

■ G.S.O.'s Evolving Web Site Undergoes Another Overhaul

The redesigned A.A. Web site of the General Service Office (www.aa.org) debuted on January 1, nine years after G.S.O.'s first Web site appeared on the Internet. That long-ago site was a bare bones affair, reflecting in large part the technology of the day. "It was a simple public information tool, containing answers to basic questions about A.A., along with a few pamphlets," says Daniel Brown, desktop/Web manager (nonalcoholic), who did the latest redesign.

This is the fourth redesign for Daniel, who started working full time at G.S.O. in 1995, and who in 2003 gave the Web site its previous overhaul.

Daniel is also in charge of the desktop publishing operation at G.S.O., which includes layout of newsletters, pamphlets and other material, and he also doubles as photographer. As part of prepress, Daniel prepares the discs that are sent to printers, making sure that the images, fonts, colors, etc. are correct. More and more though, and especially over the past year, work on the Web site takes up most of his time.

Visits to aa.org have grown, along with the Internet. In 1999, the site logged 730,000 visits, up from 400,000 the previous year. Now, monthly visits top a quarter of a million.

According to Greg M., the general manager at G.S.O., "the Internet is revolutionizing the way G.S.O. operates. In just a few years, incoming e-mails have grown to the point where they account for more than 80% of the communication directed to this office."

Because staff members mainly respond via e-mail — rather than by letter or over the phone — costs have declined, says Greg. "The Internet makes us more accessible and more efficient. We will continue to expand the site, though whatever we post on it has to respond to an established A.A. need. The goal is to make A.A.'s valuable message more available — that's the whole idea behind it."

The A.A. World Services Board has overall responsibility for the Web site through its Services Committee, and comments from A.A. members visiting the site are a main

source of input on changes to be made. Says Daniel, "They tell us what they would like to see on the site or any problems they may have finding things. We are constantly adding material; it's always growing," he says, which makes logical organization of the site and navigation tools critical. Information may be added based on the needs of the various staff assignments at G.S.O., such as Cooperation With the Professional Community or Public Information.

Illustrating how the Web site has become the favored way for A.A. members and others to contact G.S.O., 70% of those attending the A.A. International Convention in Toronto last summer registered online. And of the more than 2,000 inquiries to the Cooperation With the Professional Community desk in a recent year, 1,334 came via the Web site.

Overall, the site contains a vast amount of material, including current and back issues of *Box 4-5-9* and *About A.A.* (the newsletter for professionals), information for the media, answers for those wondering whether or not they might have a drinking problem, a history of A.A., information for those in service, and forms for listing groups at G.S.O. The Big Book is also there.

Meanwhile, the site continues to be offered in English, Spanish and French, and each language now has its own home page.

"The primary purpose of the redesign has been usability. Basically, we want to arrange the content in a way that makes it easy for visitors to find what they're looking for," says Daniel, who adds that "previously, information that was important was sometimes buried inside the site."

The old Web site had three portals — "About A.A.," "Service for Members," and "Archives" — while the new one has six, including one providing information on how to find an A.A. meeting.

"We have software in place that tells us which areas or pages are most visited, how people are using the site. This information helped us with decisions on the redesign, and on changes we'll make in the future," says Daniel.





Daniel Brown (nonalcoholic), G.S.O.'s desktop/Web manager

Technology dictates much regarding the type of content posted on a Web site and how a user navigates it. The old site amounted to HTML pages linked to each other, while the new site is database-driven with a software programming language that better responds to requests by visitors.

“The Web site has come a long way,” notes Daniel. “It amazes me how we started with nothing more than text and pictures and now we have flash animation and video PSAs. People can do online registration for Regional Forums. The site is more interactive and efficient, and it will continue to grow.”

■ Résumés for Trustees Election due Jan. 1, 2007

Two new Class B (alcoholic) trustees — from the Southwest and Northeast regions — will be nominated at the General Service Conference in April 2007. Résumés must be received at G.S.O. no later than January 1, 2007, and must be submitted by delegates only.

The new Southwest regional trustee will succeed Gary K., of Parker, Colorado; the next trustee from the Northeast will follow Michael P., of Fairhaven, Vermont.

A sound A.A. background is a basic qualification for Class B trustees. Ten years of continuous sobriety is desirable but not mandatory. Candidates should be active in both local and area A.A. affairs; and, because trustees serve the entire Fellowship, they require the background and the willingness to make decisions on matters of broad policy that affect A.A. as a whole.

It is also important that trustee candidates understand the commitment of time required. Trustees are expected

to attend three quarterly board weekends, with meetings often scheduled from Thursday afternoon through Monday morning, and the General Service Conference, which lasts for one week. Often trustees are asked to attend a Regional Forum weekend. In addition, regional trustees are usually asked to serve two years on either the A.A.W.S. or Grapevine Corporate Boards, which meet more frequently than the General Service Board.

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

■ What Is a Regional Forum and Why Should I Go?

Regional Forums, which originated in 1975, are weekend-long informational gatherings that bring together A.A. members with representatives from the General Service Board, A.A. World Services Inc., the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board, the Grapevine staff, and the General Service Office staff.

Four Regional Forums are held each year, spread among the eight regions that make up the U.S./Canada service structure. In addition, regions may request a Special Forum, which are scaled-down versions of Regional Forums that are normally held in some urban areas as well as in remote and sparsely populated areas.

All Forums are designed as sharing sessions, opportunities for exchanging information and asking questions. There are presentations and workshops during the weekend, with agendas decided jointly by the regional trustee, area delegates, and G.S.O. There is no registration fee for a Forum, and no formal actions result.

A recent gathering was the Southwest Regional Forum that met in December in Rogers, Arkansas. It attracted almost 500 participants, some of whom had been to a Forum before, and some who were sober only a matter of months and had little idea what to expect.

With five months of sobriety, Jeremy M. credited his sponsor with prompting him to attend. Jeremy drove two and a half hours in a car with four others from the Sherwood Men’s Group in Sherwood, Arkansas, near Little Rock. The one with the most sobriety had six months.

“My sponsor says it’s good to get involved, and this Forum was the first opportunity to do that. Also, we were all kind of curious. There’s more to it than I expected,” said Jeremy. “I like how it’s run on the suggestions of the members and how G.S.O. is not a governing body.”

Another attendee, Bill K. of Hummonsville, Missouri, was at his second Forum. “I was told early in A.A. to stick with the winners, and here we have a whole room of

them,” said Bill. “If you want to know what A.A. does, you have to go where A.A. meets; these are the events to hear what’s going on.”

Following presentations, members of the audience ask questions and offer comments. A.A. members going to the mike at that point were addressing subjects ranging from the revised “A.A. Group” pamphlet, relief for A.A. members and groups in areas hit by Hurricane Katrina, the type of articles appearing in the Grapevine, and the finances of the General Service Office.

Another participant, Mona M., had driven five hours with two other women from St. Louis to reach Rogers. She has two and a half years of sobriety and was attending her first Forum. “I am the G.S.R. for my home group and felt I needed to be more informed,” said Mona.

Her home group, the Gratitude Hour in St. Louis, paid for her trip. Many area committees, districts and groups will help defray the expenses of members representing them at Forums.

“This Forum has been very informative,” said Mona. “I am interested in the structure, and the way things work. What I really like is that people present their opinions honestly; they want to know how things work. I like the interaction.”

That was also the feeling of Donna B., a district committee member (D.C.M.) from District 20, Area 38, who lives an hour west of St. Louis. “I’ve always wanted to come to one of these. What impresses me here is G.S.O. being so willing to answer questions, being so accessible. I thought G.S.O. would sit on the panel and just give reports.”

For Gene, who is 12 years sober and a D.C.M. from St. Louis, attending a Forum “is the thing to do. I’ve been in service a long time and been talking to the people from G.S.O. for a long time, and now I am finally able to put faces to the names.”

Harold C., who is from Blue Springs, Missouri, and who came with a contingent from his home group, was also attending his first Regional Forum. “I didn’t realize how important our nonalcoholic trustees are,” he said.

Harold also said he thought that the “G.S.O. budget is small for such a widespread organization. It shows that G.S.O. takes seriously its responsibility to spend our money wisely.” Harold’s sobriety date is May 2, 2003. “I have been in the program since the early 80s. I struggled but think that with God’s grace this may be the recovery that I was looking for.”

Nora B., who has been sober in A.A. for 13 years and is the alternate delegate for Area 4, has been to the last three Southwest Regional Forums. “I have been wearing out my group announcing the Regional Forum the past six months. Got a couple of the women I am sponsoring to come along — I don’t like to drive alone,” said Nora, who lives in North Little Rock. She sees the Forum as an opportunity to exchange information between her area and the A.A. service structure.

A past delegate attending the Forum, Conley B., said he has been to every Southwest Regional Forum since 1983. “I always learn something new, some insight that strengthens my program, as well as making me better able to serve my home group, district and area — and, HP willing, I don’t intend to miss one.” Conley, who is 25 years sober, comes from Redfield, Arkansas. “As I see the new people come and their curiosity and intelligence, I get a good feeling that A.A. is in good hands for the years to come,” he said.

Attendees at all Forums are mailed a Final Report, which includes the questions and responses to questions from attendees. The Southwest Forum Report includes over 100 questions from A.A. members.

There have been 115 Regional Forums since 1975 and 25 Special Forums. The next scheduled Forum is a Special Forum for Native North Americans, which meets in Banning, California, May 20-21. The Pacific region will hold its Forum June 23-25 in Seattle at the Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport.

■ A.A. Meetings Thrive At Annual Desert Festival

“Burning Man,” part art festival, part happening, is held the week before Labor Day and takes place on an ancient lakebed in the Black Rock Desert in Nevada, 120 miles north of Reno. A large wooden sculpture of a man is burnt to culminate the event, which attracts about 35,000 participants.

In the midst of this sun-baked tent city of outlandish art installations, three A.A. groups hold meetings daily.

“I’ve been going for four years, and I was very surprised to find A.A. there,” says Fred S., a member from Silver City, Nevada, with 31 years of sobriety in A.A.

“I want to get the word out that A.A. exists at Burning Man,” says Fred. The Burning Desires Group holds two meetings a day for the seven days of the festival. “I’ve never been to a meeting I didn’t like, but I love every meeting I’ve ever been to at Burning Desires, where we stress the Responsibility Declaration.”

The event is “commerce free,” meaning cash transactions are forbidden. Participants rely, instead, on a “gift economy.” Says Fred, “the whole town is different, a different way to live for a week. I cried when I left.”

The two other groups at Burning Man are Friends of Bill W. and Camp Stella. The three groups stagger their meeting times to avoid overlapping, reports Marvin D., who first went to the event in 1999 and has gone every year since. Marvin, who has 16 years of sobriety, estimates attendance at the meetings at between a few dozen and 80.

“We just put up a sign for ‘friends of Bill W.’ and word got around pretty good,” says Marvin.

■ Creating a French Voice For A.A.'s Literature

“Translating, be it for A.A. or anyone else, requires accuracy and precision,” says Lise P., who has been translating A.A. literature into French since 1971, when she was nine months sober. Lise headed the Montreal office until its closing a few years ago, and from that city she and her partner, Fern L., continue, now as independent contractors, to do the bulk of French translating for Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

Fern worked for many years in public relations for multinationals, and as a consultant, where he wrote in both English and French, composing press releases, speeches, brochures, and annual reports.

“It is always important to know the level of language of the writer,” says Lise. “For example, Bill W. was quite a personage and expressed himself on many levels. He was down-to-earth, or went on flights of poetry. We have to keep up with his personality; otherwise, the translation would lose a lot of its charm and meaning. Translating a financial report is another matter.”

The workload has increased over the years as it has become policy to translate more and more service material into French. “When there is a Regional or Special Forum in French-speaking Canada, there are many documents to translate, usually in a hurry. The *Final Conference Report* is something that needs to be translated in a relatively short time, same as for *Box 4-5-9* and other newsletters,” says Lise.

French translations of A.A. literature got started in Quebec with the formation of the committee “Éditions françaises” in the 1960s. Once a piece was translated, members of the committee would take it around to French-speaking meetings. When they had sold enough copies, they would use the money to undertake another translation project.

The effort eventually floundered, though, and the committee lost the license that had been granted it by A.A.W.S.

A few years later, in 1971, a new committee was formed under the supervision of the four area delegates. A.A.W.S. agreed to reinstate the license to translate.

“I was nine months sober and became part of the com-

mittee,” says Lise. “I later became in charge of the translation and the revision of the literature. Slowly, we managed to translate almost all the books and pamphlets. The areas, through their delegates, made the decisions as to the priority of translations. In 1979, the committee was incorporated under the name Publications françaises (1979) Inc., and I was named general manager in 1983.”

Improvements and expansion of the Montreal office followed over the years as the work of translation grew. In 1999, A.A.W.S. created its own subsidiary, SMAA (Services Mondiaux des Alcooliques Anonymes), which replaced Publications françaises. In June 2003, SMAA was discontinued and, when the Montreal office closed, the work of publishing and selling French literature moved to New York.

Lise worked as a journalist before getting sober (“I would cover only events where alcohol was served”) and has brought those writing skills to her work for Alcoholics Anonymous.

“Humor and suffering always flirt with each other, so the translation work becomes a wonderful challenge,” she says. “A translation is never finished without two or three revisions. My writing style and Fern’s complement each other.”

According to Fern, “one thing we consider when working on a translation is there may be more than one way to say this, but what did the author really mean?”

“Being an A.A. member myself, translating for A.A. with Lise is like having your own A.A. group at home, full-time, with meetings 24/7. Also, we have gotten a better understanding of the importance of A.A., not only in the U.S./Canada Conference, but around the world.”

Because their translations are used internationally, says Fern, “we have to consider the reader in French Africa, in Belgium, in Switzerland, in France, or in Tahiti.” To ensure compliance on this point, “we have someone from France who revises the text to make sure that regionalisms of any country are avoided.”

Lise and Fern field regular requests for translations from the General Service Office New York on such things as e-mails, letters received by staff members, Web site updates, and even Power Point presentations.

The variety of their work keeps things interesting, says Fern, who adds: “long live the written word.”



A French Big Book and early French pamphlets.

■ Behind the Scenes at the General Service Conference

If you think of the General Service Conference as a comet that flashes into view for a week every spring, think again. The fact is that the work of the Conference, which serves as the group conscience of A.A. in the U.S. and Canada, goes on all year long.

Rick W., the General Service Office staff member who currently serves as Conference coordinator, is the contact for all 136 voting Conference members, including the 93 delegates from the United States and Canada. The Conference, he explains, “is responsible for the leadership that once rested on the shoulders of our founders.”

This year’s Conference will be held April 23-29 at the Crowne Plaza Times Square, New York, as it has for the past 14 years. “Like putting together the myriad pieces of a giant puzzle,” Rick explains, “it’s an enormous, fascinating and absorbing challenge. When I joined the G.S.O. staff six years ago, on another assignment of course, the sweeping scope of the Conference gave me a sense of awe and responsibility to A.A. as a whole. I felt I could see God working through our mix of fallible alcoholics to come up with a group conscience that was inspired.”

Rick, who also serves as secretary of the Conference

Agenda Committee and the trustees’ Conference Committee, corresponds regularly with the delegates throughout the year. They are encouraged to submit their concerns for Conference sharing. Keeping track of the delegates, who each serve a two-year term, and feeding up-to-date information to the G.S.O. data base is no easy task because, in any given year, half the delegates rotate out and new ones take their place.

The logistics of staging the Conference are at times mind-spinning, even for John Kirwin Jr., who in 2002 retired after 26 years at G.S.O. as nonalcoholic assistant controller/business administrator. John still brings his experience to bear as events consultant for the Conference and for the weekend meetings of the general service board held quarterly in New York each year. “After all this time,” he says, “I feel like an honorary member of A.A. Over the years I’ve known people who needed A.A. and have been able to steer literature and other help their way. The way A.A. functions, according to the Seventh Tradition of self-support, still amazes me.”

During Conference week, John reports, “we use numerous guest rooms for the voting members and support staff and take over 75-85 percent of the meeting rooms that

accommodate the 11 Conference committees and various workshops and regional meetings, not to mention dining facilities and a workroom for the secretaries. All areas—guest rooms, baths, eating and meeting areas—have good access for the handicapped. If a speaker needs a ramp to ascend to the dais, we’re at the ready.”

Each of the meeting rooms, John adds, “measures approximately 500 square feet. During the week we use two ballrooms at once for the general sessions, school-room style—two others are utilized for lunches and dinners. However, all four ballrooms are used for the opening dinner—comprising a huge area that covers around 7,000 square feet.”

Food is a big item “We serve lunch and dinner every day, though on Friday the delegates are on their own for dinner,” says John.

“The Conference officially ends Friday, before dinner, but a farewell brunch is served Saturday morning before everyone scatters.

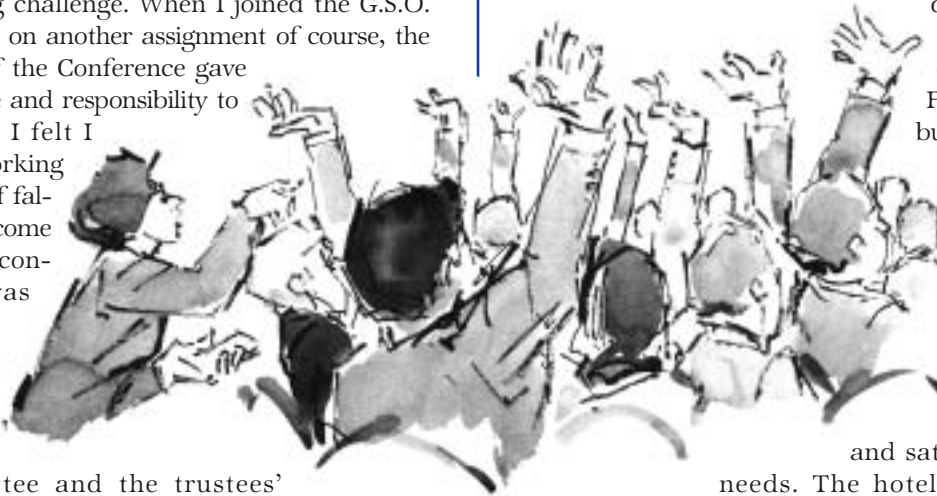
We work closely with the hotel’s food and beverage department to come up with tempting menus and satisfy special dietary

needs. The hotel staff is carefully

instructed to use no alcohol whatsoever in its food preparation, and to be prepared to serve, during breaks alone, about 4,000 cups of coffee, tea and decaf and close to 2,000 bottles of soda and water. This figure does not account for all the beverages served during meals.”

After 14 years at the Crowne Plaza, John says, “coming back is like old home week. Some of the headwaiters who were there back in 1992 are still around and very friendly. They’re familiar with the trustees and staff—they remember who’s a vegetarian, who likes ketchup. If one of the A.A. people had a child or grandchild the year before, or a kid entering college, the hotel staffers don’t forget. They’ll inquire, ‘How’s the baby?’ . . . ‘Is your boy making out okay?’ Their warmth makes the A.A.s and other attendees feel right at home.”

From ordering microphones to making sure that there is a blue-and-white banner waving this year’s theme—“Sponsorship, Service and Self-Support in a Changing World”—the Conference is a team effort, and this year most of those who make it happen are seasoned hands. Nonalcoholic financial secretary Frank Segui has worked at G.S.O. in various capacities for 25 years and as staff



assistant on the Conference assignment for more than a dozen of them. The people at the Conference “are a great bunch,” Frank says, “and they have a good sense of humor.”

Frank has a soft spot for two events in particular: At the end of the Conference on Friday, he relates, “the names of the rotating delegates are put in a basket—then the ‘winner’ is picked and given the Conference theme banner, all folded up, to take home. And on Saturday at the closing brunch, the trustees who are rotating out have a chance to speak. They express gratitude for the chance to serve A.A. and tell what it has meant to them personally. It’s a heartwarming time.”

Yee Tully, staff assistant to Rick W. on the Conference desk, came to G.S.O. in 1989 and is spending her sixth year on the Conference assignment. “As a nonalcoholic,” she says, “I find the whole event fascinating, especially as I see how Advisory Actions of the Conference come about. It’s seeing true democracy in action.” Yee likens the process of rotation to a carousel: “Both the trustees and the delegates rotate out and new ones come in, much as members of the G.S.O. staff rotate assignments every two years. They move to the rhythms of A.A. while we assistants stay rooted—and dependable, I hope—in the background.” Yee adds that she didn’t know how the Conference worked behind the scenes until she became part of the process. “In a way,” she muses, “it’s like hosting a great big party, but it’s also sort of like Congress—everybody is there to conduct the business of A.A.”

On the agenda for the 2006 Conference are presentation/discussion topics in line with the Conference themes. They include (Sponsorship) “Changes in the Alcoholic Coming to A.A.”; (Service) “Performing Service Without Expectations”; and (Self-Support) “An Informed Group Conscience.” The workshop will be entitled “Passing It On in a Changing World.”

The costs of bringing all the delegates to New York, not to mention the Conference itself, are high. Each of the areas in the U.S./Canada contributes \$1,200 annually, and some 50 percent make an additional contribution. The balance is covered by the General Fund of the General Service Board. Thus, no delegate is kept from participating in the Conference because of financial difficulties.

Many spouses or “significant others” accompany (at their own expense) delegates to New York. About ten A.A. and Al-Anon hosts are on hand to provide hospitality and escort the visitors on tours of New York landmarks, from the Empire State Building to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

“But for the Conference participants,” Rick observes, “there’s little time for sightseeing. These A.A.s are totally committed to the work at hand. They may be exhausted, but they’re there till the last bell.”

■ G.S.O. and GV Remember Midge M. and Retha G.

In February, the G.S.O. and Grapevine offices lost two past trusted servants. Midge M., who was a G.S.O. staff member from 1962 to 1977, died on February 6 in Pavilion, Florida. Retha G., managing editor of the Grapevine from 1978 to 1987, passed away in Destin, Florida, on the 17th. Both will be greatly missed by all who knew them.

Midge served as a staff member for many years before becoming administrative assistant to then-general manager Bob H. One of her major contributions was summarizing the past minutes of the Alcoholic Foundation and the General Service Board.

Dennis Manders (nonalcoholic), G.S.O.’s controller at that time, recalls Midge as being a private person, a loner type, with a great sense of humor. A retired staff member, Betty L. from Sebastian, Florida, recalls Midge telling how she came to A.A. Like many of us, she had doubts about whether she belonged, and stated her concern to the A.A. group. The group suggested that Midge make the cookies for the meeting every week, which kept her going to meetings and staying sober for the first year. So Midge said it was the cookies that kept her sober.

In her thank you note to the trustees when she retired, Midge wrote: “I want to thank each and every one for your special friendship and support over the years. . . . My time at G.S.O. seems to have flown by but it has left me with a heartfelt of golden memories.”

Retha came to the Grapevine from Ohio, where she got sober, became active in A.A. service, and attended the Conference as Panel 25 delegate from Central Southeast Ohio. During her time as delegate she was a member of the Conference Grapevine Committee, and with that background was a logical choice when the magazine needed a new chief executive. As a result of her unique experience, Retha placed great importance on strengthening ties between the magazine and the service structure as a whole — her first project after she came to the office was writing personal letters to every delegate, reminding them of the magazine and suggesting ways to use it. Magazine circulation rose significantly during her tenure, and she was also instrumental in the development of many magazine-related materials, including the *Best of the Grapevine* anthologies, *The Language of the Heart: Bill W.’s Grapevine Writings*, and a number of audio cassette tapes. Originally from West Virginia, Retha was known for her southern hospitality, and friends and fellow workers remember her informal get-togethers featuring fried chicken and all the fixings.

Retha’s two children, Kathy and Rob, were never far from her mind, and it was because of them that she first knew she had to get sober. Eleanor W., G.S.O.’s managing editor, recalls Retha talking about how she saw the words “hope is found here” on a chalkboard at her first meeting — hope that eventually led her to accept and fulfill the challenge offered by the Grapevine.

■ As La Viña Turns 10 and The Grapevine 62, Some Thoughts on Their Future

La Viña, first published in 1996, was welcomed by Spanish-speaking members throughout North and South America and Europe. As La Viña gets ready to celebrate its tenth anniversary in June, the initial circulation of 6,000 has grown to nearly 10,000. Additionally, reports editor Hernan M., in the last two years, two CDs with recorded stories from La Viña were made available with another due to come out next summer. Also, the the Spanish-language section of the Grapevine Web site has been expanded. Hernan said he “will be encouraging R.L.V.s (La Viña’s equivalent of the Gv.R., or Grapevine representative), to encourage their group members to send in articles and subscribe to the magazine.”

Such success was hardly a foregone conclusion. In recommending publication of a Spanish edition of the Grapevine back in 1995, the General Service Conference stipulated in its Advisory Action: If, after five years, the magazine “is determined to be no longer feasible, publication [should] be discontinued.” Then, in 2001, with no such stipulation, the Conference enthusiastically supported continuation of La Viña, which had already proved its salt in reaching Spanish-speaking alcoholics and making them feel at home in the Fellowship.

Always seeking more effective ways to carry the A.A. message, the editors and directors of La Viña and its venerable sister, the Grapevine—which will turn 62 in June—participated in a general sharing session, chaired by Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee Allen L. Ault, Ed.D., at a quarterly meeting of the General Service Board last October. Addressing the question “Is the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., fulfilling our Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service in a changing world?” presenter Robin B., executive editor of the Grapevine, shared, “There is no doubt in my mind that the Grapevine and La Viña are powerful tools of personal recovery. They save lives—not because of anything the staff does but because they are made up of stories from alcoholics who have gotten sober and changed their lives with the help of A.A.”

The magazines remind us, Robin said, that “what holds A.A. together is unity, not uniformity. But I have real concerns about how well they are fulfilling A.A.’s Third Legacy of Service.” Detailing these concerns, she traced the evolution of the Grapevine from the International Journal of A.A. to Our Meeting in

Print, and gave statistics showing how “articles by leaders in law, religion, medicine, journalism” and more have slowly disappeared from the pages of the Grapevine.

“Consequently,” she explained, the magazines “have become an excellent meeting in print for alcoholics already inside the program, on its brink and, to a lesser extent, for nonalcoholics already committed to or curious about the Fellowship. But they are not doing much to carry the message to those outside”—concerned professionals or individuals still seeking help for their drinking problems. She suggested this could be “a problem the publications may share with the Fellowship at large.”

Asking “What can we do about this?” Robin suggested several possibilities, including: “Report more fully on our vibrant society and its impact on the world. Welcome articles from nonalcoholics who can help carry the A.A. message. Encourage our trustees, staff, directors, and appointed committee members to use the Grapevine and La Viña as means of communicating with people inside and outside A.A.”

A.A. Grapevine director Dorothy H. then told how she had enlisted the help of a general service representative (G.S.R.) to take the pulse of a district on the question “Is our service structure using the Grapevine and La Viña as effectively as it might?” The G.S.R., noting that five out of 15 groups represented hold regular Grapevine meetings, reported that the district is using the Grapevine in Treatment Facilities work and encouraging its use in prisons—but that it is not seen as a service tool although supported by the district.

Dorothy further expressed her belief that La Viña, too, is underused as a Twelfth Step tool. In part, she considered, this is because “its place in our service structure is ambiguous; it is published by the Grapevine but at the present time is funded by the General Fund of the General Service Board,” inadvertently creating the type of “double-headed business or policy management” explicitly warned



against in Concept X (*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, p. 46).

“La Viña,” Dorothy said, “is certainly the most effective mechanism we have for hearing the voice of the Spanish-speaking member. It would be more effective if we translated the content from Spanish to English so those of us who are unfortunately not bilingual could hear these voices too, but we would have to dedicate dollars for this important service.” Noting that English-speaking A.A.s “can write for La Viña too, even if we do not speak or write Spanish,” she added, “I have no doubt that if [A.A. co-founder] Bill W. were alive today, he certainly would be publishing in La Viña.”

■ Making A.A. Accessible To the Alcoholic with Special Needs

In South Florida a disabled young newcomer uses his coded meeting book to find an A.A. meeting with wheelchair access. In Washington, D.C., a blind woman takes the arm of an A.A. member who is accompanying her to a meeting of her home group. And in California a house-bound member smiles as three A.A. friends arrive for their weekly meeting in his bedroom. They smile too, for they have looked forward to the moment as much as he.

Once rare, such scenarios are becoming commonplace as A.A.s across the U.S./Canada, along with the General Service Office in New York, step up their efforts to make A.A. accessible to alcoholics with special needs. At G.S.O., Gayle S. R. serves on the Nominating/Special Needs assignment. The Special Needs piece of the assignment was recently transferred from Group Services, she explains, “to focus more time and effort on communication with Special Needs/Accessibilities committees in the Fellowship.”

In the early days, individual A.A.s assisted members with special needs on a one-to-one basis, but not in an organized way. Then, in the late 1970s, numerous requests for information on how to help the hard-of-hearing alcoholic spurred G.S.O. to develop “A.A. Guidelines on Carrying the Message to the Deaf Alcoholic.” Several years later “A.A. Guidelines on Serving Alcoholics with Special Needs” came about as part of an effort to support local A.A. members to assist alcoholics with a broader spectrum of challenges. And today there is a wealth of service material for alcoholics with special needs—from the Big Book, Twelve and Twelve and other A.A. literature in Braille to closed-captioned videos and easy-to-read literature, much of it translated into Spanish, French and other languages.

In the 1980s Eastern Missouri and Northern Florida, among other areas, were pioneers in forming Special

Needs committees. And in Northwest Pennsylvania there was a fledgling Special Needs/Accessibilities Committee, but it was better known as Friends of Rita because, explained member Charlie B. at the time, “the Twelfth Step work we do—taking meetings to house-bound members—started with her, when she was too sick to get around.” And for years many house-bound alcoholics have gained strength from participating in the bimonthly global newsletter *Loners-Internationalists Meeting (LIM)* as “Homers.”

Today, Gayle points out, “there are approximately 39 Special Needs committees on the area level and 94 on the district level, all working diligently to reach alcoholics facing various accessibility difficulties. Much has been done—much more is left to do.”

Michael N., who chairs the Southern Wisconsin Special Needs/Accessibility Committee and is blind, couldn’t agree more. Michael reports that “approximately eight districts are represented by our Special Needs committee, which is strong and getting stronger. Last year the committee developed a self-evaluation document so groups could take their own accessibility inventory regarding such questions as: Is there handicapped parking near the entrance to your meeting place? Is there wheelchair access to an entrance? How many steps, if any? Where there are stairs, is there also an elevator? Are there bathrooms on the same floor as the meeting room? Can they accommodate a wheelchair? Do any deaf or hard-of-hearing members belong to your group and, if they do, is someone available to translate what’s said into American Sign Language (ASL)?

“The idea,” Michael explains, “is to raise the consciousness of our members. They need to understand that something’s wrong or missing before they can start to fix it. People’s hearts are in the right place, but when it comes to those with special needs, it’s generally ‘out of sight, out of mind.’”

In Hamden, Connecticut, Rolando P., chair of the Special Needs committee, says each week there are 1,545 meetings throughout the state, and about 25 percent of them are wheelchair-accessible. He points out that “although we have no A.A.s with special needs on our committee, I hope that sometime soon we will have such a person. And meanwhile we feel we are making progress. If some member needs transportation, we will find an A.A. member to volunteer, and right now we’re working to find an ASL signer for one of our meetings.”

The Special Needs committee also translates into Spanish not only A.A. literature but what is said at area meetings, roundups and other large events. “With the sophisticated equipment we have now,” Rolando marvels, “we can translate and amplify sound at the same time for people with hearing problems. Thankfully, what is good in one aspect of A.A. can be good for another.”

Recently the Special Needs desk at G.S.O. redesigned its packet of service material and pamphlets for Special Needs committees. It consists of a two-pocket folder for

the material, which includes a Special Needs catalog of audiovisual material and a variety of service pieces. As the pamphlet “Serving Alcoholics with Special Needs” states, “all alcoholics—whether deaf, blind or with other disabilities—want to be part of the whole” of A.A. “The goal is to enable every alcoholic to be an active participant in the group, without emphasizing differences.”

P.I.

■ Twelve-Day Fair Draws A.A. Volunteers from Across Western New York

Old hands and new, the volunteers come eagerly from Buffalo, Cheektowaga, Jamestown, Niagara Falls, Orchard Park and other towns and cities that dot Western New York State. “For 12 full days every August, we take turns hosting an A.A. booth at the annual Erie County Fair at Hamburg,” says Sally Ann C., who chairs the Area 50 Public Information Committee. “About a million people visit the fair,” she says, “and our goal is to extend the hand of A.A. to as many alcoholics and their families and friends as we can. We also hope to interest and inform some of the professionals in the alcoholism field who wander by.”

Last August the A.A. booth had a new attraction—a banner 8-feet-long and 2-feet-high, the words Alcoholics Anonymous emblazoned in white on a blue background with white edging. Says Sally Ann: “My husband, John, who also is in A.A., built a stand for the banner and even fixed it so we could raise and lower the banner at will.” The booth was situated in a large tent “with a nice cross-breeze,” she relates, and was chockablock with A.A. literature, including the Big Book, Twelve and Twelve, issues of the Grapevine, meeting lists and pamphlets such as “44 Questions,” “A.A. for the Woman,” “Young People and A.A.” and “Is A.A. for You?” She notes that “having packets of LifeSavers on the front burner was also a great icebreaker.”

Some people nearing the booth “looked and moved by very fast,” she says. Of those who stopped by, “nobody owned up to actually having a problem with alcohol. They would say, ‘I have a friend—or relative or coworker—who is drinking too much.’ Generally they’d ask, ‘Who are you?’ . . . ‘What do you do?’ . . . ‘Do you work for A.A.?’ . . . ‘Are you a member?’”

In response to the last question, Sally Ann affirms, “I didn’t mind sharing with visitors that I’ve been sober in the Fellowship for 20 years. In explaining that alcoholism is an illness, I told them it’s the best terminal disease I know. The medicine—A.A.—doesn’t hurt, you can’t over-

dose on it, and with it you can live a long, comfortable and rewarding life.”

Volunteers tended the booth in pairs, working in 4-hour shifts from 10 a.m.-10 p.m. throughout the 12 days of the event. “The effort, as always, required a lot of time, organization and energy,” Sally Ann says, “but coming up with committed volunteers has not been a problem. The need for assistance travels by word of mouth, and several months before the fair, we run a request for volunteers in our Buffalo Central Office newsletter *New Frontier*. We have four active intergroup/central offices in 23 districts, representing 6,000 A.A. members. Some of them see the item and call. They’re hardworking and full of enthusiasm, and quite a few phone after the fair asking to help all over again the following year.”

After the 2005 fair, Sally Ann says, “one A.A. volunteer wrote the P.I. committee, ‘Thanks for letting me be a part of this.’ It’s the way we all feel. Carrying the message at the fair is a labor of love, and if directly or indirectly we can help an alcoholic or two find recovery in A.A., that’s ample reward.”

C.P.C.

■ ‘Let’s Be Friendly With Our Friends’ on The Alcoholism Front

“Surely,” A.A. co-founder Bill W. wrote in a 1958 Grapevine article entitled “Let’s Be Friendly with Our Friends,” “we can be grateful for every agency or method that tries to solve the problem of alcoholism—whether of medicine, religion, education, or research. We can be open-minded toward all such efforts, and we can be sympathetic when the ill-advised ones fail. We can remember that A.A. itself ran for years on trial-and-error. As individual A.A.s, we can and should work with those that promise success—even a little success.”

Nearly a half century later this timeless insight would have profound impact on the thinking and direction of an A.A. service committee in Canada’s vast B.C./Yukon area.

The meeting in Kitimat, B.C., last fall of the Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community started out in the usual low-key fashion. But it wound up, as Ed W. later noted in the B.C./Yukon area newsletter, *Grassroots*, “with us having once again been rocketed into the fourth dimension of existence in Alcoholics Anonymous.”

Relates area C.P.C. committee chair Shawna G.: “The meeting opened with a member’s suggestion that we discuss some ways to improve our effectiveness in getting the A.A. message to health workers—specifically to some

treatment programs where alcohol may be encouraged in moderation and whose goal is to reduce harm to individuals and communities from the sale and use of both legal and illegal substances. A chief sticking point for numerous A.A.s is that alcoholics may be urged to moderate, not abstain from, drinking.

Shawna's suggestion that the C.P.C. committee cooperate with professionals in city-run substance-abuse programs evoked several negative responses. These, according to Ed's report, "showed how some of us have a marked intolerance toward any method of recovery from alcoholism that is not based on the A.A. model of total abstinence." He said the chair, Shawna, "guided us toward a consensus that we would likely have more success carrying the A.A. message if we set aside our judgments and 'better than' attitudes and sought ways to cooperate more with professional helpers at all levels." After all, he added, "those helpers are working on the front lines keeping people alive. We can't carry the message to dead people."

Shawna, who is 18 years sober in A.A., notes that in Bill W.'s article "Let's Be Friendly with Our Friends" (available from the General Service Office as a reprint), Bill further suggested that the answer to helping alcoholics help themselves "seems to be in education—education in schoolrooms, medical schools, among the clergy and employers, in families and the public at large." Asks Shauna: "If we don't provide information about ourselves to professionals working in other alcoholism-treatment programs, how will they ever know what A.A. really is? How else will they realize that A.A. works for more than 2 million sober alcoholics worldwide?"

Despite some initial concerns, members of the

B.C./Yukon C.P.C. committee haven't missed a beat in reaching out to professionals every way they can—from hosting informational luncheons to speaking at schools and placing literature in the courts, offices of health professionals, business firms and more—plus expanding an "adopt a doctor" project that acquaints physicians with A.A.'s meetings and program of recovery. Over time, Shawna says, "we've been guided by some rules of thumb gleaned both from our own efforts and from the collective experience of A.A. as expressed in its literature." A sampling:

- Individually we can be only an example for A.A. We can't speak for A.A.
- Recognize whatever personal prejudices we bring to the table and be guided by the group conscience.
- Explain to professionals that A.A. cooperates, but does not affiliate, with outside agencies and "has no opinion on outside issues," in the spirit of Tradition Ten—including other programs and treatment modalities.
- When carrying the message of A.A., be aware that for many sick alcoholics and those who treat them, you might be the only Big Book they see.
- As the G.S.O. service piece "Information on Alcoholics Anonymous" explains, "The primary purpose of A.A. is to carry its message of recovery to the alcoholic seeking help. . . . Together we can do what none of us could accomplish alone . . . be a source of personal experience and an ongoing support system for recovering alcoholics."
- Realize that every time you reach out to alcoholics or those in a position to help them, you are participating in your own recovery.



Order Form

Individual:

Single one-year subscriptions (\$3.50). Please send _____ individual subscriptions \$ _____

Special Group Rates:

Bulk subscriptions (\$6.00 each unit of ten). Please send _____ individual subscriptions \$ _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Mail to:

Name _____

Address _____ Apt # _____

City _____

State (Prov.) _____ Zip _____

Enclosed check or money order and make payable to:

**A.A. World Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, N.Y. 10163**

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.

April

- 1-2—Merlo, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Semana de la Literatura. Write: Ch., Bouchard 140, Merlo, Provincia de Buenos Aires; semana-delaliteratura@merlo.net.ar
- 1-2—Trieste, Italy. Seminar 2006. Write: Ch., via pendice Scoglietto, 6, 34100 Trieste, Italy
- 7-9—Peoria, Arizona. 16th Annual West Valley Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 5495, Sun City West, AZ 85376
- 7-9—Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Seventh Annual Promises Weekend Men's Getaway. Write: Ch., Box #576 4306 S. Peoria Ave., Tulsa, OK 74105
- 13-15—Managua, Nicaragua. 32^a Convención de Centroamérica y Panamá. Write: Ch., Oficina de Servicios Generales de A.A., Costado Sur Colegio María Mazzarello, Casa #8, Bo. Altagracia, Managua, Nicaragua; comite32convencionaaanic@hotmail.com
- 13-17—Hobart, Tasmania, Australia. 41st National Conv. Write: Ch., Box 133, New Town TAS 7008, Australia; www.aahobartconvention2006.org
- 14-16—San Bernardino, California. Tercer Congreso del Inland Empire. Write: Ch., 415 W. Valley Blvd. #14, Colton, CA 92324
- 21-23—Chipley, Florida. Chipley Country Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 63, Chipley, FL 32428; chipleycountryroundup@hotmail.com
- 21-23—Superior, Wisconsin. 61st Annual Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 996, Superior, WI 54880; superiorroundup@yahoo.com
- 21-23—Dauphin, Manitoba, Canada. Dauphin Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 453, Dauphin, MB R7N 2V3
- 28-30—San Jose, California. Sober & Free. Write: Ch., Box 4707, San Jose, CA 95150-4707; www.soberandfree.org
- 28-30—Boca Raton, Florida. Fourth Serenity Weekend Women's Spring Conf. Write: Ch., 8025 Gillette Ct., Orlando, FL 32836
- 28-30—Atlanta, Georgia. 16th Annual Marietta Spring Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 2018, Smyrna, GA 30081-2018; www.mariettaroundup.com
- 28-30—Baltimore, Maryland. International Men's Conf. Write: Ch., Box 643, Ellicott City, MD 21041-0643

- 28-30—Omaha, Nebraska. 19th Annual Heartland Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 6035, Omaha, NE 68106; www.heartlandroundup.org
- 28-30—Canandaigua, New York. The Conf. of the Lakes. Write: Ch. Box 982, Canandaigua, NY 14424
- 28-30—Fairlee, Vermont. 43rd Vermont Conv. Write: Ch., Box 2006, Wallingford, VT 05773
- 28-30—Mont-Tremblant, Québec, Canada. Congrès Mont-Tremblant. Write: Ch., 70 chemin Jean-Robert, Mont-Tremblant, QC J8E 1Y9
- 28-1—Puerto Santiago, Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain. XV Convivencia Regional Canaria. Write: Ch., Apartado 479, C.P. 38080 Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain; xvconvivencia_rc@yahoo.es
- 29-30—Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Weekend Big Book Study. Write: Ch., 902-15 Carlton St., Winnipeg, MB R3C 1N8

May

- 5-6—Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada. TriCities Spring Rally. Write: Ch., 1753B Pekrul Pl., Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 6A7; tricitiesrally@shaw.ca
- 5-7—Lake Henshaw, California. Sober 'N Crazy May Day Madness #21. Write: Ch., Box 1381, Bonita, CA 91908
- 5-7—Idaho Falls, Idaho. Idaho Area 18 Spring Assembly/Conv. Write: Ch., Box 50223, Idaho Falls, ID 83405
- 5-7—Grand Rapids, Minnesota. 36th Iron Range Get Together. Write: Ch., Box 32, Hibbing, MN 55746; www.area35.org

- 5-7—Albuquerque, New Mexico. 13th Annual Red Road Conv. Write: Ch., Box 9460, Albuquerque, NM 87119
- 5-7—Lake Brownwood, Texas. 23rd Annual Texas Man to Man Conf. Write: Ch., Box 140114, Irving, TX 75014-0114
- 5-7—LaCrosse, Wisconsin. 55th Annual Area 75 Spring Service Conf. Write: Ch., Box 642, LaCrosse, WI 54602-0642; www.Area75.org
- 5-7—Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada. 41st Annual Blossom Time Conv. Write: Ch., Box 831, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6V6
- 5-7—Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. 40th Annual Northwestern Ontario Area 85 Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 10073, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6T6
- 5-7—Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. Regina Round-up. Write: Ch., 207 Bentley Dr., Regina, SK S4N 5C4
- 5-7—Saint-Jacut de la Mer, Côtes-d'Armor, France. 19^{ème} Conv. Bretagne. Write: Ch., Centre Curie, 4 rue Félix le Dantec, 22000 Saint Brieuc, France
- 6-7—Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Cedar River Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 581, Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-0581
- 6-7—Victoriaville, Québec, Canada. 22^{ième} Congrès. Write: Ch., 663 Boul Gamache St., Victoriaville, QC G6P 6R8
- 12-13—Orford, Québec, Canada. 25^e Congrès Bilingue. Write: Ch., 75 des Érables St-Catherine, Magog, Québec J0B 1W0
- 12-14—Newbury, Ohio. 78th Punderson Park Conf. Write: Ch., Box 570, Newbury, OH 44065
- 18-21—Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. First Annual International Sober-Over-Sixty Conf. Write: Ch., Box 385668, Waikoloa, HI 96738

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 _____, 200 _____

Name of event: _____

Place (city, state or prov.): _____

For information, write: (exact mailing address) _____

Contact phone # (for office use only): _____

Cut along dotted line, and post this page on your group's bulletin board



18-21—*Ermioni-Thermista, Peloponnese, Greece*. 12th International Conf. in Greece. Write: Ch., Box 86002, 18503 Elektrikos Stathmos, Piraeus, Greece;
http://aa-europa.org/events/ermioni/ermioni_2006.htm

19-21—*Rehoboth Beach, Delaware*. 46th Delaware State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 446, Nassau, DE 19969;
 delawarestateconvention2006@mindspring.com

19-21—*Laughlin, Nevada*. 22nd Annual Tri-State Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 27837, Las Vegas, NV 89126;
 www.titstate-roundup.com

19-21—*Dayton, Ohio*. Women's Workshop XXVII. Write: Ch., Box 1527, Dayton, OH 45401-1527;
 Womens_workshop@hotmail.com

19-21—*Tulsa, Oklahoma*. 48th Annual Oklahoma State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 690896, Tulsa, OK 74169-0896;
 www.aaoklahoma.org/conference

19-21—*San Angelo, Texas*. 19th Annual Concho Valley Conf. Write: Ch., Box 2497, San Angelo, TX 76902

19-21—*Green Bay, Wisconsin*. Area 74 Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 0632, Green Bay, WI 54305; www.greenbayaa.org

19-21—*Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada*. Kamloops 59th Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 54, Savona, BC V0K 2J0;
 kamlooproundup@hotmail.com

20-21—*Grangetewe, Posieux FR, Switzerland*. Congrès du 50e anniversaire de Suisse Romande et Italienne. Write: Ch., ruelle de la Reta 3, CH-1630 Bulle/FR Switzerland;
 info@aastr.info

26-28—*Ontario, California*. XXXI Convention Estatal Hispana. Write: Ch., Box 4641, Ontario, CA 91761

26-28—*Bellaire, Michigan*. 24th Annual Northern Michigan Inter Area Spring Round-up. Write: Ch., 4374 W. Vail Ln., Gaylord, MI 49735

26-28—*Bloomington, Minnesota*. Gopher State Round-up XXXIII. Write: Ch., Box 65295, St. Paul, MN 55165-0295

26-28—*Dallas, Texas*. 20th Annual Gathering of Eagles. Write: Ch., Box 35865, Dallas, TX 75235; www.dallasgatheringofeagles.org

26-28—*Dallas, Texas*. XLIV Asamblea Estatal Hispana de Texas. Write: Ch., Box 814594, Dallas, TX 75381

26-28—*Sheridan, Wyoming*. Area 76 Spring Conv. Write: Ch., Box 79, Sheridan, WY 82801; www.area76wyaa.org

26-29—*Daytona Beach, Florida*. 16th Daytona Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 951903, Lake Mary, FL 32795

June

2-4—*Boca Raton, Florida*. Big Book Workshop Weekend. Write: Ch., Box 951903, Lake Mary, FL 32795

2-4—*Grand Island, Nebraska*. Area 41 47th Annual Reunion. Write: Ch., 910 S. 8th St., Lincoln, NE 68508

2-4—*Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada*. Prince Albert Gateway Round-up. Write: Ch., RR #5, Site 32, Comp 2, Prince Albert, SK S6V 5R3; www.princealbertroundup.ca

3-5—*Columbus, Mississippi*. 2006 Unity Conv. Write: Ch., Box 1073, Columbus, MS 39703-1073

9-11—*Hot Springs, Arkansas*. Fourth Annual Tri-Lakes Conv. Write: Ch., 305 Hidden Meadows Dr., Benton, AR 72015

9-11—*Storm Lake, Iowa*. Area 24 2006 Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 174, Evelyn, IA 51338

9-11—*Springfield, Missouri*. 16th Heart of the Ozarks Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 1607, Springfield, MO 65801

9-11—*Akron, Ohio*. 71st Founders' Day Celebration. Write: Ch., Box 12, Akron, OH 44309; www.akronaa.org

9-11—*Houston, Texas*. 61st Annual Texas State Conv. Write: Box 3076, Bellaire, TX 77402-3076; www.txaa2006.org

9-11—*Calgary, Alberta, Canada*. 25th Annual Calgary Gratitude Round-up. Write: Ch., #2, 4015-1 Street SE, Calgary, AB T2G 4X7

10-11—*Kansas City, Kansas*. V Encuentro Hispano del Estado de Kansas. Write: Ch., 723 Osage Ave., Kansas City, KS 6610

15-17—*Mc Bean, Couva, Trinidad and Tobago*. Jubilee Anniversary National Conv. Write: Ch., General Service Office, L.P. 52 Rivulet Road, Brechin Castle, Couva, Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies; gsort@hotmail.com

16-17—*Windsor, Québec, Canada*. 24e Congrès 88-10. Write: Ch., 237 rue Bord de L'Eau RR 2, Timwick, QC J0A 1L0

16-18—*Llandrindod Wells, Powys, Wales*. Welsh National Conv. 2006. Write: Ch., Box 489, Swansea, SA4 3WF, U.K.; www.aawelshconvention.org.uk

23-25—*Seattle, Washington*. Pacific Regional Forum. Write: Forum Coordinator, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org

23-25—*Sept-Îles, Québec, Canada*. 27ème Congrès District 89-10. Write: Ch., C.P. 1242, Sept-Îles, QC G4R 4X7

July

7-9—*Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada*. Chilliwack 2006 Round-up. Write: Ch., 46035 Victoria Ave., Chilliwack, BC V2P 2T9

14-16—*Jefferson City, Missouri*. 55th Annual Missouri State Conv. Write: Ch., 5939 Lakeland Drive, Villa Ridge, MO 63089; www.eamo.org

14-16—*Rivière-du-Loup, Québec, Canada*. 31e Congrès District 88-05. Write: Ch., 206 Principale, St. Cyprien, QC G0L 2P0

20-23—*Charlotte, North Carolina*. 59th North Carolina State Conv. Write: Ch., 305 Park Rd., Wadesboro, NC 28170

21-23—*Rimouski, Québec, Canada*. Congrès du Bas St-Laurent District 88-06. Write: Ch., 62, Ste-Marie #6, Rimouski, QC G5L 4E2

23-28—*Crested Butte, Colorado*. 23rd Annual Crested Butte Mountain Conf. Write: Ch., Box 14014, Irving, TX 75014-0114; www.cbconference.org

28-30—*Rochester, New York*. 2006 New York State Conv. Write: Box 1073, Webster, NY 14580

Box 4-5-9 is published bimonthly by the General Service Office of

Alcoholics Anonymous,

475 Riverside Drive,

New York, NY 10115,

@Alcoholics Anonymous World

Services, Inc., 2006

Mail address: P.O. Box 459,

Grand Central Station

New York, NY 10163

G.S.O.'s AA Web Site: www.aa.org

Subscriptions: Individual, \$3.50

per year; group, \$6.00 for each unit

of 10 per year. Check-made payable

to A.A.W.S., Inc.—should accompany

order.