

■ The Fellowship's International Monthly Journal Celebrates 60 Years of Continuous Publication

June 2004 marked the 60th anniversary of A.A.'s principal magazine, the A.A. Grapevine. Founded by six volunteers in June 1944 as an eight-page newsletter for New York City members, the first issue was mailed to all A.A.s serving in the armed forces in World War II, who began calling it their "meeting in print." It was also sent to the secretaries of every known group in North America and, quickly gaining popularity, was adopted in 1945 as A.A.'s national magazine. By January 1949, the masthead proclaimed it "the international monthly journal of Alcoholics Anonymous," a designation confirmed by action of the General Service Conference in 1986.

Today, the Grapevine is a 64-page monthly illustrated magazine with a circulation of over 110,000, written, illustrated and read by A.A. members and others interested in the A.A. program of recovery from alcoholism. In June 1996, the first issue of a bimonthly Spanish-language magazine, *La Viña*, was published as a service to Hispanic A.A.s. And in conjunction with the anniversary, the Grapevine expanded its presence with the opening on June 1 of the A.A. Grapevine online Digital Archive.

Selected articles have long been reprinted in special issues of the magazine, in Grapevine anthologies, or as part of Conference-approved publications, but these have only whetted the appetites of Grapevine aficionados. Now, the full panoply of A.A. experience, strength, and hope contained in more than 12,000 Grapevine articles and letters will be accessible to the Fellowship at the click of a mouse. Executive editor Robin B. describes the archive as not only a source of A.A. history but as "support for our own sobriety and spiritual growth. We don't yet know how people will use it," she says, "but it's important for the health of the Fellowship to tap into our roots."

The Grapevine is unparalleled as a source of knowledge about our beginnings and as a faithful reflection of our growth and development. In the

1940s, it showed us a Fellowship in the midst of what Bill W. called the period of "flying blind." New groups were springing up all over the place, without the guidance of time-tested practices and principles. The Grapevine served as a means of communication among these widely scattered groups at a time when their only resources were a few pieces of A.A. literature and a small, overloaded headquarters office in New York.

Those early issues reflect a Fellowship that was brand-new and at times fearful. There were articles about slips and how to avoid them, drunkalogs to help new members identify, and ideas for reading material and hobbies to fill the free time between infrequent meetings. At the same time, there were articles that might easily find a home in current issues — Bill W.'s "Those Goof Balls" or articles that would strike a chord with 21st century A.A.s concerned about drug addicts in meetings, and at a time when the membership was overwhelmingly male, such pieces as "Women in A.A. Face Special Problems" in 1948 were precursors of more contemporary articles that address the concerns of young people or dually addicted alcoholics or gay/lesbian members.

As time went on, the pages of the Grapevine began to reflect an A.A. that had greater confidence in its own collective sobriety and spiritual principles. Readers wanted more stories about staying sober, working the Steps, practicing the Traditions in their groups, and enjoying opportunities for service.

In 1946, the Grapevine was legally incorporated as one of two service corporations of A.A.'s General Service Board. In a letter to the lawyer who drafted the articles of incorporation, Bill W. described his vision for the magazine and articulated some key editorial principles: "The Grapevine staff should be primarily responsive to A.A. group opinion and tradition. . . . The Grapevine should feel free to print articles expressing the widest dif-



The 60th anniversary of the Grapevine was celebrated this past April at the General Service Conference in New York. The month also saw the debut of the online Digital Archive of the magazine.

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ferences of opinion on all topics of a strictly A.A. nature. . . . Like the Alcoholics Anonymous movement it is to mirror, there will be one central purpose: The Grapevine will try to carry the A.A. message to alcoholics and practice A.A. principles in all its affairs.”

True to that vision, Grapevine editors have always been able to find the right balance between A.A. recovery experiences, stories about working the program and using spiritual principles, and articles that stimulate readers to think. Articles on working the Steps and practicing the Traditions are front and center in every issue, but beyond that the editors choose for publication writings that represent the full spectrum of A.A. opinion and experience and deal forthrightly with whatever is happening in the Fellowship. When there are many sides to an issue, special sections of articles presenting different points of view provide a well-rounded presentation, and articles by young people, oldtimers, beginners, and sponsors and sponsees are regular features. From the beginning, there has been a running commentary about such controversial subjects as problems other than alcohol, smoking at meetings, saying the Lord's Prayer at meetings, and disagreements between A.A.s who believe in the “God stuff” and those who don't. A letter in the July 1960 issue entitled “I Don't Go to Meetings Anymore” occasioned more reader responses than any other in the magazine's history. In the late 1980s and early '90s, an appeal for articles on the subject “Is A.A. Changing?” brought forth a deluge of manuscripts that could have filled the magazine to overflowing for months.

Needless to say, lively articles provoke a lively response, and the letters section has always welcomed reactions from readers, pro and con. In March 1986, a special section of articles on “A.A. and Other Addictions” opened such floodgates of reader reaction that the editors created a new feature, “Your Move.” In later issues, “Your Move” contained readers' points of view on such hot topics as profanity at meetings, special groups, and atheists in A.A. And since 2000, the Grapevine Web site has offered another opportunity for reader participation, the on-line version of the letters section, i-Say.

Like any good meeting, our “meeting in print” helps us

laugh at ourselves, drunk or sober. Humor sections, from “Barley Corn” in the 1940s to today's “Ham on Wry,” are often where readers turn first, and cartoons, including the well-loved perennial, Victor E., enliven every issue. Good humorous writing is hard to find, but over the years talented members have made readers laugh with articles ranging from an A.A. nursery tale, “To Fetch a Pail of *What?*” in 1977 to a satirical article in 1991 (a time of heated Fellowship-wide discussion of A.A. chips and medallions) about an imagined visit to Wilsonland, the first A.A. theme park.

On a more serious note, the Grapevine has not only recorded but helped to fashion A.A.'s history. The Preamble, written by the first editor, was introduced in the June 1947 issue as a way of describing to nonalcoholics who had begun reading the magazine just what A.A. was and was not. Bill W., who wrote extensively for the magazine, first presented the Twelve Traditions in an April 1946 article entitled “Twelve Points to Assure Our Future.” And in December 1950 Bill W. and Dr. Bob suggested in the Grapevine that the groups as a whole should form a General Service Conference, to take over from the founding members responsibility for the management and continuity of the Fellowship.

But at its heart, the history of Alcoholics Anonymous has little to do with facts or events. The story of A.A. is the story of individual anonymous members, living sober, one day at a time. It is the story of our victories and failures, beliefs and opinions, laughter and tears. Grapevine readers have always been able to learn from the experience of members all over the world. Now, readers who explore the A.A. Grapevine Digital Archive cannot only cross geographical boundaries but can shed the constraints of time to share in the lives of A.A.s 60, or 40, or 20 years ago.

■ Back Issues of The A.A. Grapevine

One of the better kept secrets in A.A. is that A.A. members and groups may purchase packs of 50 back issues of the Grapevine. Effective July 1 the price has been reduced to \$20, plus shipping (previous price \$30). A valuable Twelfth Step tool for meetings in institutions and/or your group's literature table. To order, please call: (212) 870-3404.

■ New from G.S.O.

Large-print editions of *Living Sober*, *Came to Believe* and *As Bill Sees It* have recently been published by A.A. World Services. The books may be ordered by contacting local intergroup/central offices or from the General Service Office. Item numbers and prices are: *Living Sober* (B-25; \$3.25); *Came to Believe* (B-26; \$3.25); and *As Bill Sees It* (B-27; \$6.50). Quantity discounts apply.

■ Centuries-Old Customs will Enrich A.A. Sharing at Native American Convention

This fall the 14th Annual National/International Native American Indian (NAI) A.A. Convention will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in Bloomington, Minnesota. Like those in the past, says Ken S., a contact chairperson, “it will provide an opportunity for Native Americans to celebrate their sobriety, working the Twelve Steps of A.A. so that all of us can carry the message back to our people who are still suffering from the disease of alcoholism.”

Recalling past conventions, he reflects, “Growing up in a mainstream culture that was hostile to Indians and having to exist with a guarded sense of self for fear of rejection and violence over so many years—then suddenly walking into the NAI-AA Convention and experiencing the tremendous sense of celebration in claiming the part of us we’d so long repressed . . . for me the feeling was powerful. Some have connected with their roots. Many have committed themselves to relearning their tribal ways and languages lost through generations of drinking—this has been the missing piece of the puzzle in their sobriety.”

Noting a frequently asked question about the NAI-AA Conventions—“Can non-Indians attend?”—Ken stresses, “Our doors and hearts are open to the entire A.A. family worldwide. All are welcome to come.” He reports that activities include 24-hour marathon meetings, dances, a social powwow and both men’s and women’s “talking circles” in which A.A.s share their social and personal concerns. Sunday, the final day of the convention, will offer a spiritual speaker meeting and a sobriety countdown. More than 300 people are expected to come.

“The countdown is a magical event,” says Kim S., registration chairwoman of the 2003 convention, which was held in Burbank, California, last October. “After the countdown, from the A.A. member with the least sobriety to the one with the most,” she relates, “a crystal-and-silver medallion—etched with a triangle against a background of three eagle feathers, both symbolizing A.A.’s Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service—is given to the ‘oldest’ oldtimer, who in turn will bring it back next year for a repeat presentation.”

Kim, who celebrates 16 years of sobriety in A.A. this September, recalls that for her, “the highlight of last year’s convention was seeing a newcomer from the year-ago event, an Apache woman from Arizona, come back, still sober and at home in A.A.” But, she adds, “for me personally, sharing at a marathon meeting on ‘The Family After A.A.’ warmed my heart the most. My two sons, then aged 24 and 17, were there, along with my sister and me—all alcoholics, all sober. It was a miracle come true. And for me as for so many others, it was overwhelming to see so many Native Americans sober in one place, and to see the Al-Anon members and others with them.”

For Kim, who belongs to the O’odham desert tribes of

Arizona, “water is a sacred site. So during the convention my family and I observed our custom of visiting the ocean, in this instance the Pacific, and giving an offering and saying a prayer. One can give many things—sage, a flower—but I gave a hair from my head.” She notes that meetings at the convention are mainly conducted in English, but that many tribes, many languages and dialects are represented and heard. “For instance,” Kim explains, “when I speak, I say in O’odham, ‘*Bancheggie* (my name is) Kim, I am an alcoholic.’ We sort of mix and match.”

Ken, a member of South Dakota’s Lakota tribe and one of the upcoming convention’s nine contact persons, is in charge of mailing, addresses and databases. He tells how the NAI conventions originally began with one man’s vision: “By 1990,” he says, “increasing numbers of Native Americans in the U.S. and Canada were coming to A.A. and staying. But there was as yet no common meeting ground where they could share their journey in sobriety. Then a young Paiute Indian, A.A. member Earl L. of Bishop, California, dreamed of a great gathering of Native people, with sobriety as the central theme. At once excited and nervous, he sought the help of a medicine man, who told him he had experienced a vision of what the future could hold. Earl took heart; at the next area assembly he announced there would be an international gathering for Native Americans in the fall of 1991—without the vaguest idea of what organizing such an event entailed.

“But armed with inspiration, determination and the help of A.A. friends far and wide, Earl realized his dream. The first NAI-AA convention, in Las Vegas, in 1991, drew a couple of hundred participants, and as word spread, more and more people came. After the first three conventions, all held in Las Vegas, it was decided to vary the locale in order to attract those who could not afford to drive to Vegas each year. Future ones were held in or near populous Indian communities such as Rapid City, South Dakota, and Seattle, Washington. Last year’s convention was held in the Los Angeles area, where there is a large Native American population. This year’s convention, in Minnesota, where many Native Americans live, is within reasonable driving distance of densely populated reservations in the Dakotas, Montana, Nebraska, Iowa and Wyoming.”

Over the years unity has been a leitmotif of the NAI conventions. Comments Doug R., a staff member of the General Service Office who attended last year’s event: “The emphasis of the elders was on unity—that all of us are A.A. and it is one big whole, that the service structure works.” Ken says that the growth of the convention is tangible evidence of A.A. efforts, especially since 1985, to reach out to Native North Americans. Many have been able to identify with the stories of alcoholics in the pam-

phlet “A.A. for the Native North American,” available from the General Service Office.

As he looks forward to the October NAI convention, Ken says he is “reminded of a message thrust into the hands of a speaker at the 1998 convention that says it all: ‘I started out drinking with Indians, fought with Indians, laughed with Indians and despaired with Indians. Now it is only appropriate that I am in recovery with Indians—the circle is complete.’”

To register or obtain more information about the 14th NAI-AA National/International Convention, write: NAI-AA-AA Convention, P.O. Box 19321, Reno, Nevada 89511; call the information hotline, 1-888-825-4167; or see the NAI-AA Home Page online at: www.nai-aa.org.

■ Robin B. Is Named Executive Editor of The Grapevine

Robin B. came to work at the A.A. Grapevine as senior editor in 2000, never thinking four years later she would be named executive editor of the pocket-size magazine that mirrors A.A. in action around the world. In selecting Robin, who succeeds Desmond T., the board of directors notes, “During her tenure, she has demonstrated her creative leadership and ability to analyze and solve problems.”

Before joining the Grapevine, Robin served as a senior project editor for Scholastic Inc., an associate editor of *Creative Classroom*, and the managing editor of *Outside Kids*. She holds a B.A. in literature from N.Y.U., as well as an M.A. in Literature and an M.Phil. from Columbia and taught humanities and writing at both schools before leaving a career in teaching for one in publishing.

Robin, who assumed her new responsibilities in April, views her appointment as “an opportunity to chair what is to me one of the most moving meetings in A.A.—our meeting in print—and a chance to help my fellow alcoholics.” Sober since September 1989, she vividly remembers how it was during her drinking, what happened, and the way it is now. “My alcoholism,” she says, “was the story of the death of the soul. My recovery brought about its rebirth.”

“Born and bred to be an alcoholic” in Freeport, Long Island, Robin came from “a family of several generations of alcoholic drinkers.” She “quickly went from plucking the cherries out of my grandmother’s whiskey sours as a child at home to tossing back liters of beer abroad as a teenager.” After her first drunk, she relates, “I drank for 20 years. I changed jobs, men, but nothing worked. A therapist I was seeing told me to quit drinking, so I quit smoking. Then she told me to go to A.A., so I went to Al-Anon. And all the time I was resisting help, I was in extraordinary pain.”

Finally, at the end of her rope, Robin “was Twelfth-Stepped incrementally at work by an A.A. member,” she says, “and became willing to try A.A. In time I was fortunate to find a home at the Oxford Group in Manhattan, one that is full of people with remarkable recovery. I also have a great sponsor.”

Of the Grapevine, which is subtitled “Our Meeting in Print” because it is written mainly by alcoholics for alcoholics, Robin says, “Before I ever dreamed of working on the magazine, it was an integral part of my recovery.” She wholeheartedly concurs with A.A. co-founder Bill W., who called the Grapevine “our biggest and best means of communicating current A.A. thought and experience in staying sober, in hanging together, and in serving.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, p. 31)

Robin lives in Manhattan with her (nonalcoholic) husband, Jack. “When I was drinking, I was bitter and my life was empty,” she recalls. “Today life is full of abundance—sometimes it’s a little too abundant. Jack and I are fortunate in having two sons, Geoffrey, 9, and David, 8, who are full of love and fun and mischief.”

The Grapevine’s new executive editor is blessed with a sense of the absurd. When she received an invitation to speak at the kickoff dinner-meeting of the General Service Conference in April, Robin admits, “I was excited but scared, and I said to myself, ‘Gosh, I didn’t mean to get *this* sober.’” We in A.A. are glad she did.

■ New Class B Trustees Are High on Service

The General Service Board welcomes two new Class B (alcoholic) regional trustees: Charles (Chuck) B., West Central U.S.; and Tom K., Western Canada. Both share a deep commitment to A.A., a warm sense of humor, and a desire to share the strengths they have gained in recovery.

Chuck B., of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, succeeds Minnesota’s Ted S. When he was elected to the board, he says, his sponsor, past West Central regional trustee (1988-92) Dan B. “called to congratulate me. ‘See,’ he told me, ‘it pays to have a good sponsor!’” True, but Chuck has other attributes going for him as well. After sobering up in A.A. in October 1982, he held a variety of offices, from group treasurer to area Correctional Facilities chairman and area delegate (Panel 51, 2001-02). Active in his home Neighborly Group, he leads a weekly Big Book study meeting.

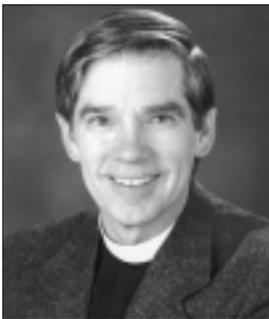
In his work life Chuck spent 12 years in the carpentry and drywall business, seven years as construction manager for a cable TV company and at present is an electrician. His hobby is bicycling and, he reports, “I have ridden across Iowa on an annual bike ride for the past ten years.” In A.A., Chuck says, “my heart is in C.F. work, but basically I’m interested in any service that helps A.A. as a whole.

This is a powerful program. It will save the life of anyone who becomes willing to surrender.”

Tom K. of Vibank, Saskatchewan, follows British Columbia’s Ric D. “I am excited about the prospect of being a trustee,” he says. “When I got the confirming phone call, though, I wasn’t prepared for my emotional reaction.” He notes that he “was quick to contact my friends, including Murray M., trustee-at-large/Canada, who has been giving me a lot of support in learning the ropes of my new service job.”

Sober since November 1983, Tom is a past delegate (Panel 48, 1998-99). He has attended all the Western Canada Regional Forums since 1986, is active in his home Vibank Group and the Regina Intergroup, and is an active sponsor. He has worked continuously for the Canada Post Corporation for 31 years and observes, tongue-in-cheek, that he is “the fretting father of three independent young adults.” Looking back, Tom can’t imagine his life without A.A. “I have a deep love and appreciation for this Fellowship and what it has given me,” he says. “And It has benefited my family as well.”

■ A.A. Salutes Two New Class A Trustees



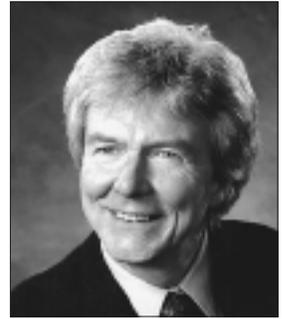
Rev. Ward Ewing

This spring two new Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees joined A.A.’s General Service Board: the Very Rev. Ward Ewing, D.D., dean and president of the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in Manhattan; and William (Bill) Dexter Clark, M.D., medical director of the Addiction Resource Center, Mid Coast Hospital, in Brunswick, Maine.

Before Rev. Ward Ewing assumed his present position in 1998, he spent 13 years as rector of Trinity Church in Buffalo, New York. He also has served congregations in Tennessee, Florida and Kentucky. He became involved in A.A. and alcoholism, he says, while serving as vicar of St. Peter’s-in-the-Valley, Louisville, Kentucky, in 1975. “First I became aware of alcoholism as a disease, then I began attending seminars on alcoholism and took a full semester course on alcoholism. In my congregation we developed a group of persons with at least five years of sobriety who met weekly to deal with religious and spiritual issues in their lives. Consequently I began to incorporate the Twelve Steps into my own life and my own spirituality in a real way. Today I feel privileged to be a trustee of A.A. and hope that I can be of some help.”

Dr. Bill Clark, a cum laude graduate of both Harvard University and Harvard Medical School, has been in his

present position since 1987. He steps into the shoes of rotating trustee George Vaillant, M.D., of Vermont. In a letter to the board, George said of Bill, “He is one of the most deeply spiritual men I have met. . . . He has been doing work in C.P.C. [Cooperation With the Professional Community] for decades and is a ‘poster person’ for why A.A. has Class A trustees.”



Dr. Bill Clark

Bill himself says, “I am terribly excited at the prospect of being of service to a fellowship that has meant so much to my patients through the years. I look forward to helping spread information about A.A. through the medical community.”

In addition to its 14 Class B (alcoholic) trustees, the board consists of seven Class A trustees, including the trustee chairperson—all of them highly respected professionals. From matters of philosophy and organization to public information and international sharing, their work touches on every aspect of A.A. service.

Experience has shown that for A.A.s, being in the public eye is hazardous to our sobriety—and to our collective survival if we break our anonymity at the public level, then get drunk. Yet “A.A. had to be publicized somehow,” as co-founder Bill W. pointed out in *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, p. 129, “so we resorted to the idea that it would be far better to let our friends do this for us”—mainly, as it turns out, our nonalcoholic trustees. They can face the camera head-on or use their last names without threat to themselves or the Fellowship and its Traditions. In the process they reach many a suffering alcoholic with the A.A. message.

■ 2004 A.A. Membership Survey

Once again it is time for a survey of A.A. membership, which will be conducted in randomly selected groups throughout the United States and Canada. The information gathered by this survey will be used as the basis for the Public Information pamphlet “A.A. Membership Survey — 2004.” This informational pamphlet, which describes the composition of our Fellowship, has been very effective in introducing and explaining A.A. to nonalcoholic professionals and the general public.

The survey procedure is approved by the General Service Conference, and participation is anonymous and voluntary. If you are asked to fill out a Survey Questionnaire between August 1st and 14th, you will be helping to provide information about our membership to

our fellow A.A.s and anyone who would like to know more about us.

If you have any questions about the A.A. Membership Survey, call the Public Information desk at the General Service Office.

■ In Memoriam

Bill A.

It is with great sadness that the General Service Office announces the death of Bill A., staff member and friend.

After a gallant fight of over a year against cancer, Bill passed away peacefully June 7, at the Montefiore Medical Center, New York City.

A native of Montreal, Bill was a Panel 46 delegate to the General Service Conference, representing Area 87, Southwest Quebec. He came to G.S.O. over five years ago and at the time of his death was serving on the Conference assignment. Members of the 54th General Service Conference were privileged to witness how valiantly he orchestrated Conference week and all the preparation that preceded it.

Bill celebrated 20 years of sobriety on May 21st. He will be remembered for many things — but foremost for his extraordinary and quick sense of humor and his devotion to the Fellowship he loved and served so well. All who knew him were blessed.

Our sympathy is extended to Bill's wife, Audrey, and his brother, David, of Montreal.

Bob S., Jr.

Robert S., Jr., Dr. Bob's only son, died in St. Francis Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee, on April 22, 2004. The last living person who witnessed the historic first meeting between A.A. co-founders Dr. Bob and Bill W., he was 16 years old at the time. Only years later, after he joined Al-Anon in the 1970s, did he realize the global significance of what happened that Mother's Day in 1935.

"Smitty" spent his working life as an oil producer and served as a pilot in World War II, but for the past 30 years he had devoted his time to sharing his father's gift to the world. A frequent and sought-after speaker at A.A. and Al-Anon gatherings, he would describe his memories of A.A.'s pioneering days when his father and mother, Anne, allowed drunks to stay in their home to sober up. With his sister, Sue Windows, he coauthored the book *Children of the Healer*. In it he expressed gratitude "for the many friends I have met and known as a result of twelve step programs. You have taught me a way of life . . . that I never would have figured out for myself."

Bob is survived by his wife Mona, his three children, and one granddaughter.

■ Where Does a Binge Drinker Go to Identify in A.A.?

"My name is Mark and I am an alcoholic," writes an A.A. member from British Columbia. "I came into the A.A. program a year-and-a-half ago, and I still struggle to feel connected."

The problem, Mark explains, "is the dearth of testimony in the printed A.A. canon about my type of alcoholism—the binge drinker. . . . My experience is having been able to go for periods of time without even the thought of a drink, only to go out on a real tear, followed by those characteristically alcoholic feelings of deep depression and despair. Yet I almost never had a morning drink, and many of my binges played out in just one booze-soaked evening. . . . My partner, who has nine years in our program, tells me she has seen many with my type of symptoms go back out, because often they are unable to find the essential validation for binge drinking as alcoholism within A.A. If I have missed some essential reading, please direct me accordingly."

Responding to Mark's letter, a General Service Office staff member notes that the office is a repository of shared A.A. experience. Then he shares his personal story: "My brother and I are both members of A.A. He was a periodic, or binge, drinker while I drank every day. Curiously, my brother felt he could not be an alcoholic because he was able to stop for varying periods of time. I felt I could not be an alcoholic because I did not have to stop and could drink on a daily basis.

"At the end of our drinking, we both ended up in almost identical places, being unable to live life on life's terms or even to leave our bedrooms in the apartment we shared. Today my brother and I are both 20 years sober. It goes to show that though we may have taken different paths to get to A.A., the common solution that is offered works for the daily drinker and the binge drinker alike."

The writer then points out that "our basic text, *Alcoholics Anonymous* [the Big Book], contains much information on the varying aspects of alcoholism. Referring to the fourth and latest edition, he notes, "The chapters 'The Doctor's Opinion' [page xxv] and 'More About Alcoholism' [page 30] offer descriptions of the diverse drinking habits alcoholics have displayed. For instance, in the latter chapter it says, 'We have seen the truth demonstrated again and again: Commencing to drink after a period of sobriety, we are in a short time as bad as ever. If we are planning to stop drinking, there must be no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion that someday we will be immune to alcohol.'"

The correspondent further suggests to Mark that he "take a look at the chapter 'Me an Alcoholic?' which depicts the binge, or periodic, drinker." He also points him to the pamphlet "44 Questions" (page 9), written in Q&A

form. The question: “I can stay sober quite a while between binges; how can I tell whether I need A.A.?” The answer, in part: “Most A.A.s will say that it’s how you drink, not how *often*, that determines whether or not you are an alcoholic. Many problem drinkers can go weeks, months, and occasionally years between their bouts with liquor. . . . Then, for some unaccountable reason, or for no reason at all, they go off on a first-class binge. . . . The spree may last a single night, or it may be prolonged for days or weeks. When it is all over, the drinker is usually weak and remorseful, determined never to let it happen again. But it does happen again.”

Finally the G.S.O. writer urges Mark “to continue attending meetings and attempt to identify rather than compare. We can easily find the differences in other people’s stories—but as we look closer, we find many similarities in the patterns and feelings our fellow alcoholics reveal.”

■ International Convention Update

What: A.A.’s 70th Birthday Celebration.

Theme: “I Am Responsible”

When: June 30–July 3, 2005

Where: Toronto, Ontario, Canada (Metro Toronto Convention Center, SkyDome Stadium, Royal York and Intercontinental Headquarter Hotels in downtown Toronto).

What is it? Beginning with the first, in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1950, A.A.’s International Conventions have often been milestones in the growth of our Fellowship; high points in the celebration of sobriety; and a moving spiritual experience for those who attended. Held every five years to celebrate the anniversary of our founding, our International Conventions have grown to be some of the largest events of their kind in the world.

The objectives of this International Convention are: To provide opportunities for a rededication of attendees to the primary purpose of A.A.; to enable attendees to witness the success and growth of the A.A. program around the world; to let the world know that A.A. is alive, flourishing and available as a community resource, locally and internationally.

Who is it for?: The International Convention offers A.A. meetings to anyone who is interested in Alcoholics Anonymous — A.A. members, Al-Anon members, friends of A.A., media and other professionals, or anyone who would like to drop in on a “open” A.A. meeting.

Cost: The preregistration fee is \$85 (U.S.). After May 16, 2005, the on-site registration fee is \$95 (U.S.). You must be registered to attend any International Convention event.

Registration: In late August 2004, your group G.S.R. will receive registration forms. Central Offices and Intergroups will also receive a generous supply. You will also be able to register and pay your registration fee on-line at www.aa.org. A preliminary program will provide additional information about International Convention activities and will be mailed in late spring 2005. Registration opens, at the Metro Toronto Convention Center, at 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, June 29th.

Hotel Rooms/Housing: You will receive a Hotel/Housing reservation form after you have registered and received your badges in the mail. (Your badge is confirmation of your registration). Fill out and return the Housing Form as soon as possible. Or you may reserve Hotel/Housing electronically once your registration fee payment has cleared.

No hotel or housing assignments will take place before November 15, 2004. All reservation forms received prior to that date, either by regular mail, fax or electronically, will be processed by lottery starting on November 15. Everyone who applies by this date has the same chance of being assigned to a downtown hotel. After November 16, 2004, all Hotels/Housing reservation forms are processed in the order that they are received.

Why not go directly to hotels in Toronto? A.A. has signed contracts with a majority of the hotels in Toronto and surrounding communities. Thus Convention rates are substantially lower. A.A. has contracted more than enough hotel rooms for this Convention, with the majority (over 8,500 of the 12,000 blocked) located in downtown Toronto.

Local Transportation: No hotel is further than 45 minutes from downtown. For attendees staying outside the Downtown Core, a limited, door-to-door shuttle bus service between all Convention activities will be provided.

Although no shuttle bus service will be provided for attendees staying in the Downtown Core of A.A. participating hotels, everyone may purchase a four day Toronto transit pass (TTC) at a reasonable rate that will allow them to use Toronto’s excellent transportation system to get to all Convention activities. This transit pass will also allow attendees the leisure and freedom to return to their hotels when they wish or to travel throughout Toronto to sightsee. In addition to providing clear transit maps, the 2005 Host Committee volunteers will be everywhere along the main downtown public transportation system routes to help direct folks. The Toronto transit pass may be purchased at the same time an attendee registers. Special transportation will be available for those who are physically challenged.

Special Events:

Thursday, June 30: Enjoy the “Party in the Park,” right outside the South Building of the Metro Toronto Convention Center. Dances will be held in the park, in the convention center and at the Intercontinental Hotel. A

carnival atmosphere with food vendors and circus tents will lend a festive air to the park area throughout the weekend.

Marathon meetings in English, Spanish and French begin at midnight and run continuously until 7:15 a.m. Sunday, July 3.

Friday, July 1: A.A. meetings begin at 9:00 a.m.

Friday night we will meet at the SkyDome Stadium and mark the opening ceremonies with a parade of flags of those countries in attendance—probably 80 flags—followed by the Big A.A. Meeting.

There will be another dance at the Convention Center after the Big A.A. Meeting.

Saturday, July 2: Meetings, meetings, meetings.

Oldtimers A.A. meeting at the stadium, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, July 3: Closing meeting at stadium.

■ International News

Alcoholics Anonymous has become an established global phenomenon, with its program of recovery speaking to suffering alcoholics in every corner of the world. In this issue, *Box 4-5-9* introduces a series of international A.A. news items.

- A member of the Peace Corps in Madagascar contacted the G.S.O. in New York seeking information on establishing A.A. in that island country. The Peace Corp member, a nonalcoholic, was directed to the G.S.O. in South Africa, which sent her A.A. literature in French. Madagascar, which lies east of Mozambique in the Indian Ocean, is a former French colony with a population of about 17 million. French and Malagasy are both official languages. Translation of A.A. material into Malagasy is under consideration by A.A.W.S.

- Alcoholics Anonymous in Belarus held its First Service Conference last September. Participants at the two-day meeting approved a charter, bylaws, and other items in creating a general service structure in that country. Murray McL., trustee-at-large/Canada, attended as an invited observer. Belarus, a republic of the Soviet Union until 1991, borders Poland on the east. It was in 2002 in Poland, at the First Eastern Europe Service Conference, that a Belarusian Committee was formed.

- The Eighth Meeting of the Americas (REDELA) was held last October, in Maracaibo, Venezuela. Seven countries from South, Central and North America participated in the five-day event, during which there was sharing of A.A. experience throughout the Americas. Charlie B., trustee-at-large/U.S., and Murray McL. attended as representatives of U.S./Canada. Adrienne B., staff member on the International assignment, was present as an observer.

- Forty delegates met in Frankfurt, Germany, last October for the Twelfth European Service Meeting. They

shared their experience about developing sound structures “to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, whoever he may be, whatever the language he speaks.” Greg M., G.S.O. general manager, Chris C., publications director at G.S.O., and Adrienne B., staff member on the International assignment, attended as observers.

- A Lebanese student studying in Montreal visited G.S.O. to gather information to help start A.A. in his home country. Habib, a nonalcoholic, spoke with staff members and was given literature in Arabic and French. Among his plans is to donate A.A. literature to libraries in Lebanon. Habib has lived in Chicago, where he first learned about Alcoholics Anonymous.

Correctional Facilities

■ West Virginians Fund ‘Books for Crooks’

Members in West Virginia are proving A.A. co-founder Bill W.’s contention that “AA. in action calls for the sacrifice of much time and a little money.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, pp. 140-141) This, plus an ample helping of imagination, has made the area’s “Books for Crooks” program a heartwarming success in funding literature for A.A.s behind the walls.

Kathy O., who chairs the area Correctional Facilities (C.F.) committee, recalls that one A.A. wondered if calling the project Books for Crooks was P.C. (politically correct). “I told the person,” she relates, “that the name was dreamed up by someone who has himself served time and that, for sure, it was not intended to offend anyone in any way. Judging from the response, people really take to it.”

Says Kathy, “Several years ago we started passing a pink can to raise money, an idea that began in California years ago and, in various colors and forms, has worked wonders for groups around the U.S. and Canada. But here in West Virginia—yes, it is a state—nobody seemed to pay attention. So in 2001 at my home base, the Ceredo-Kenova Serenity Group, we started passing a C.F. basket after the regular Seventh Tradition collection. Shaking it to make the coins we’d put in it jangle, we’d say things like ‘This is a program of change and we’ll gladly take yours.’”

Very quickly, she reports, “we found that people who are too embarrassed to put anything less than a dollar bill in the group collection basket will gladly part, when asked, with a quarter, a dime, or whatever change they have in their pockets for a project like ours—and in no way does this have a shrinking effect on group contributions.” Some A.A.s contribute in memory of deceased members, others for no reason other than wanting to give.

And, says Kathy, “it all adds up: We started passing the basket in June 2001 and for that half-year collected \$233; in the whole of 2002, \$653; and in 2003, \$737. As of May 2004, we were ahead of the game with \$322.50. All told we’d raised \$1,945.50 by then, and I figure we’ve easily pushed past the \$2,000 mark to date.”

In the county jails in Kathy’s home District 2, she says, “the program has enabled us to give every alcoholic inmate his own copy of the Big Book. We’ve also passed out many Twelve and Twelves, along with a variety of pamphlets. Much of our success is owed to the help of the district’s New Life Group in Huntington. We’ve worked closely with them and with the district C.F. committee chair, Sue M. Additionally, other District 2 groups have been donating Grapevine subscriptions. All this support has really made a difference.”

Early this year the notion took hold of setting up a 12-by-12-by-16-inch cardboard box attractively decorated in light and dark pink (shades of the pink can!) and clearly marked “Books for Crooks”—a receptacle for books that group members and visitors donate at group meetings and often inscribe. “We started putting out the boxes this spring,” Kathy says, “and they really are a hit.” Credit for the moniker, she is quick to point out, originated with a former member of the area C.F. committee, Phil W., who in turn says he and a fellow A.A., Ellen, came up with the catchy title some years ago.

Phil, who has 12 years of sobriety, says, “I got sober in the Department of Corrections in North Carolina after doing three DUI [Drinking Under the Influence] stints. Upon leaving jail the last time (I hope), I joined the Forever Newcomers Group in Hickory, North Carolina. When I was about six months dry and gung ho to do more than make coffee and put out chairs, an oldtimer said, ‘I have the perfect job for you—C.F. representative.’ Then, while brainstorming for ways to raise literature money, Ellen and I came up with the idea of a decorated box say-

ing ‘Books for Crooks.’ People took notice and gave, and the idea caught on. Now it’s doing what it’s needed to do here in West Virginia.”

When it comes to actually taking literature into jails and prisons, Kathy says, “we’ve found that some don’t permit us to give stapled literature. That’s because occasionally an inmate will use the staples for tattooing.” To conform with regulations, she explains, “we figured out a way: Punch holes in the pamphlet or booklet, insert and tie off yarn, then pull out the staples with a staple remover.” Noting how important it is to follow institutional rules, Kathy, who celebrates ten years of sobriety in August and has taken many a meeting inside, cautions, “Sometimes if we don’t cooperate, we get thrown out. Even when the rules may seem tedious and overdone, we need to remember that we’re the guests, and if we want to carry the A.A. message inside, it’s in our best interest to conform to house rules.”

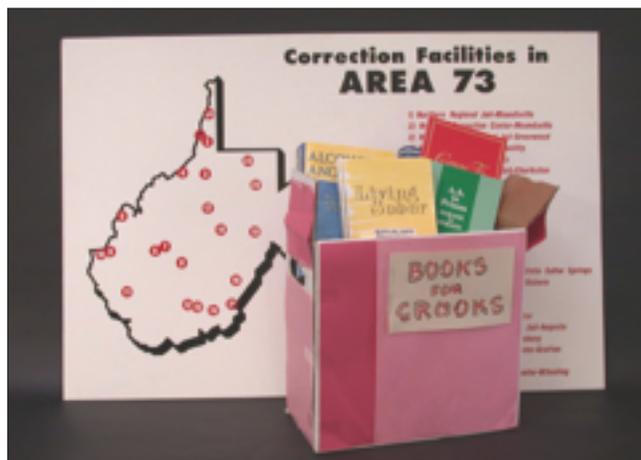
Numerous recipients of Books for Crooks have written to express their appreciation. The head of inmate services at a women’s prison sent the C.F. committee a stack of “thank-yous from the ladies” along with the comment, “Know you are touching lives.” One inmate, Theresa, wrote, “Alcohol is such a sneaky disease. Thank you for bringing in meetings and donating the A.A. books. We need to see and read about people who have turned their lives around in A.A.” Another inmate, Elizabeth, said, “Without your help, a lot of women would not get the knowledge to get the help they need to repair and recover.” Still another letter, signed “Jennifer and Tina,” noted, “It’s women like you who make a difference in lives like ours.”

P.I.

■ In Northern New Jersey Spanish-speaking Groups Are on a Roll

The 13 groups in Northern New Jersey’s Spanish-speaking district (42) have blanketed the region with A.A. literature. Reports Pedro H., chairman of the district’s fledgling Public Information committee: “Just in the past year since our committee was formed, we have placed 24,000 pieces of A.A. literature in Spanish and 120 wire display racks everywhere—from hospitals, agencies and some businesses. Each time my friends and I can carry the message this way, it is like giving ourselves a present. A.A. is my life, and nothing makes me happier than giving back what A.A. has given me.”

Several of the groups have successfully worked with local newspapers and bulletins to insert A.A. public service announcements (P.S.A.s) and often notices of upcoming A.A. meetings. Lakewood’s Grupo Nueva Luz has had



The display consists of a cardboard donation box decorated in two-toned pink. The map of West Virginia (Area 73) pinpoints the whereabouts of correctional facilities in the state. The names and locations of these facilities are listed on the right side of the display.

a notice published in a church newsletter and in the newspaper *Latinos Unidos*, and in Long Branch the Grupo 5 de Noviembre has had inserts in *Latinos U.S.A.*, while Pedro's home group in Freehold, the Grupo Vida Nueva, has done the same in a local church newsletter and the Hispanic newspaper *Nosotros*. "Thanks to these notices," Pedro reports, "we get numerous calls, not just from alcoholics but from their families and friends who want to help but don't know how. The alcoholics we welcome at our meetings; as for their relatives and others, we make an effort to send them the pamphlet 'Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?' and to direct them to the nearest Al-Anon meeting."

In New Brunswick two groups—Tres Legados and Buena Voluntad—report that between them, racks of literature have been placed at two hospitals, two doctors' offices, and more. The Grupo Un Dia a la Vez in Perth Amboy has put racks in two police stations, as has the Grupo 5 de Noviembre in Long Branch. The Grupo 2000 in Princeton has installed racks at restaurants, laundries, pizzerias, and grocery stores.

"The story is similar at our groups in Bridgetown, Camden, Hamilton and South River," says Pedro. "Our P.I. committee is very young, but everybody in the district pulls together. We couldn't do what we do without each other and without the help of our New Jersey Area (44), which, for example, has supplied all the racks and some pamphlets as well." The literature placed on the racks, he notes, consists mainly of the many A.A. pamphlets that have been translated into Spanish, among them "44 Questions," "This Is A.A.," "Young People and A.A.," "It Happened to Alice," "What Happened to Joe" and "Is A.A. for You?" "We also place our A.A. phone number on the racks," Pedro adds. "We want to reach every alcoholic we can who wants our help."

Treatment Facilities

■ In Maine 'Identification' Works Wonders for Alcoholics and Nurses Who Treat Them

From the beginning, the process of identification—one drunk sharing experience, strength and hope with another—has been a powerful tool of recovery in A.A. But as the Maine area Treatment Facilities committee surmised, identification has universal power and can work wonders in reaching the minds and hearts of professionals who often are among the first to treat the suffering alcoholic.

Says Roy R., chairman of the Maine T.F. committee: "On April 1, working closely with the area committees on

Public Information and Cooperation With the Professional Community, we held an informational workshop for a meeting of the American Nurses Association at the University of Maine in Augusta. Recognizing a common bond between the roles these nurses play today and the ones nurses and doctors played way back in the days of A.A.'s early pioneers, we displayed everything we could think of that would generate identification."

On exhibit at the workshop, Roy relates, were the pictures of nurse Sister Ignatia, A.A.'s beloved nonalcoholic friend who worked closely with our co-founder Dr. Bob at Akron's St. Thomas Hospital; and William Duncan Silkworth, M.D., A.A.'s first friend in medicine, who treated co-founder Bill W. in the beginning (*Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, centerfolds). There also was a picture of Dr. Bob and information about the Lasker Award that was presented to the Fellowship in 1951 by the American Public Health Care Association, then comprised of 12,000 physicians. Roy reports that "a number of nurses picked up pamphlets" such as "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Professional," "A.A. in Treatment Facilities," "This Is A.A.," "If You Are a Professional, A.A. Wants to Work with You," and more.

Close to 40 nurses were present for an informational meeting at noon. "The speakers were very informative," says Roy, "and went completely through the 'Information Sheet on A.A.' which, like the pamphlets, is available from the General Service Office. They did a great job of defining what we do and don't do, according to our Traditions, and they explained the different types of meetings available in A.A.—open, closed, beginners, public service, and so on. At the end ample time remained for a Q&A period. In a separate room our immediate past delegate Miles B. [Panel 52, 2002-03]—we refer to him and other officers who have rotated out as our 'rusted' servants—held a lively Traditions meeting at the same time."

Roy adds, "I can't tell you just who was there and how many attended, but I will tell you that on this rainy April Fool's Day in central Maine, being in the auditorium and another room where the topic of the day was 'The Impaired Nurse,' we A.A.s were on hand to help any sick and suffering alcoholics there. In my mind's eye I see the Maine area C.P.C., P.I. and T.F. committees come together with our Preamble in mind: '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. . . .' All of us are grateful to give of the gift that was so freely given to us by the good oldtimers who have since passed on, for today we are among the custodians of the A.A. Traditions."

The workshop owes its success, Roy stresses, "largely to the fact that our standing committees work together and remain open to any input from other areas willing to share their experience. Our own committees are grateful to all in Maine and to our friends at G.S.O. who shared with us and made this event possible."

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.

August

- 6-8-*Mountain View, Arkansas.* 64th Old Grandad Arkansas State Convention. Write: Ch., 9 MC 5026; Yellville, AR 72687
- 6-8-*Palm Beach, Florida.* Way of Life Conference. Write: Ch., Box 4106; Lantana, FL 33465
- 6-8-*Tinley Park, Illinois.* Illinois State Conference. Write: Ch., Box 1501, LaSalle, IL 61301
- 6-8-*Eau Claire, Wisconsin.* Chippewa Valley Round-Up. Write: Ch., Box 1033, Eau Clair, WI 54702
- 6-8-*Lynchburg, Virginia.* 55th Virginia Area Convention. Write: Ch., 587 Holman Mill road, Farmville, VA 23901
- 6-8-*Red Deer, Alberta, Canada.* Annual Red Deer Roundup. Write: Ch., 94 Castle Crescent, Red Deer, AB, CA T4P 2E9
- 13-15-*Indianapolis, Indiana.* East Central Regional Conference / Indiana Convention. Write: Ch., Box 19323, Indianapolis, IN 46219
- 13-15-*Williamsport, Pennsylvania.* PENNSCYPAA XVI. Write: Ch., 938 Sheridan St. Apt. #9, Williamsport, PA 17701
- 13-15-*Saskatchewan, Canada.* Waterhen Lake 26th Annual A.A. Round-Up District 14. Write: Ch., Box 5, Waterhen Lake, Saskatchewan Canada
- 19-22-*Destin, Florida.* Summer Serenity at the Beach. Write: Ch., Box 6176, Destin, FL 32550
- 20-22-*Payson, Arizona.* 12th Annual Serenity Under The Rim Roundup "The Road of Happy Destiny". Write: Ch., Box 2575, Payson, AZ 85547
- 20-22-*Elko, Nevada.* Elko Comes Alive, 8th Annual Gathering & Campout. Write: Ch., Box 2142, Elko, NV 89803
- 20-22-*Beachwood, Ohio.* 22nd Ohio A.A. Round Up. Write: Ch., Box 254, Berea, Ohio 44017; www.ohioroundup.org <<http://www.ohioroundup.org>>
- 20-22-*East Liverpool-Calcutta, Ohio.* 14th A.A. Beaver Creek Getaway. Write: Ch., 5174 East Liverpool, Ohio 43920
- 20-22-*York, Pennsylvania.* 7th Annual Sunlight of the Spirit Conference. Write: Ch., Box 3538, York, PA 17402

20-22-*Beaumont, Texas.* A Design For Living. Write: Ch., Box 1446, Buna, Texas 77612

20-22-*Green Lake, Wisconsin.* 24th Annual A.A. Green Lake Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 684, Menomonee Falls, WI 53051

20-22-*Green Lake, B.C. Canada.* Green Lake Campout. Write: Ch., Box 10119, 108 Mile Ranch, B.C. V0K 2Z0

20-22-*Oshawa, Ontario, Canada.* 32nd Annual Lakeshore District Conference. Write: Ch. 192 Athol Street East, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada L1H 1K1

20-23-*Kerrville, Texas.* 29th Annual Hill Country Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 2391, Kerrville, TX 78029-2391

20-24-*Columbia, Missouri.* 53rd Missouri State Convention. Write: Ch., Box 204, Conception Junction, MO 64434

26-29-*Omaha, Nebraska.* Cornhusker Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 425, Bellevue, NE 68005

27-29-*Nashville, Indiana.* 33rd S.E. Indiana Fall Conference. Write: Ch., Box 183, Milroy, IN 46156

27-29-*Santa Maria, California.* 52nd District 12th Annual Convention. Write: Ch., P.O. Box 6983, Santa Monica, CA 93456; www.aa52.org

27-29-*Teton Canyon, Reunion Flats, Wyoming.* 3rd Annual Teton Canyon Campout. Write: Ch., Box 153, Driggs, Idaho 83244

27-29-*Writing on Stone Park, Alberta, Canada.* Corn Roast Roundup. Write: Ch., 719 Birch Ave., Shelby, MT 59474

27-29-*Montreal, Quebec.* Eastern Canada Regional Forum. Write: Forum Coordinator, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

28-29-*Buenos Aires, Argentina.* El Grupo En Acción. Write: Ch., 99 De Julio 1788, Lanús Este, Buenos Aires, Argentina 1824

September

3-5-*Phoenix, Arizona.* XXXII Convención Hispana de A.A. Estados Unidos y Canadá. Write: Ch. Box 61512, Phoenix, AZ 85082-1512

3-5-*San Francisco, CA.* The Spirit of San Francisco 12th Annual Convention. Write: Ch. Box 423832, San Francisco, CA 94142; www.info@spirit-sf.org

3-5-*Tacoma, Washington.* 12th Annual Sponsorship Conference. Write: Ch., info@sponsorshipconference.org <<mailto:info@sponsorshipconference.org>>

10-11-*Kalispell, Montana.* 10th Annual Fall Refresher. Write: Ch., Box 214, Bigfork, MT 59911

10-12-*Bull Shoals, Arkansas.* 24th Annual Autumn-In-The-Ozarks. Write: Ch., 1040 Harding Blvd., Cotter, AR 72626

10-12-*Polacca, Arizona.* 11th Annual Freedom In Sobriety-Hopiland. Write: Ch., P.O. Box 241, Polacca, AZ 86042

10-12-*Cromwell, Connecticut.* 46th Annual Area 11 Convention. Write: Ch., 76 High Street, Thomaston, CT 06787; area11convention@msn.com

10-12-*Jacksonville, Florida.* 24th FCYPAA-Unity. Write: Ch., Box 50962, Jacksonville, FL 32250-0962; www.fcypaa.org

10-12-*Salina, Kansas.* 47th Annual Kansas Area Conference. Write: Ch., Box 3255, Salina, KS 67402-3255

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 us:

Date of event: from _____ to _____, 20 _____

Name of event: _____

Place (city, state or prov.): _____

For information, write: (exact mailing address) _____

Contact phone # (for office use only): _____

10-12-Osage, MN. 14th Annual Heartland Round-Up. Write: Ch, 22623 Bass Lake Road, Osage, MN 56570

10-12-Buchanan Dam, Texas. 22nd Annual Bill W. Roundup. Write: Ch, 1400 Ranch Road 261, Buchanan Dam, TX 78609

10-12-Houston, Texas. 6th Southeast Texas Area 67 Correctional Conference. Write: Ch, Box 925241, Houston, Texas 77292-5251; correci@www.aa-seta.org

10-12-Dunnville, Ontario, Canada. 38th Annual Dunnville Convention & Campout. Write: Ch, 215 Alexandra St. Port Colborne, Ontario, Canada L3K 2Y9

17-19-Lenox, Massachusetts. Back to Basics Week-End. Write: Ch, 368 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

17-19-Taos, New Mexico. Taos Mountain Fiesta. Write: Ch, Box 253, El Prado, NM 87529; taosmfestia@groups.msn.com

17-19-Fargo, North Dakota. North Dakota State A.A. Convention. Write: Ch, Box 1125, Fargo, ND 58107-1125

17-19-Madina, Tennessee. Area 64 Tennessee State Convention. Write: Ch, 425 Cumberland St., Medina, Tennessee 38355

17-19-Bastrop, Texas. Fellowship In The Pine. Write: Ch, 167 Lost Pine Drive, Bastrop, Texas 78602-6727

18-19-Levis, Quebec, Canada. Congres Riv Sud 89-05. Write : Ch, 380-A Dorimene Desjardines, Levis, Québec G6V 5V2 Canada

18-19-Mr. Laurier, Québec, Canada. 14eme Congrés des A.A. District 90-20. Write: <http://www.distric9020@aa-quebec.org/>

24-26-Temp, Arizona. Arizona Area 03 2004 Convention. Write: Ch, Box 20662, Mesa, Arizona 85277-0662

24-26-Plymouth, California. 18th Gold County Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 195, Pine Grove, CA 95665-0195

24-26-Sarasota, Florida. Sponsorship Weekend. Write: Ch, Box 17712 Sarasota, FL 34276

24-26-Morris, Illinois. First Illinois State Correctional Conference. Write: Ch, 604, Geneva, Illinois 60134; ilcorconf@yahoo.com

24-26-Duluth, Minnesota. A Spiritual Journey Roundup. Write: Ch, 331 East First St., Duluth, MN 55805

24-26-Mesquite, Nevada. Mesquite Round-Up. Write: Ch, Box 1117, Mesquite, NV 89024

24-26-Lake Jackson, Texas. 11th Annual Mouth of the Brazos Conference. Write: Ch, Box 1641, Clute, Texas 77531

15-17-Lake O' the Pines, Jefferson, Texas. Serenity Weekend. Write: Ch, 5530 FM 2208, Jefferson, TX 75657

24-26-Salt Lake City, Utah. Area 69 2004 Fall Election Assembly. Write: Ch, 1065 North 400 West, Bountiful, Utah 84010

24-26-Whelging, West Virginia. Area 73 Fall Assembly. Write: Ch, 47 Fort Clarke Estates, Benwood, WV 26031

24-26-Rimini, Italy. Italian Convention. Write: Ch, gaitaly@tinl.it

10-12-October

1-3-Pittsbtwgh, Pennsylvania. 34th Annual NERC. Write: Ch, Box 164, Monessen, PA 15062; www.wpaarea60.org

1-3-Osijek, Croatia. 4th Southeastern Europe Regional A.A. Convention. Write: Ch, Student Center SKAC, Palmaticeva 31, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia

8-9-Montreal, Quebec. 43rd A.A. Area 87 Convention. Write: Ch, 1480 Belanger Street, Suite 101, Montreal, QC H2G 1A7

8-10-Montgomery, Alabama. Alabama/Northwest Florida Area 1 Assembly. Write: Ch, 1314 Stanford Road, Dothan, AL 36305; areaonseccty@aol.com

8-10-Pueblo, Colorado. Ocsobterfest. Write: Ch, Box 8394, Pueblo, CO 81008

8-10-Davenport, Iowa. 2004 Area 24 Fall Conference. Write: Ch, Box 4702, Davenport, IA 52805

14-17-Amarillo, Texas. 58th Annual Top of Texas Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 412, Amarillo, Texas 79105

15-17-Greensburg, Pennsylvania. 62nd Laurel Highland's Conference. Write: Ch, Box 6, Boward, PA 15619

15-17-Mackinac Island, Michigan. 16th Annual Fall Weekend, "The Road of Happy Destiny." Write: Ch, 1500 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48912

15-17-Salt Lake City, Utah. Rockmountain Round-Up. Write: Ch, Box 9152, Ogden, Utah 84409-0152

15-17-Meritt, B.C., Canada. 31st Roundup. Write: Ch, Box 4242 Lower Nicola, B.C., Canada V0K 1Y0

November

15-17-Angles City, Philippines. 9th Fall International A.A. Convention. Write: Ch, 1996-A Apr. Marlin Ave., Diamond Subd. Balibago, Angeles City, 2000 Philippines

20-24-Cataluna, Spain. Costa Brava International English-Speaking Convention. Write: Ch, Apartado Correo 157, 17300 Blanes 9Girona), Spain; spain@aa-europe.net

21-24-Jekyll Island, Georgia. 51st Georgia State Convention. Write: Ch, Box 202, Waynesville, GA 31566

22-24-Santa Barbara, California. 20th Annual Santa Barbara Convention. Write: Ch, Box 91731, Santa Barbara, CA 93190-1731; info@sbaaconvetion.com

22-24-St. Cloud, Minnesota. 22nd Annual St. Cloud Roundup "The Miracle of It". Write: Ch, Box 125, St. Cloud, MN 56302

22-24-Kansas City, Missouri. Heart of America Round-Up. Write: Ch, Box 12839, Overland Park, KS 66282-2839; www.aa-roundup.org

22-24-Lathin Springs, Texas. 27th Annual Brazos Riverside Conf. Write: Ch, Box 5624, Laguna Park, TX 76644; www.brazosconf.org

22-24-Rock Springs, Wyoming. Wyoming Conf. Write: Ch, Box 1172, Rock Springs, WY 82901

29-31-Paducah, Kentucky. 44th Annual Tri-State Convention. Write: Ch, Box 183, Bandana, KY 42022

29-31-Bramson, Missouri. Western Area of Missouri Convention. Write: Ch, Box 91, Niangua, MO 65713

5-7-Winnipeg, MB, Canada. 60th Annual Keystone Conference. Write: Ch, 208-233 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2C1, Canada

26-28-Stamford, CT. CSCYPAA CT State Conference of Young People. Write: Ch, 514 Dewey St, Bridgeport, CT 06605

26-28-Warwick, Bermuda. Annual A.A. Convention. Write: Ch, Box 178, Warwick, Bermuda; bermudainter-damintergroup101@hotmail.com

26-28-Warwick, Bermuda. Anonymous BnM > <http://www.alcoholicsanonynous.bnm/>