

# BOX 4-5-9

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

Vol. 15 No. 1

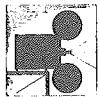
February-March 1970

## What to tell your group about...

### A.A.'s 35th ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION IN MIAMI BEACH

Imagine three A.A. meetings of more than 10,000 recovered alcoholics and their families—from all over the world—with Bill W. and Lois among the chief speakers.

Imagine three days (8 a.m. to 2 a.m.) of big and little Alkathons, panels, and coffee sessions. . . a dozen or more well-known guest experts. . . young A.A.'s. . . doctors in A.A. . . Internationalists. . . Conference and ex-Conference delegates and G.S. Board members.



#### New Movie featuring Bill

Imagine the world premiere (multiple showings) of the new color-and-sound movie, "Bill Discusses the Twelve Traditions." It is 60 minutes filled with Bill's wit and wisdom—many humorous and informative tales on himself—and some on other colorful early-timers!

You'll hear about the funny goofs, the proud moments and the helps from a greater Power that explain most of A.A.'s present-day customs.

The Fontainebleau Hotel, the Eden Roc (Al-Anon and Alateen headquarters), and Miami's luxurious air-conditioned Convention Hall will be the sites of the meetings—but hotel and motel accommoda-

#### NOT a 'Conference' For A.A. Business

Some newcomers and members in other lands have asked if they should try to get their groups to pay an A.A.'s expenses so that he can serve as a delegate to the Miami Beach get-together.

The answer is NO. This is *not* an A.A. business or conference session. The July 3-5, 1970 gathering is a giant convention for *all* A.A.'s (and Al-Anons and Alateens) who can get there. No one sends "delegates." There will just be sharing of fun, fellowship, and inspiration.

And each A.A. *pays his or her own way*, according to our Seventh Tradition.

tions are all over the city, of course, to suit anyone's taste and purse.

We've already received bushels of advance registrations (\$6.00 for all A.A. sessions, \$10.00 if you want the A.A. meetings plus two big fun features—the get-acquainted dance Thurs. night, July 2, and the closing big-name variety show Sun. night, July 5.

Newcomers who will turn into friends for life. . . oldtimers you've always heard of. . . great spiritual

talk. . . reunions with far-away friends. . . all these and many other wonderful moments will happen to you during these once-every-five year A.A. world get-togethers, where the language of the heart is heard in a dozen tongues. Laughter, tears, coffee, and prayers combine to form a kaleidoscope of inspirational once-in-a-lifetime A.A. memories you'll treasure forever.

Sharing, brotherhood, fellowship in king-size swigs describe the Convention experience. Or, in one

(to p. 4)

#### CHARTER FLIGHTS TO MIAMI BEACH ARE MUCH CHEAPER

From many parts of Canada and U.S.A., from Helsinki, London, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Central and South America. . . and other places. . . many A.A.'s are already chartering planes, buses and trains for trips to the Miami Beach convention, at greatly reduced fares.

You can probably learn from your state or provincial G.S. committee or delegate, maybe your group's G.S.R. or the local central office, how to get your charter tickets. Or, write to G.S.O., P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Post Office, New York, N.Y., 10017, U.S.A.

# Help! We Need Your Answers

1. We keep hearing about (and some of us have seen) amateur plays written and acted by members for local shindigs. We are often asked for scripts for such shows—by local A.A.'s wanting to try one for their own fun. But we don't have a single one!

PLEASE—if you have an A.A. script you have performed, share the laughs! Send us a copy!

2. How did your group's holiday Alkathon go? When was it (Thanksgiving? Christmas? New Year's?), and what hours did it run? What

was the program? Who arranged it, and the refreshments? Did one or several groups sponsor it?

Please tell us about your Alkathon so we can share your experience with other groups, clubs, committees and central offices who want to try one.

3. Have you had *any* A.A. experience while in a hospital? Have you taped your story of it, or would you record it on tape?

Our tape library needs A.A. hospital stories. Please send us some to share with other hospitalized alcoholics.

## LITERATURE NEEDS GROW BEHIND THE WALLS

Will you help, please?

More and more alcoholics in hospitals and penal institutions beg us for the A.A. message-in-print (pamphlets and books) every year.

We send at least *something* free every time. But as new inmates and patients turn up all the time, greater quantities are needed daily.

Local groups, central offices, Institutions Committees and area General Service Committees are usually happy to take on this kind of 12th Step work in their own communities when they know the need.

Many groups and intergroups collect old pamphlets and old Grapevines; and individual members do the same or make cash donations for literature.

Special funds, such as "Buck-of-the-Month"; special meeting, dinner, or party proceeds; and piggy banks at meetings, marked "For Institutional Literature," all help.

Remember—for any institution, you get a discount from G.S.O.:

\$4.50 worth of material for only \$3.00.

Will you help, please?

## PANEL 20? or 19?

### CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ROTATION

Getting your G.S.O. mail? Names of Panel 18 G.S. Conference delegates were put on G.S.O.'s *ex-delegates'* mailing list Jan. 1, and Panel 20 delegates have now joined Panel 19 on the *active* delegates' list. Committee officers and members also rotated Jan. 1. Be sure G.S.O. has your current active list.

## 1970 CONFERENCE THEME CHOSEN

"Service—the Heart of A.A." is the theme chosen for the 1970 General Service Conference.

This annual business session (our 20th) of U.S. and Canadian delegates meets April 20-25, for the first time in the Hotel New Yorker, 34th Street and 8th Avenue.

## ELEANOR N. JOINS G.S.O. STAFF

Originally from North Carolina and later from Virginia and Pennsylvania, Eleanor N.—now with seven years sobriety—is the latest addition to our G.S.O. family, as of Jan. 12, 1970.

Besides her A.A. work in her home group, as a volunteer at the N.Y. Intergroup office, and on G.S.O.'s volunteer Hospitality Committee, Eleanor brings to her G.S.O. job a wealth of work experience which will add greatly to her G.S.O. value.

She has traveled widely in Europe and the Middle East, handled government chores in Washington, D.C., and directed summer stock on Cape Cod.

She has held volunteer executive responsibilities in Red Cross, Girl Scouts, Y.W.C.A., P.T.A., mental health and in political and fine arts organizations, giving her experience in speaking, teaching, organizing, and in public relations.

Eleanor has also worked for hotel chains and shipping lines, most recently in charge of reservations and decorating duties. And, oh yes—she has done regular secretarial work, too.

Welcome aboard, Eleanor dear!

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## THANK YOU, FAITHFUL FRIENDS!

We mean the more than 50 of you who responded so beautifully and quickly to our call for help in a recent *Box 4-5-9*. We asked about meeting formats, and paying expenses for 12th Step work.

Sorry we haven't room to print all the wonderful replies (we'll send if you ask), but we want especially to thank Canadian groups and one in Bergen, Norway, for great cooperation.

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**GRAPEVINE CARTOON BOOK  
DEBUTS IN MIAMI BEACH**

A brand-new, 64-page, 6x9 hard-cover book of the Grapevine's funniest cartoons from the last 25 years will bow at Miami!

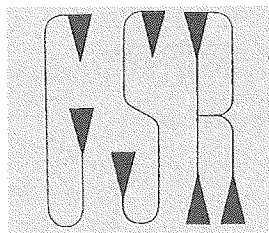
Most are by anonymous but famous cartoonists, members of course.

**Coming Up Next**

FEB.: Globe-Circling a-la-A.A.; Second Chance; Count-the-House Charlie; 2nd Step; Tiger Tamed; Freedom in Prison; 3rd Tradition; Honesty; Loner Not Alone (in Rhodesia); Miami bulletins.

MAR.: A Selfish Program?; Lawyer's Case; Invisible Line; 3rd Step; Acceptance (Mexico); Speaking of Non-A.A.'s; The Night Her Play Closed (a drama!); Miami News!

**'Three Years Ago, Dying in My Skidrow Kitchen; Now, G.S.R.!'**



"Dear G.S.O.,

My purpose in accepting this new responsibility (G.S.R.) is a bit selfish. I have a great desire not to become stagnant in my sobriety.

Three years ago I was dying in my skidrow kitchen. To be released from that hell is still a miracle to me.

Learning more of our Fellowship beyond our own little community seems to be one way I can keep principles before personalities. If I am of service, that's extra icing.

We have a few new members very much aware of their responsibilities beyond the personal one-drunk-to-another basis. We liked the filmstrip on the work at G.S.O. It gave me inspiration and courage to prod the group conscience about our financial contribution. Until this year, we never sent any money at all.

Godbless you all, from a very grateful sober wife and mother."

—H.H., British Columbia

(Ed. note: In case you have not had an opportunity to review all of the good service information in the revised "A.A. Service Manual"—especially the whole chapter on G.S.R. activities, why not put this on your "First things First" list for the new year?)

**HOW IT WORKS ON THE  
18th FLOOR**

On a Friday not too long ago Jack M. of the Grapevine called to order the regular weekly meeting of our G.S.O. 18th Floor Group. Around the table were about 30 people, including the Staff.

After a moment of silence Bess (Montreal) told her story, encompassing many sober years in Canada and the States. Then each person around the room expressed what he was feeling at the mement. Que., Conn., Tex., N.Y., Ireland, Corning, N.Y., New Hampshire, Washington, D.C., South Carolina, Puerto Rico and Colorado were all represented. Our ages ranged from 20 to 70, our sobriety from 7 months to 22 years.

Young Charles (Texas) told of his new feeling for his 3-year old daughter. Frances (Midland) told of 57 hospitalizations.

Again we witnessed the beautiful fact that A.A. can and does work for alcoholics of every age, nationality and background.

**HOW  
A. A.  
GROWS**

How fast is A.A. growing? Is growth more rapid than it was? This chart shows the number of groups and members as reported each year to the General Service Office.

The General Service Board's P.I. Committee is currently using the figure 425,000 as the approximate total membership.

This figure was determined as a result of a special census survey.

Year	Active Membership	Groups
1935	2	
1940	1,400	50
1945	12,986	556
1950	96,475	3,527
1955	131,619	5,927
1960	151,604	8,211
1961	162,037	8,615
1962	176,474	9,305
1963	189,702	10,070
1964	209,434	10,956
1965	217,967	11,752
1966	232,105	12,444
1967	251,615	13,279
1968	263,026	14,154
1969	285,731	15,030

# Special Gifts to G.S.O.

ALABAMA		
Alabama & N.W. Fl. State Conv.	\$ 201.45	
ARKANSAS		
State Convention	237.64	
CALIFORNIA		
18th So. Ca. Conv.	6,003.49	
Long Beach: Harbor Area Annu. Traditions Banq.	292.61	
Southern Area: G.S.O. Workshop of Dists. 5, 6 & 12	10.00	
COLORADO		
Sterling: 3rd Legacy Comm.	500.00	
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA		
Area G.S. Assembly	200.00	
FLORIDA		
Brevard Co. Intergroup Grat. Mtg.	20.00	
Palm Beach Co.: Grat. Dinner	1,749.18	
South Fla. Dist. 11 Gratitude Dinner	71.65	
Gratitude Dinner Dist. 7	1,189.61	
ILLINOIS		
Chicago & Suburban A.A. Intergroup 15 Annu. Dinner	222.07	
MAINE		
District 2	10.00	
MASSACHUSETTS		
Mass. Conf.	200.00	
MISSOURI		
St. Louis: 29th Annu. Banq.	253.02	
Women's Conf.	100.00	
Western Mo. Fall Conf.	125.00	
NEBRASKA		
A.A. State Comm.	100.00	
NEVADA		
So. Nv. Roundup	200.00	
NEW HAMPSHIRE		
State Assembly	100.00	
NEW JERSEY		
Mt. Holly: 5th Southern N.J. Conv.	200.00	
No. N.J. Panel	1,000.00	
NEW YORK		
Niagara Frontier Area, Central Comm.	100.00	
S.E. N.Y. Area Assm.	750.00	
Hudson-Mohawk-Berkshire Area Conf.	200.00	
PENNSYLVANIA		
E. Pa. Conf.	537.35	
OHIO		
Youngstown: N.E. Ohio G.S. Comm.	44.40	
WASHINGTON		
Tacoma, Wa. Area Assem.	75.00	
WEST VIRGINIA		
Bluestone Retreat	150.00	
CANADA		
B.C.: Bayshore, Sept. Mtg.	74.00	
B.C.: Yukon 1969 Assm.	216.21	
Manitoba: 25th Annv. Roundup	462.50	
Manitoba: River Gp. 5th Annu. Roundup	40.00	
Ontario: Brant Erie Dist Conf.	22.20	
Ontario: Dunville Go Forth A.A. Conv.	92.50	
Ontario: Georgian Bay Area Conf.	85.00	
Ontario: Ottawa Central Comm.	185.00	
Ontario: Quinte Dist. Conference	25.22	
Sask.: Plenty: Oklahoma Birthday Party Area	102.00	
Sask.: Prov. Conf. Comm.	23.00	
Sask.: Saskatoon: Oklahoma Birthday Supper, Area 8	37.00	

## CONVENTION (from p. 1)

word, the Convention theme for '70, UNITY.

Ask anybody who witnessed such an A.A. gathering in Cleveland (1950), St. Louis (1955), Long Beach (1960), or Toronto (1965). Then quickly ask your group G.S.R. or secretary for the registration-with-housing forms. Send to P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Post Office, New York, N.Y. 10017.

## DETROIT TO JOHANNESBURG

It happened to Fred D., in Randburg, South Africa. Shortly after his 5th Anniversary, he was transferred there—11,000 miles from the Glenwood group, Wyandotte, Mich. As No. 6 approached, Fred

was feeling forlorn and forgotten. But at his new African group's meeting, there was a cake with lettering: "Happy Birthday Fred from your Glenwood Group," and a card signed by 72 A.A. friends back home.

We are told that such love *does* exist outside A.A. Probably so. Maybe few of us ever learned to *give* it, until A.A. taught us.

*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. (Check should accompany order.)*

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

## A.A. CALENDAR

### JANUARY

- 23-25 — *Durham, N.C.*, 3rd Tar Heel Mid-Winter Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., Box 2271, Durham.
- 24 — *Bedford, N.H.*, 3rd Annu. Mid-Winter Banquet. Write: N.H.S.A., Box 182, Portsmouth, N.H.
- 30-31 — *Blytheville, Ar.*, 13th Annu. Tri-State Coon Supper. Write: Chm., Box 401 Blytheville.

### FEBRUARY

- 20-22 — *El Paso, Tx.*, El Paso Jamboree. Write: Jamboree Secy., Box 1405, El Paso.
- 20-22 — *Louisville, Ky.*, 19th Ky. State Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., Box 13082, Louisville.
- 21 — *Philadelphia, Pa.*, Intergroup 30th Anniv. Dinner & Dance. Write: Anniv. Chm., 2202 St. James St., Phila.
- 21-22 — *Nanaimo, B.C., Cn.*, 2nd Annu. Nanaimo Roundup. Write: Roundup Chairman, Box 15, Nanaimo.
- 22 — *Miramar, Santurce, P. R.*, Annu. Puerto Rican Conv. Write: Secy., 710 Anon St., Highland Park, Rio Piedras, P.R.
- 27-Mar. 1 — *St. Louis, Mo.*, 6th Women's Annu. Conf. Write: Chm., 3932 Botanical, St. Louis.

### MARCH

- 14 — *C.F.B. Petawawa, Ont. Cn.*, 4th Annu. Roundup. Write: Roundup Chm., Box 1, Petawawa.
- 20-22 — *New Orleans, La.*, 27th Anniv. & 3rd Annu. Conv. Write: Conv. Chm., Box 73042, Metairie, La.
- 20-22 — *Lamar, Co.*, Spring Reg. Conf. Write: Conf. Sec., Rt. 2, Box 109H, Berthoud, Co.
- 27-29 — *French Lick, In.*, Indiana A.A. Conf. Write: Conv. Chm., 201 Red River Rd., New Castle.
- 27-29 — *Port Elizabeth, C.P., So. Africa.*, Port Elizabeth Annu. Conv. Write: Conv. 1970, P.O. Box Posbus 5134 Walmer, Port Elizabeth, C.P.
- 27-30 — *Sydney, Australia*, 25th Anniv. Easter Conv. Write: Conv. Comm., Central Service Office, 81 York St., Sydney 2000.

### APRIL

- 3- 5 — *Atlantic City, N.J.*, Phila. 3rd Intergroup Roundup. Write: Roundup Secy., 2202 St. James St., Philadelphia, Pa.
- 3- 5 — *Ithaca, N.Y.*, Central N.Y. 1970 Area Conf. Write: Conf. Chm., Box 212, Ithaca.
- 10-12 — *Toronto, Ont., Cn.*, 20th Annu. Ontario Regional Conf. Write: Comm. Hdqrs., 2 Gerrard St. W., Toronto.
- 24-26 — *Westport, Co. Mayo, Ireland*, 13th All-Ireland Conv. Write: Hon. Sec., A.A. Westport, Bridge St., Westport.