receive your forms, send your name and complete address to G.S.O. now.)

Convention Registration and Housing Forms will be handled at G.S.O. and hotel accommodations will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

A.A.'s headquarters hotel will be the Fontainebleau. Headquarters for Al-Anon will be right next door, at The Eden Roc. The Convention Hall, (pictured here), will house the big meetings—Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday morning; and, of course, the traditional "Big Show," sponsored by the Host Committee on Sunday evening.

Let Your Group Conscience Be Our Guide, Please



Please sit down with your fellow members and consider carefully the questions below. Keep a simple record of your ideas, and send it *soon* to your committee member or your delegate to this year's General Service Conference.

The 19th Annual Conference theme will be about the "group conscience."

So delegates should arrive at New York's Hotel Roosevelt, April 21, fully aware of the group's conscience regarding:

1. What is being done and can be done to "carry the A.A. message" on TV and radio?
2. Where does cooperation stop and affiliation begin?
3. How can better communication be established between central offices (intergroups), intergroup committees and area General Service committees?
4. Alternate delegate's duties.
5. Communications within A.A.: (a) How can we better communicate with the "Under 30" alcoholic? (b) Do members sober a shorter length of time have a different approach to the program and service responsibility from those sober longer? (c) Ideas for making meetings in small isolated groups more interesting?
6. Relationship between A.A.'s and Al-Anon.

DID YOU COOPERATE THIS MONTH?

Anybody notice that there was no "Alcoholism Information Week" in the U.S. in 1968?

The omission was the first since the National Council on Alcoholism established the idea in 1959.

But the absence of a 1968 week was not a slip-up. It was planned. Instead of the annual *week*, there is a national Alcoholism Information *Month*, and this January, 1969, marks the first one.

Since this is a public effort, it is not an official A.A. activity, of course. It is sponsored by the local affiliates of N.C.A., who have requested governors, mayors, and even U.S. presidents (from General Eisenhower on) to issue the formal proclamations. Local councils and committees on alcoholism and their friends have arranged for car cards, newspaper stories, radio and TV shows and commercials, stressing that alcoholism is a disease and that alcoholics can be helped.

Many A.A. groups have had experience cooperating in such activities.

without breaking our Traditions of anonymity, non-professionalism, non-endorsement, and non-affiliation.

Why not get the new A.A. Guidelines on this ("A.A. Participation and Cooperation During Alcoholism Information Month") from G.S.O.? It's free.

Yes, There Is Such a Book...

"Dear Bill," writes C.J. from Ann Arbor: "I wish there were some collection of all or a great part of all you have written, including GV pieces, in one volume. If there is, please let me know..."

Bill wrote C.J., of course. Maybe you will help us carry the message to many other A.A.'s who haven't heard yet about "The A.A. Way of Life," a 333-page hard-cover, pocket-size anthology.

Bill's private letters, Grapevine pieces and other A.A. writings are presented under such topics as: *Fear as a Steppingstone; Troublemakers Can be Teachers; Getting Off a 'Dry Bender'; How Much Anonymity?; Fac-*

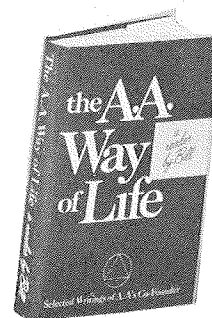
AN UNEXPECTED PLACE

From Guaymas, Mexico: "In one of the bends of the road, we discovered the old town of Queretaro with its famous aqueduct and old Convent of the Cross. Leaving, I happened to see a doorway at the side and a sign reading 'A.A.' on the door. I made inquiries. Sure enough, they were *our* letters—and in such an unexpected place! Love, Anne C."

CARRYING THE MESSAGE IN MANY TONGUES

A.A. publications are now available in many languages besides English: *Groot Boek* (and some pamphlets) in Afrikaans; 8 pamphlets and the Big Book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," in Finnish; 20 pamphlets and the basic book in French; the book and 3 pamphlets in German; 2 pamphlets in Hungarian; 3 in Italian; the book and 3 pamphlets in Norwegian; 4 pamphlets in Portuguese; 13 pamphlets and the book in Spanish, and 4 pamphlets in Swedish.

These are just a few of the languages. For details, write for our Translations Order Form. *Allow plenty of time*, because most of the publications come from Centers overseas.



\$3.50
•
\$3.15 to
Groups
•

Includes "Discussion
And Reading Guide"

ing Criticism; Surveying the Past; Whose Inventory; Coping with Anger; Speak Up Without Fear... and hundreds of other down-to-earth daily problems that oldtimers as well as newcomers run up against.

SPECIAL GIFTS TO G.S.O.

FLORIDA:

Cocoa: Ann. Gratitude Meeting,
Brevard Co. Intergroup\$ 85.00
Miami: Dist. 8 Gratitude
Dinner 800.00
Palm Beach: Ann. Co. Gratitude
Dinner1381.61

INDIANA:

Evansville: 7th Ann. Tri-State
Conv. 110.79

MICHIGAN:

Dearborn: State Conf.2000.00

MINNESOTA:

Duluth Groups 50.00

NEW JERSEY:

Hommonoton: 4th Southern
Conv. 100.00
Northern N.J. G.S. Panel 700.00

NEW YORK:

Coopers Plains: Watson Home-
stead Conf. 649.60
Southeastern Area, 500.00
Troy: 18th Ann. H.M.B. Area
Conf. 300.00

NORTH CAROLINA:

Charlotte: S.E. Conv. 600.00
Charlotte: Blackstone Retreat . 100.00

OHIO:

Newbury: Punderson Park Conf. 68.06
Youngstown: International
Doctors 125.00

PENNSYLVANIA:

Eastern Penn. 10th Conf.1071.21
Eastern Penn. Conv. 340.00

SOUTH CAROLINA:

Georgetown. Waccamau Area
Gp. 5.00

TEXAS:

Dallas: 5th N. Tx. Area Conv. . 113.17

WEST VIRGINIA:

Hinton: Bluestone Retreat, 100.00

WISCONSIN:

Kenosha: Southern Wisc. Conf. . 200.00

CANADA:

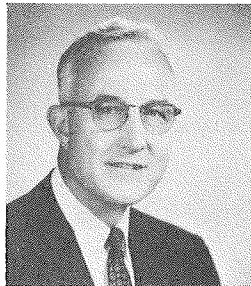
E.C.: Vancouver, Yukon
Assembly Area 128.07
MANITOBA: Rivers Group
Roundup 40.00
ONTARIO: Brantford, Erie Area
Conf. 18.96
London & Middlesex: Area
Comm. 8.70
Reabou: Central E. Area
Gratitude Meeting, 11.10

BOX 4-5-9 is published 6 times a year by the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, 305 E. 45th Street, N.Y.C., N.Y. 10017.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Individual, \$1.00 per yr.; Group, \$2.50 for each unit of 10 per yr. (Checks should accompany order.)

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

Dr. Jack and Austin MacCormick Honored Once Again



DR. JOHN NORRIS

Two of A.A.'s most distinguished nonalcoholic General Service Boardmembers, Dr. John L. Norris and Austin Mac-

Cormick, recently had more high honors bestowed on them. Congratulations!

We're not at all surprised, of course, nor are any other A.A.'s who have worked with Dr. Jack and Austin.

They're both extremely modest men and we had to do lots of snooping to learn that:

(1) Dr. Jack was honored at special meetings of both the National Council on Alcoholism, Rochester Area, and the local Rochester A.A. groups in November and December, marking his January 1 retirement from the Eastman Kodak Co., Rochester, N.Y. of which he was for many years Associate Medical Director. He was cited "for his pioneer work, painstaking research, and sustained effort in the treatment of alcoholism."

(2) Austin MacCormick received the Bowdoin Prize from his alma mater (Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine) in October. It is awarded only every five years (by a committee composed of the presidents of Harvard and Yale and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maine) to the alumnus or

LEST WE FORGET...

Could your group budget *now*—as January inaugurates a new year— for R.C.P.?

We mean the Regular Contribution Plan for support of A.A.'s world services on a regular monthly or quarterly basis. If more groups used R.C.P., we would not have to mail out a frantic appeal come next winter to help get G.S.O. onto the black-ink side of the ledger for the year.

faculty member who has made "the most distinctive contribution in any field of human endeavor."

Since 1940 Austin has been executive director of the Osborne Association, Inc., in New York.

Any G.S. Conference delegate who has worked with Dr. Jack on Literature, or Nominating or Finance Committees, could tell you for hours about Dr. Jack's keen and gentle wisdom, his insistence on the highest standards of excellence, his devotion to the best of medical science, his spirituality, and his unshakable humility. Austin's co-workers on the Grapevine, Literature, Institutions and other committees are continually amazed at the way he gets at the nub of a problem, at his non-sentimental compassion, his courage and truly impressive knowledge, and at his humor, famous wherever he has spoken on alcoholism programs.

* * *

These two nonalcoholic trustees truly honor A.A. by speaking our "language of the heart." Their examples demonstrate every 24 hours what "I am Responsible" truly means. We'll be proud to do half so well.

Most groups regularly set aside collection money for refreshments, literature, rent, etc. If your group also put aside just 25¢ per member per month for world 12th-Step work, and mailed it regularly, such a plan would help keep G.S.O. out of the red.

Most of us understand A.A.'s Tradition of self-support—that A.A. wants no charity, that we take care of our *own* services to alcoholics. But we sometimes forget. R.C.P. reminds us.



ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR GROUP MEETINGS

A.A. CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 24-25 — Blytheville, Ar., 12th Annual Tri-State "Coon Supper." Write: Chm., Box 401, Blytheville.
 24-26 — Reno, Nv., Western G.S. Assembly. Write: Chm., Box 2057, San Rafael, Ca.
 24-26 — Durham, N.C., 2nd Tar-Heel Mid-Winter Conf. Write: Conf. Chm. Box 2271, Durham.

FEBRUARY

- 14-16 — Greely, Co., Ann. Mid-Winter Stampede. Write: Chm., Box 209, Greely.
 14-16 — Lexington, Ky., 18th Ky. State Conv. Write: Host Comm., Box 626, Lexington.
 15-16 — Christchurch, N.Z., N.Z. Gen. Serv. Conf. Write: N.Z. Gen. Serv. Conf., Box 1381, Christchurch.
 21-23 — Kansas City, Mo., 5th All Women's Conf. Write: Secy., 3334 Karnes Blvd., K.C.
 21-23 — El Paso, Tx., El Paso Jamboree. Write: Jamboree Secy., Box 1405, El Paso.
 22 — Philadelphia, Pa., Intergroup 29th Anniv. Write: Intergroup Assoc., Anniv. Chm., 2202 St. James St., Philadelphia.
 22-23 — Nanaimo, B.C., 1st Ann. Nanaimo Dist. Roundup. Write: Secy., Box 15, Nanaimo.

MARCH

- 1- 2 — Campbell, Ca., Ann. Spring Conf. Northern Ca. Council of A.A. Write: Conf. Chm., 220 Virginia Ave., Campbell.
 9 — Wilmington, De., 25th Ann. Banq. Write: Banq. Chm., 134 E. 2nd St., New Castle, De.
 14-16 — French Lick, In., 16th Ann. Indiana St. Conv. Write: Conv. Chm., Box 274, Orleans, In.

1. WE NOW HAVE FIRST INFORMATION ON HOW TO REGISTER FOR A.A.'s INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN 1970. (SEE PAGE 1)



2. TWO OF THE DISTINGUISHED NONALCOHOLIC TRUSTEES OF OUR GENERAL SERVICE BOARD RECENTLY RECEIVED NEW HONORS.



3. JUST A REMINDER: THE NEWEST A.A. BOOK, THE "A.A. WAY OF LIFE — A READER BY BILL," IS GREAT FOR ANSWERING PERSONAL QUESTIONS. WE'LL GET IT FOR YOU IF WE'RE OUT OF COPIES.



4. THIS BLUE "I AM RESPONSIBLE" A.A. WALLET CARD IS ALSO AVAILABLE FROM G.S.O.



5. THE 19TH MEETING OF A.A.'s GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE WILL BE APRIL 21-26, 1969, AT THE HOTEL ROOSEVELT, NEW YORK CITY. SEE G.S.R. CORNER (p. 2) FOR THEME AND PRELIMINARY AGENDA.

ALOHA—P.I.C. IN HAWAII

In just two months, the numbers of Central Office calls and new faces at Hawaiian meetings grew enormously as a result of the Public Information job done by Hawaiian A.A.'s, Arnold N. reports.

Locally-produced 30-second taped announcements about A.A. were accepted and broadcast by eight local radio stations. One station uses 10-second live readings from the P.I. Kit which G.S.O. furnishes.

Two network TV stations show the two one-minute films prepared by G.S.O., and have asked to keep them another month or so. Another radio station offered 15 minutes for a week-

ly Sunday evening radio show. Local newspapers carry stories, too.

FEATURED IN GV....

The February issue has special stories by young people in A.A. and one view of the A.A. generation gap. Dr. E. J. Delehanty, distinguished psychiatrist, conveys an A.A. message to doctors. Also: "Dr. Bob and Tradition 11," "Happy Though I'm Sober," "The Pit of Depression," plus another of Prof. Winkler's spoofs, and a message from Africa.

MEETINGS (cont'd from p. 1)

tions," "A.A. Comes of Age") deserve a meeting apiece—why they were written, their contents and use, etc. Many groups devote one meeting a month to the latest Grapevine. Pamphlets, bulletins (even Box 459) and Guidelines have been bases for live-

THEY LOST!

Well, we did it! We sure made believers out of Bob and Dennis. I say "we"; but I really should say "you," for it was your wonderful response to my November letter which enabled us to meet our Contributions forecast—and me to get a steak dinner out of Dennis and Bob!

—Bob Morse, Treasurer, G.S.B.

ATTENTION: ALL GROUPS

We enjoy listing your conferences and conventions. But please help us provide this information by sending your dates to us in plenty of time for inclusion in the Calendar.

The mailing dates for Box 4-5-9 are: Jan. 15, Mar. 15, May 15, July 15, Sept. 15 and Nov. 15. We need your dates, at the latest, one month in advance of the mailing date.

Re mailing addressees: please keep in mind we cannot use full names in this bulletin.