

Around AA

Items of AA information and experience

Film About AA Wins Approval of 1979 General Service Conference

A new way of carrying the AA message received the hearty endorsement of the 29th AA General Service Conference (U.S./Canada), meeting in New York City April 22-28, 1979. For the first time, AA has made a film designed for the general public, to give an accurate picture of life in our Fellowship. Last year, after seeing test footage shot by filmmakers Crommie and Crommie, Inc., the 28th Conference gave the go-ahead signal to the trustees' Literature Committee, which had assigned its Audiovisual Subcommittee to the project.

The completed 28-minute color film, titled *Alcoholics Anonymous—An Inside View*, was shown to the 1979 Conference in answer-print form. Approval was voted with the proviso that the quality of the sound track would be improved and a voice-over explanation would be added to point out the techniques used in preserving members' anonymity. Real AAs are shown engaged in lively group activities and the individual joys of sober living, but the camera leaves these members unidentifiable.

Immediately after the Conference, the General Service Office was besieged with requests from AA committees eager to rent the film, not only for outside organizations interested in alcoholism, but also for local AA gatherings. GSO had to reply that no prints could be made until the changes required by the Conference had been put into effect. Those interested were asked to stand by for further information on availability and rental costs, to be given in flyers and in the GSO bulletin *Box 4-5-9*.

The film was only one of the important matters considered by the 132 Conference members: 91 area delegates, the trustees of the General Service Board, the AAWS and Grapevine directors, and the GV and GSO staffs. The Conference theme, "The Lega-

cies: *Our Heritage and My Responsibility*," was emphasized in the first day's keynote talk and in the last day's group of nine presentations on the Legacies. Some of the other presentations led to serious discussions on "A & P (Alcohol and Pills) Groups," "Sponsorship Needs of Potential Members Coming to AA from Treatment Facilities," and "How Do Roundups, Jamborees, Cruises, Rallies, etc., Fit into AA Traditions?"

Conference week culminated in the consideration of Conference committee recommendations and other topics brought onto the floor, with final agreement on the 1979 Advisory Actions, including the following (reprinted here, with the permission of AAWS, as condensed in *Box 4-5-9*):

Agenda—that theme for 1980 Conference be built around "Participation—the Key to Recovery."

Cooperation with the Professional Community—recommended that members, through CPC committees, notify treatment facilities and court programs which meetings are available for prospective members.

Correctional Facilities—recommended publication of "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell," new pamphlet for residents of correctional facilities.

Finance—recommended maximum contribution (or bequest) acceptable from a member be \$500, not \$300, because of inflation, but emphasized group contributions are primary base of support for world services.

International Convention—three commercial firms are to bid on taping 1980 sessions, using volunteer AA tapers to assist.

Literature—approved for publication the pamphlet for older alcoholics, "Now It's Time to Start Living—Stories of Those Who Came to AA in Their Later Years."

Policy/Admissions—recommended delegates never have less than 66 2/3% of total Conference votes, but no arbitrary ceiling be set on the number of GSO/GV staff eligible to vote.

Public Information—recommended trustees' PI Committee and GSO produce new radio and TV spots, including Spanish-language spots; recommended use of sign language for the deaf on TV announcements.

Report and Charter—recommended a more detailed index of service subjects in "The AA Service Manual."

Treatment Facilities—approved for publication (with revisions) new pamphlet "AA in Treatment Facilities."

Trustees—approved slate of new trustees; recommended no restructuring of regions at this time.

"Alcohol and Pills" groups—recommended that groups which by name are for dually addicted members not be listed in AA directories.

Grapevine—Advisory Actions involving the GV were as follows (in full):

- It was recommended that, when feasible, groups consider bulk orders as a means of making the Grapevine available at the group.

- Grapevine representatives recommend to their groups that they sponsor subscriptions, where possible, for institutions, treatment facilities, and professionals being "sponsored."

- The Grapevine office make available Grapevine prepaid gift certificates.

- Delegates continue their efforts in using the area and district service structure to achieve the goal of a Grapevine representative in every group.

- No changes be made in magazine format.

The film decision, the P.I. Advisory Actions, and the heavy reliance on illustrations in the new pamphlet for those in correctional facilities all make one point clear: Expressing the group conscience of AA in the U.S. and Canada, the 1979 Conference recognized the necessity for reaching out to still-suffering alcoholics through all the most effective means available today.

New Items Offered by GSO Recognize Changing Times

The 1979 Literature Order Form, listing Conference-approved literature and other service material available from GSO, has an innovation—a separate section for audio-visual materials, including nine items, four of them new:

- "PO Box 459"—instead of a filmstrip, separate 35 mm slides, for those who have no

- access to a filmstrip projector. \$25.00
- "Circles of Love and Service"—also now available in 35 mm slides as an alternative to the filmstrip. \$25.00

- "Bill Discusses the Twelve Traditions"—tape cassette, from the sound track of the AA film of that title. \$3.50

- "Voices of Our Co-Founders"—28-minute tape cassette incorporating five excerpts from talks by Bill W. and Dr. Bob. \$3.50

Other new items on the 1979 form:

- "Advisory Actions of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous"—summary of Conference recommendations 1951-1978. (For the next few years, actions of succeeding Conferences will be available on loose pages, as supplements.) \$2.50

- "Ask-It Basket"—summary of questions and answers at the 1951-1978 Conferences. (To be updated in the same manner as the actions.) \$2.50

- Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions window-shade displays (easily rolled up) for meeting rooms. \$20.00 each;

- \$35.00 for set of both Steps and Traditions
- AA meeting sign—the triangle-in-circle symbol, enclosing the letters "AA," on a blue and silver metal disc, to hang outside meeting rooms. \$3.00

All these items may be ordered from the General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10017. Note: The first, "PO Box 459," is available for use *within AA only*, since faces of members are shown.

AA Growth Speeds Up in Italy

You don't have to know Italian to translate *Atcolisti Anonimi*, letterhead on a communication of good news from the new Central Italian Office, in Rome.

After a slow start, the spread of AA in Italy seems to be accelerating. Developments have come fast within the past year: an all-Italy AA convention; the founding of the country's first intergroup office; local publication of AA literature in Italian; ample coverage in newspapers; a two-hour program on AA broadcast on national TV; and the establishment of two national AA telephone numbers, operating 24 hours a day.

Calls from central and southern Italy go to the number of the Rome office: (06) 47 55 14. People in northern Italy seeking help or information may call a Milan number: (02) 60 85 952.