

■ South Africa's Diamond Jubilee Year of Celebration

In 1946, a court translator named Solomon M. found himself wandering the outskirts of Johannesburg, despondent and hungover: his drinking had brought himself and his family to the brink of starvation. He spied a copy of *Reader's Digest* in a trash bin, picked it up, and began to read an article, originally published in *Grapevine*, entitled "My Return From the Half-world of Alcoholism."

The narrator of that story had found hope in A.A., and now Solomon did, too. He wrote to A.A. Headquarters (now the General Service Office) in New York and was sent a pamphlet, simply entitled "A.A.," which contained excerpts from the Big Book. Although Solomon never started a meeting — and, in fact, would later be a "Loner" — he became South Africa's first A.A. member.

In October of the same year, another alcoholic, Arthur S. — a stockbroker — found the same article in the nursing home where he was drying out after numerous unsuccessful attempts to stop drinking. He, too, wrote Headquarters in New York, was sent the "A.A." pamphlet, and became intrigued enough to start A.A.'s first South African meeting, with more than a little help from a local minister, the Reverend Peacock, and a Catholic nun, Sister Maxwell, who was in charge of the drying-out ward at Johannesburg General Hospital. Sister Maxwell and Reverend Peacock were both nonalcoholics but were an essential part of the beginnings of early South African A.A. When Arthur showed up drunk to speak at the first meeting, Reverend Peacock took over. And after Arthur died of pneumonia, Sister Maxwell stepped in and ran the meetings herself.

A desperate individual led by chance to A.A., a hopelessly alcoholic stockbroker, a kindly and determined Catholic sister — this set of individuals in random circumstances (with echoes of the origins of A.A. in the

U.S. 11 years earlier) led to the spread of Alcoholics Anonymous in South Africa. The 75th anniversary of A.A. in that country kicked off on October 17 with a virtual meeting attended by a dozen countries celebrating "75 Years of Hope."

"It was wonderful to start off on the 17th — the actual birthday is the 18th," says Irene F., acting chairperson of the South African General Service Board. "It was a two-hour long virtual meeting with people from all over the world. We're going to be celebrating throughout the next year with events dedicated to the Jubilee," which include

more online events, a Jubilee Forum in August 2022, and the annual National Convention in Capetown, also in August 2022.

Marita R., trustee at large/U.S., attended the October 17 virtual meeting as an observer. "It was filled with recounting how A.A. came to South Africa, which is a story of experience, hope, strength and wisdom, and was attended by members expressing their delight at the birth of South Africa's light."

"We face the challenges of having a serious alcohol abuse problem here," says Irene. "We have the highest incidence of fetal alcohol syndrome in the world. About 170 people die every day of alcohol-related causes. But we've got wonderful members here, ready to help in any way they possibly can. Our C.P.C. (Cooperation with the Professional Community) and P.I. (Public Information) committees

work hard to reach out to social workers, who are the ones who deal with alcohol in the communities. It is so important that, 75 years later, A.A. is alive and well in South Africa."

Marita adds, "I am encouraged by the many ways A.A.s everywhere have learned how to continue to carry our message and to do our Twelfth Step in new and different ways that keep us all connected with our roots."



In the background: Durban, South Africa, site of the 25th A.A. World Service Meeting.

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Note on anonymity: From time to time in this publication full names and/or pictures of G.S.O. employees, Class A trustees and other nonalcoholics are used. The anonymity of A.A. members is maintained, as they are identified throughout by first name and last initial only.

■ Translating in the Language of the Heart

For many years, the General Service Office has provided equivalent services throughout the U.S./Canada Conference area in French and Spanish to ensure that A.A.s reaching out for information and assistance in these languages receive the same level of help given to English-speaking members.

Providing such services presents a host of opportunities to reach alcoholics in their native tongues with the lifesaving information A.A. has to offer, but it also comes with some ongoing challenges.

As the commitment to providing equivalent services has grown — in large measure as the result of a 2017 General Service Conference Advisory Action requesting that G.S.O. strive to provide all Conference background materials in a timely manner in French and Spanish so that, in the spirit of unity and inclusiveness, all members will have meaningful access — G.S.O. has continued adapting its services to meet the expressed need for these materials.

These critical translation services are currently centralized in G.S.O.'s Publications department, under the guidance of Ames S., G.S.O.'s executive editor, and are overseen by two A.A. members who are professional translators — Spanish editor/translations consultant Hernán M., who has been connected to G.S.O. for over twenty years, and French editor Juliette L.

Juliette began working at G.S.O. in 2018, the year after the Advisory Action regarding translation of all Conference background material. She points out that the task meets the need of our expanding Fellowship. “By making the General Service Conference a three-language operation,” she says, “we are making the general service structure and our publications accessible to the majority of the A.A. members of the U.S. and Canada.”

“The need was there all along,” she emphasizes. “The French-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities were asking for the general service structure to be more accessible — because some of the delegates in the service structure either do not speak English at all, or only know English as a second language — not having everything translated into their language creates a barrier that prevents them from accessing true participation to the general service structure of Alcoholics Anonymous, the group conscience of A.A. as a whole.”

Over and beyond the work necessary to translate the background material (a task managed by G.S.O. managing editor Julia D.), Juliette's daily workload is as varied as the thousand-plus pieces of A.A. literature available. “Smaller items are not actually smaller,” Juliette says. “In addition to the pamphlets, newsletters and books, we also translate all service documents and correspondence from A.A. staff members, which takes over 50 percent of our work time.”

Juliette works with “about five English-to-French translators, all located in Quebec, Canada. The target language is French-Canadian since this is the community the U.S./Canada G.S.O. serves. Some translators work on longer projects, such as full-length book translations or the recently revised and reformatted A.A. *Service Manual*, and some work more on shorter, more time-sensitive pieces such as emails, announcements and assignment updates.”

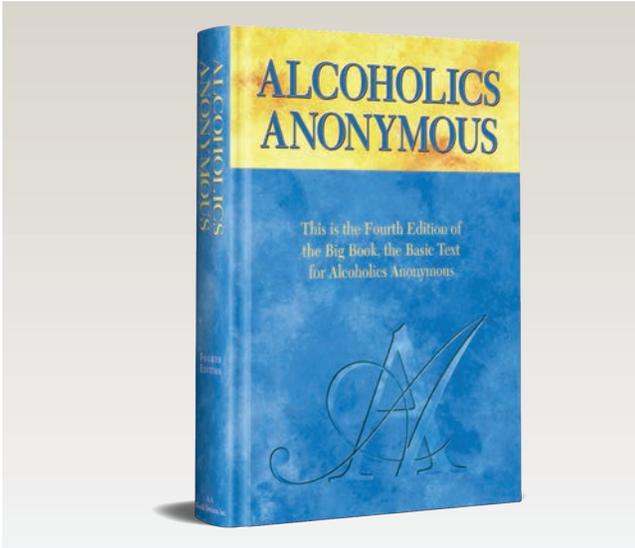
Similarly, Hernán supervises the work of five or six translators, “all language professionals,” he adds, “with a very good command of both languages.”

Among his many expanding duties, Hernán mentions revising pamphlets for reprint, correcting errors or changing style choices made in the past. “A quick read,” says Hernán, “becomes a substantial revision.”

Hernán speaks of the challenges of revising previous translations. One major example is how “the accepted version of the word ‘sponsor’ in Spanish — *el padrino* — is a male construction meaning ‘godfather.’ So, the pamphlet on sponsorship now has the female *la madrina* interspersed as well,” offering more gender balance and a linguistic reflection of A.A.'s inclusiveness.

In tandem with revisions, Hernán also speaks of his excitement working on “standardizing language and creating a style guide, creating a glossary to describe what's really going on.” Language, Hernán insists, is part of the solution. “A translation has to be accurate and to read well. One thing I try to do when I translate is to clean up the literal translation. This leads to the question of how to make service material more inclusive without being clunky.”

Languages are living realities, adapting to changing environments and local customs in the various parts of the world where they are spoken. Languages change: words fall out of favor and are replaced by new ones. Old words take on new meanings and the style of writing transforms with time.



“Translation is not a science,” Hernán asserts. “It’s basically a description of an experience.”

Similarly, Juliette says, “My team of translators and I have been slowly revising many older French translations that had a lot of errors. This included many pamphlets and some of our main publications, as well as service documents, sample letters and other service-related pieces.”

She relates that when she first joined G.S.O., “the first thing I heard about from our French-speaking community was how in 2002 the Steps were retranslated and some wording was changed. Because so many newcomers got sober with those ‘new’ Steps (they are the same Steps, the wording is just slightly different), it would be tricky to change them back to the old translation.”

“A.A. has its own lingo and insider language, and that is a critical part of the translation, too,” says Ames. So, along with the sheer volume is the curious complexity the translators face. “It’s almost a double translation. Not only does the work have to meet the linguistic parameters of the appropriate language, it also has to adhere to the many A.A. subtleties throughout our communications.”

In terms of the growing volume of materials needing translation throughout G.S.O., Julia D., G.S.O.’s managing editor, says that new material doesn’t so much cross her desk every *day* as it does “*every fifteen minutes!*”

Among those quarter-hour flurries, Julia states, “It isn’t only printed material — books and pamphlets — but management updates, committee sharing, budget summaries and financial reports. Currently, we’re translating all the material for the upcoming revisions of the website, along with user guides for Fellowship Connection, and scripts for PSAs and audio recordings.”

Especially given global events of the past 18 months, Julia points out that “the amount of printing we’re now doing is back up, and with that, lots of book and pamphlet reprints are surging, thanks to the semi-hiatus we took from printing at the height of the pandemic.”

Hernán also points to the last year and a half, when so much of the Fellowship moved online. “With the World Service Meeting and many other events also being held online, 2020 quickly became one of the busiest years on record.”

Juliette acknowledges that her already impressive workload has “doubled during the pandemic.”

Nonetheless, the professional translator and the A.A. member come together in the midst of the work, finding expression in the language of the heart. “I particularly love translating the stories from our members that get published in the pamphlets,” Juliette says. “I always cry when I read these stories of recovery for the first time, and as a fellow A.A. member, I feel so grateful to get to work on these translations, and I want to make sure that French-speakers can get the same access to these wonderful stories.”

The commitment the Fellowship has shown in the U.S. and Canada to providing A.A. literature and services in English, Spanish and French reverberates with A.A.’s primary purpose and echoes the words of A.A.’s Responsibility Declaration, “When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.”

■ Anonymity Letter to the Media: “A Gift Each Member Makes to the Fellowship”

Each year since the practice began in 1949, the trustees’ Public Information Committee has sent its annual Anonymity Letter to the Media.

The simple letter both thanks our friends in the media — journalists, radio, television and online editors and producers — for the support they have always afforded Alcoholics Anonymous with respect to protecting the anonymity of A.A. members at the public level and asks for their continued cooperation. The letter goes on to request that if A.A. members are identified in the media that only their first name and last initial be used, and no images be used in which a member’s face may be recognized.

This helps to provide A.A. members with the security that anonymity can bring. The letter further explains, “The principle of anonymity is at the core of our Fellowship. Those who are reluctant to seek our help often overcome their fear if they are confident that their anonymity will be respected. In addition, and perhaps less understood, our tradition of anonymity acts as a healthy guardrail for A.A. members, reminding us that we are a program of principles, not personalities, and that no individual A.A. member acts as a spokesperson of our Fellowship.”

“We’re trying to focus on the message that we’re sending about Alcoholics Anonymous to clarify any

misconceptions that we find and to remind all about our spiritual principles and why they are important,” says Patrick C., General Service Office staff coordinator on the Public Information desk. “So that no one person is speaking for A.A. or there’s not one person who is intentionally causing harm — although normally anonymity breaks happen out of innocence or lack of understanding.”

This January, thousands of Anonymity Letters will be distributed to a media list covering the U.S. and Canada (including Spanish media in the U.S. and French media in Quebec). The letter is also posted on G.S.O.’s website at https://aa.org/pages/en_US/pressmedia.

Despite the saturation coverage of the Anonymity Letter, and the vigilance of A.A. groups and individual members everywhere, anonymity breaks do happen — a number of them at the hands of well-meaning members eager to help other alcoholics like themselves. What is done about such breaks and the dozens of others that occur yearly? As mail received by the General Service Office reveals, members have expressed continuing concern about such violations of the Eleventh Tradition (“Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films”), which the Fellowship’s co-founder Bill W. called “the key to A.A.’s spiritual survival.”

When a specific anonymity break occurs, A.A. members frequently ask G.S.O. to send a letter to the publication or broadcast station involved. But it has long been the consensus of A.A.’s General Service Conference that responsibility for protecting the Tradition of Anonymity at the public level, and for responding to anonymity breaks in the media, rests with the individuals, groups and service committees within the Fellowship. So, when there is an anonymity break at the public level, the Public Information desk at G.S.O. writes to the appropriate area delegate, passing along the basic facts and suggesting that the delegate or another trusted servant make contact with the member.

As it turns out, Patrick is a past delegate — Panel 63, Southwest Texas, Area 67. “So I was on the receiving end of a P.I. coordinator’s letter, the kind of standard email from the General Service Office, which says, ‘Hey we have an anonymity break in your area. Here’s an example of a letter that you can use to write to the individual who appeared in the article.’ Because that’s who we are reaching out to — not the journalist. The responsibility for our Traditions lies with the A.A. member and so we’re just providing a friendly reminder — ‘Did you know that when we are involved in a media story, one of the things we avoid is putting our full name or our full picture and our statement saying we are members of A.A.?’”

Terry Bedient, nonalcoholic former chair of the General Service Board, has put it very well. He sees anonymity not as an act of self-restraint, but as an active demonstration of love and service. “Anonymity is a gift

each member makes to the Fellowship. It is humility in action, a voluntary decision made by A.A. members to set aside personal recognition so that the A.A. principles and program can have center stage instead.”

■ A.A. Guidelines: Experience As It Happens

Developed individually over the years in response to the expressed needs of A.A. members for specific information on specific topics, G.S.O.’s A.A. Guidelines contain shared experience on 17 different areas of concern to members, groups, and service committees throughout the Fellowship. Covering such issues as central and intergroup offices, the relationship between A.A. and Al-Anon, the Internet, and accessibility for all alcoholics, the Guidelines reflect current A.A. practices and consolidate A.A. experience as it happens. The historical development of the A.A. Guidelines is shrouded in mystery, and a search through G.S.O.’s A.A. Archives turns up little to clarify their exact beginning. In the early 1960s, however, according to Beth K., a G.S.O. staff member during those years, what appears to be the first of A.A.’s Guidelines was prepared as a result of ongoing Conference concern over the relationship between A.A. and clubs. Other Guidelines, such as those on conferences and conventions, court issues, and institutions, came about because G.S.O. would receive a flood of mail over an extended period of time containing questions about what to do regarding a particular topic. Reaching out to delegates and other appropriate and relevant sources for additional sharing, the staff would then gather as broad a range of experience as possible on each given topic and prepare a set of Guidelines. Unlike A.A. Conference-approved literature, which expresses A.A.’s collective group conscience, the bright yellow A.A. Guidelines (two to six pages) are a distillation of specific trial-and-error experience that has been shared with G.S.O. on a number of specialized topics that come up frequently in correspondence but are not necessarily relevant to all groups or members throughout the Fellowship. For that reason, the 1980 General Service Conference approved a recommendation that the A.A. Guidelines could be produced or revised at the discretion of the G.S.O. staff without Conference approval when new information or other contingencies arose. The Guidelines bring together the shared experience of A.A. members and groups throughout the U.S./Canada service structure, and, over the years, as concerns with a given topic have abated, the corresponding Guidelines have been dropped; similarly, as particular topics of concern come to the fore, new ones have been added. A.A. Guidelines, which are listed in the A.A.W.S. literature catalog, are available singly or in complete sets. They may also be accessed on G.S.O.’s A.A. website (aa.org).

■ The Power of Connection: Updating the Corrections Correspondence Service

Since its inception in 1962, G.S.O.'s Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS) has been considered "a special kind of A.A. service" within the greater service structure of our Fellowship. As its name would suggest, this service involves matching A.A. members in custody with A.A. members on the outside throughout the U.S. and Canada, so that the two members can share their respective experience, strength and hope with one another through written correspondence. "The connection of hearts and hands from the outside to the inside is so crucial," says Sandra W., director of staff services at the General Service Office. "It provides that spiritual connection from one member to another."

Until recently, the database that helped to facilitate the service and the matching of correspondents took a significant amount of time — sometimes months — to initiate that vital spiritual connection, with forms and letters being mailed via snail mail. Not surprisingly, explains Brenda B., who worked as the Corrections coordinator during much of this updating project, "We found our old system to be a little trying as we were attempting to move forward into the 21st century."

With the implementation of the office-wide NetSuite system in 2019 for other G.S.O. functions, it became apparent that this new technology could provide a solution for matching A.A. members — inside and outside — in a more expedient manner. "The genesis of the project came from the Technology Services department because it became clear that the former database needed an overhaul," adds Sandra.

So, Technology Services and Corrections joined forces. "We established a team and hired some professionals to develop a state-of-the-art application that could match, correspond, and generate letters," says Brenda. Lorna Graham (nonalcoholic), director of Technology Services, further explains that this collaboration was managed similarly to a traditional software project. "We went through requirements and then into design," Lorna says. "There was a lot of involvement from Brenda and her staff assistant, Ana Isabel Mejia-Andrade (nonalcoholic), helping us to figure out how it should work — participating in user acceptance testing for ways to improve how the application functioned." Not surprisingly, this effort was collaborative in every sense of the word. "We were tossing things over the wall," explains Lorna, "and both Technology and Corrections were working very hard side by side." From the technology team, Dmitriy Kerget and Militza Alma-Noyola (both nonalcoholics) worked on the data conversion and participated in a significant amount of testing as well.

On September 28, 2021, the new system and database were launched — and 267 individuals were matched on

that first day. "It's a game-changer," remarks Lorna. The matching software speeds up the communication process significantly. "At a glance we could see what region had more Spanish-speaking members on the outside," explains Sandra. "We could get snapshots like this — and this allowed us to improve our services for the people who are boots on the ground."

Similar to many other major projects executed during the past two years, this updating was completed while team members were working remotely from home. In addition, the isolation created by the pandemic highlighted the acute need for this improved system. "We are in a pandemic, at a time when many facilities have suspended the process of outsiders bringing meetings into prison," says Sandra. "This makes the Corrections Correspondence Service even more critical. It is very rewarding. We receive letters that come with that pure, simple gratitude for being connected with another A.A. member or receiving a Big Book or a Grapevine. We

"The connection of hearts and hands from the outside to the inside is so crucial..." — *Sandra W.*

might take it for granted, but it helps that individual to stay sober one more day. CCS is the conduit for that."

In step with a common suggestion throughout the Fellowship with respect to sponsorship, the CCS matches men with men and women with women. During phase two of this updating, other gender identities will be addressed: For example, it will be easier to match a nonbinary person with another nonbinary individual. In addition, other features — such as enhanced reporting and a potential expansion of the current system — will be added during phase two. Despite still being in phase one, the Corrections desk has been able to manually match a few transgender individuals with transgender members on the outside. "I put out a plea for this kind of match," explains Brenda, "and at least ten individuals responded right away. This is just another gift of this beautiful program we have."

For many of the staffers and vendors who worked on this project, it was a very rewarding experience. "This was one of my favorite projects because I have a passion for the Corrections world and being able to help the individuals there. Before this, people in custody waited for months for a match," adds Lorna. "Now this new system allows us to increase the number of people we can support because we now have the ability to be proactive. It's amazing."

For more information about the Corrections Correspondence Service and how you can be a part of it, contact the Corrections desk at G.S.O. (email corrections@aa.org; call 212-870-3400; or write to General Service Office, PO Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163).

■ ICOAA Seminar: “I’m supporting them; are they supporting me?”

Sue C. is manager of the Rhode Island Central Service Office, which hosted the 36th annual Intergroup/Central Office/A.A.W.S./AAGV Seminar, held September 29-October 2. “We put in a bid in 2019 to host the meeting,” Sue says, “and our intention was to do it in person.” It was, after all, to be the first ICOAA seminar ever held in New England. “We were going to have people come in on Thursday, see Providence, visit the local office, maybe take a trip to Brown University,” which hosts a collection of Dr. Bob’s papers, consisting of 5,000 items including two hundred books, dozens of pieces of memorabilia and several hundred manuscripts and photographs. Unfortunately, uncertainty surrounding the Delta variant forced the seminar steering committee to choose a virtual seminar, making it the second one ever held virtually (the first was hosted by Des Moines, Iowa, last year). Planning was time-consuming, but Sue had the help of Mary H. — “my right hand person”; Cheri J., of Kansas, Missouri, who did invaluable tech work; and Matthew C., central office manager from Ventura, California, who helped set up and troubleshoot the ICOAA seminar website.

Attending were 118 registrants (17 from A.A.W.S. and Grapevine) representing 67 different central offices, including six offices from Canada and one office in Auckland, New Zealand. In order to accommodate time zones and deal with online fatigue, the seminar was held from Wednesday until Saturday; lessons learned from the Des Moines virtual seminar were applied (break-out rooms instead of separate teleconference links for each meeting, as well as one big room where everyone could “sit and talk,” as Sue says). The workshops — all run by central office workers — focused on the Seventh Tradition in a largely cashless society; learning the all-important technical tools for today’s virtual A.A. world; planning annual budgets and prudent reserves; how best to keep groups informed, via newsletters, email and other types of outreach; and a good deal more.

The A.A.W.S./G.S.O. contingent gave a presentation followed by a Q&A Thursday night, with speakers that included General Manager Bob W.; Jimmy D. and Deb K. of the A.A.W.S. board; David R., Publishing Director; Malini Singh (nonalcoholic), Director of Operations; Margaret Matos (nonalcoholic), manager of the new Member Services department; and Craig W., G.S.O. staff on the Group Services assignment. Friday night it was Grapevine’s turn, with speakers Chris C., AA Grapevine publisher; Jon W., AA Grapevine senior editor; and Karina C., La Viña editor.

From the very first ICOAA seminar in 1986, the stated purpose of the seminars has been to provide a forum,

through workshop discussions and the exchange of ideas and shared experience, for those who labor on A.A.’s front lines. But the need to reconcile the problems common to most central office/intergroups with the services provided to the Fellowship by A.A.W.S., Grapevine and the General Service Board — especially since, structurally, the appearance of the first intergroups/central offices (IGCOs) in the 1940s predates the creation of the General Service Conference and the A.A. service structure — creates tension, tension that came to the surface during the seminar weekend.

“The IGCOs would like to be more involved in the Conference process; they would like better communication with the delegates; and they would like to be included or consulted when matters involving them or affecting them comes up, such as the Service Manual, beta testing, new literature,” says Craig W. “There is a perception that we would rather talk to the delegates than the IGCOs on a lot of issues. The General Service Conference process asks us to communicate with the area delegate and the hope is that the area delegate will carry that information locally. But we do see the necessity to communicate more on the matters directly concerning the IGCOs.”

The value of intergroup/central offices cannot be overstated, Craig says. “They are A.A., and they are on the front lines when someone needs help, buys a book or stops by for a pamphlet; they provide a conversation about A.A. and recovery, and about what’s going on locally.”

During the weekend gathering, some longstanding tensions boiled over, with intense criticism directed at G.S.O. staffers by a few of the IGCO attendees during Q&A sessions and at other moments during the seminar. “Some of the behavior toward staffers was hurtful,” Craig says, as often the criticism was leveled at matters beyond their scope. “To have so many staffers there to put up with that behavior is really not productive.”

Jimmy D., A.A.W.S. chair, agrees that the situation was difficult. “I have significant Dallas intergroup experience. I served two terms on that board, 20 years apart, and I chaired that board. I come from a place where I respect a certain level of frustration. Like everyone in A.A., those managers want to make sure that their voice is heard. But the tone and tenor of the discussion were not good. There was at times a snide, vitriolic type of environment.”

Like Craig, Jimmy understands the feeling among many intergroup/central office managers that there is a lack of communication or concern for the central offices on the part of G.S.O. “But there are certain parameters that, from a viability perspective, we can’t entertain at this point,” he says. “We eat hundreds of thousands of dollars for shipping each year to intergroups and central offices, and we’re happy to do that. We give the best pricing discounts that we can — quantity discounts — that most intergroups/central offices are able to make

work. There are small intergroup and central offices that would like better pricing. They asked for the mixed-item discount last year and the board approved it, but we put that on hold so that we could do the shipping discount. And so on.

“In my opinion, frankly, dependence on literature sales is not healthy for G.S.O. and not healthy for local service offices, either. But that aside, we can all align ourselves with the mission of A.A. What seems to be most helpful is when we move the material concerns out of the way and understand that we both have the same objective. We fulfill different roles in that objective. G.S.O. is not equipped to hand off the Big Book and spend 15 minutes talking to the new guy about A.A. But intergroup and central offices are.”

Jimmy, Craig, Bob W. and others stayed online after the presentations and workshops were done to discuss these issues with intergroup/central office managers — the “meeting after the meeting,” as Craig says. “It was as late as midnight on the East Coast and six p.m. in Hawaii. We were able to connect and hear each other. The question came up, ‘How come we never have one person we can talk to regularly? You’re all always rotat-

ing out of your positions.’ (Staff rotation is a recurrent complaint of IGCO managers.) And so I said, ‘Maybe you should stop wearing us out.’ That got a laugh. The point is, we want to continue to work together, to grow, to heal — and we all have to look at how we are communicating our expectations.”

Colleen M. has been the Greater Vancouver central office manager for the last three years. The Covid-19 pandemic struck a devastating blow to her office, as it did to so many intergroup/central offices, which depend on physical human interaction to help suffering alcoholics and on selling the literature to help keep the offices afloat. “We shut down completely on March 13, 2020. People weren’t allowed to come and hang out. Literature sales dropped drastically. Our heart is our phone volunteers, our volunteers who stuff envelopes, and the people who stop by for coffee.”

Colleen has been to the ICOAA seminar every year since 2018. “It saved my life when I first started this job. It was total identification. You get in that tribe of people who understand what it is like to be a central office worker. We are very blessed, but it is a very unique position. The seminar is one of the few times, aside from

■ OIAA — Coming into its own

With all the tumult of the ICOAA seminar, not everyone noticed that there was a new, first-time attendee: Online Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous (OIAA). Arising from a group that called itself “Living Cyber” in the mid-1990s, OIAA provided a centralized location where groups could come online and people could find them. Now with over 4,000 meetings, OIAA is essentially a worldwide online intergroup/central office, with the crucial distinction that it does not sell literature, has no brick-and-mortar presence and has an all-volunteer staff.

Gwen M., chair of the OIAA, and Barry M., secretary, attended the seminar. Gwen says that OIAA had not been aware of the ICOAA seminar “until it came up in conversation with Craig W. of the Group Services desk. We’ve had a really collaborative relationship with G.S.O. because of our explosive growth — among other things, G.S.O. wanted to get a feel for ways in which online groups might be plugged into the service structure — and we have a monthly touch-base. So, Craig brought up our attending ICOAA and we thought, ‘Wow, we should be a part of this.’ It’s sort of like the next chapter for us. We were such an anomaly and now we’re finding our legs and truly going mainstream.”

The rapid expansion of OIAA is in large part due to the A.A. world turning to virtual communication and meetings during the Covid-19 crisis. In September, the OIAA site (<https://aa-intergroup.org>) saw 20,000 hits per day, with over 640,000 views for the month. Their “How we can help” page averages 3,900 views a day and had 1.2 million hits in 2021 by the end of September. Their Twelfth Step committee (the “Steppers Committee”) responds directly in 16 languages via email to those suffering alcoholics needing help. A feature allows A.A.’s and those seeking A.A. to find the “next available” meeting, listing the platform upon which it takes place (Zoom, Skype, phone, email, chat room, etc.). There are numerous options for meetings, which indicate the broad base of members served by OIAA — meetings for blind/visually impaired, Deaf/Hard of Hearing and LGBTQ, to name only a few of the myriad choices available.

How did Gwen feel to be finally connected with the IGCOs at the seminar? “I loved it,” she says. “I left with so much respect for my local intergroup as well as appreciation for intergroups everywhere.” She was aware of some of the tensions due to the differing perspectives of G.S.O. and intergroup/central offices but feels that sometimes expressing these tensions is necessary “to move us forward — they can be opportunities to grow” and that they echo similar tensions within OIAA itself. And she and Barry found that the topics covered at the workshops provided invaluable advice on everything from vetting new meetings to tax and insurance issues, which Barry has been examining for OIAA.

Ultimately, Barry says, “We want to deepen and broaden our relationship with intergroup/central offices — and not only here in the U.S. We truly want to have OIAA committed to interface with the intergroups/central offices around the world.”

SCHEDULE OF A. A. MEETINGS New York City and vicinity

	Group	Address	Type of Meeting	Time
SUNDAY	Manhattan	405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C.	Beginners (Open)	3:00 P.M.
"	Manhattan	405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C.	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	South Shore	Girl Scout Bldg., 3 Park Avenue, Baldwin, L. I.	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	New Rochelle	Y.M.C.A. Division St. & Burling Lane	Open	8:15 P.M.
MONDAY	Manhattan	405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C.	Discussion Group	8:30 P.M.
"	Manhattan	Forest Hills Inn (8th Ave. Sub.)	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	Mineola	New Court House, Old Country Rd., Mineola	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	Mt. Vernon	Women's Club, 110 Crary Avenue	Open	8:30 P.M.
TUESDAY	Manhattan	405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C.	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	Yonkers	Y.W.C.A., 87 So. Broadway	Closed	8:30 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	Manhattan	17 East 42nd Street, Room 407, N.Y.C.	Closed	8:30 P.M.
"	Jackson Heights	Republican Club, 3760 82nd Street, 3rd Floor	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	Brooklyn	St. George Hotel	Closed	8:30 P.M.
"	Bronx	2503 Marian Avenue	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	White Plains	Republican Club, Martine & Mamaroneck Avenues	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	Staten Island	S. I. Inst. of Arts & Science Bldg., St. George, S. I.	Open	8:30 P.M.
"	Seaman's	334½ West 24th Street, N.Y.C.	Closed	8:30 P.M.
"	North Shore	75 Plandome Road, Manhasset, L. I.	Open	8:30 P.M.

The first meeting schedule printed by the New York Inter-Group Association of Alcoholics Anonymous, now known as New York Inter-Group (NYIG).

when you're talking to A.A.W.S. staff, that you get to talk to other people who understand Tradition Eight in the same way that we do."

Colleen, who sits on the ICOAA communications committee, says that understanding the differing G.S.O./A.A.W.S./ICOAA perspectives begins with understanding the fact that "there are two different service entities within A.A. — intergroup/central offices and A.A.W.S./Grapevine — and we were here first!" she says, laughing. "Do I think we work in harmony all the time? No, obviously not. We're one great big dysfunctional family, but we come from different perspectives. It's a systemic problem in Alcoholics Anonymous, but I believe even so that the central offices feel more respected than we ever have. I think that we feel heard."

Colleen agrees that the frustration of the IGCO managers at the seminar went beyond what was appropriate. "We weren't nice to paid [G.S.O./A.A.W.S.] staff," she says. "We owe them an amends." But issues obviously remain, and Colleen says, "I'm scared of what's going to happen to intergroup/central offices. Like many of my colleagues, I am fearful." Literature sales remain a large and to some extent unresolved issue. "I can't get the new Grapevine book *Prayer and Meditation* here in Vancouver. I ordered it the day it came out and it is still back ordered from Grapevine. But I can go and order it on Amazon and have it delivered next day. I don't think anyone [at Grapevine] is doing this on purpose, but it is really disheartening when my members can go to Amazon and get a book, but they can't from their central office. I would never order from Amazon because that would go against the group conscience of Greater Vancouver intergroups. But understand that all through Covid I've maintained my office subscriptions to Grapevine, and they are just sitting there in the cupboard. So the ques-

tion is: I'm supporting them; are they supporting me?"

Then there are the quality issues.

"I have people bringing me back a copy of *Daily Reflections* that you open it up and it's all blank pages. I have members bringing me back Big Books where Chapter Five and 'A Vision for You' are upside-down. Why are we having these quality issues all of a sudden? Why are we only finding out at the seminar that you have changed printers? Why aren't we being told this? Two days ago, I received 500 wallet cards with the new Preamble — but they're the *old* Preamble. So I just wasted a bunch of money that my Fellowship is not going to be happy about.

"So it's little things like that that we are asking for information about.

If you can send it out to a delegate, why can't you send it out to us? Why do I have to rely on a delegate? They may be in the Conference service structure, but we are the boots-on-the-ground service structure. We want to know about these things so we can also help A.A.W.S. sales by encouraging people to buy and letting them know ahead of time if there are problems. Why can't we have the new book before Amazon has them if we are all part of the same family?"

In the first two weeks after the Greater Vancouver office shut down in March 2020, Colleen says, "We got 3,000 phone calls at a time when we normally might get 1,600. 'My home group is closed. What do I do? What's going on with A.A.? Can you tell me?' Yet we weren't getting the letters that were being sent out to delegates. Nobody's talking to intergroups. We had each other. Trish L. [trustee at large/Canada and Colleen's sponsor] was able to help us out by connecting us with a bunch of districts and D.C.M.s and with Victoria intergroup. We'd meet every second week to exchange information. Beyond a shadow of a doubt, in these new times, we have been the support, the voice and the heart of the Fellowship."

Not long after the seminar, Craig W. attended the intergroup/central offices quarterly meeting with the IGCO communications committee. There, away from the supercharged atmosphere of the seminar, perspectives were aired and both groups had what Craig calls "a very good and unifying meeting. I think the point here is we have people who are willing to connect and heal. There is still obviously resentment we had to work through on almost every topic, but I think it was a chance for us to build trust and have honest conversations about difficulties and frustrations, as well as to set boundaries moving forward."

■ The Power of Sharing

Dear A.A. Friends, Let's open our meeting with the A.A. Preamble...

So begins the latest issue of the *Loners-Internationalists Meeting* (LIM) — an A.A. meeting in print for Loners, Internationalists and other A.A.s who cannot attend regular A.A. meetings.

Not everyone in A.A. has access to the abundance of meetings that take place every day, every hour, literally around the globe. Many members are separated by distance or circumstance from other A.A.s; many may not have access to a computer or the ability to connect to the Internet. One function of the General Service Office is to close these gaps between members by providing shared experience from Loners around the world. For some A.A.s this may be their main link with the Fellowship.

To this end, LIM contains excerpts of the many letters sent to G.S.O. from A.A.s around the world. Most of the letters reveal the writer's gratitude for their sobriety and speak volumes for the power of A.A.'s language of the heart. A sampling follows here from the November/December 2021 issue:

John G., a Loner from Ribeira de Pena, Portugal, shares, "Dear A.A. friends, just checking in after months of not writing. I am still sober and sane after more than 40 years of staying away from drinking. Our little country has been badly affected by the Covid virus, so meetings are closed. My nearest is 80 miles away, so I am totally dependent on LIM and my monthly phone calls to my sponsor in the United Kingdom and our letters. I am so grateful for the lessons I learned in my early years in A.A. I struggled to keep coming back in those years; it would have been impossible without the support I received in the rooms. Today I am joyous and free and have for many years taken the advice to keep coming back. It works if you work it."

"My name is Irene R. I was a Loner in the Alaskan Bush for 13 years and greatly appreciated receiving the LIM before, during and after those years. Although, during those 13 years, through unscheduled and inconsistent mail service, the LIM was quite frequently stolen. The message of recovery is sometimes carried in rather unexpected ways. All the A.A. members who were living when I got sober are now long deceased. In many ways, I miss them, but I do not feel great sadness. I feel tremendous joy and gratitude, as I know the message they carried is being carried on by my generation, as well as subsequent generations. They have not died and been forgotten, because the message of recovery, which they shared, continues to live on through those of us who learned from them and who continue to 'pass it on.'"

Alicia S., from Middletown, Pennsylvania, writes, "November is gratitude month in A.A. I do my best to remain grateful every single day that I no longer must get 'loaded' to survive life on life's terms. My daily reprieve is indeed a treasured gift. I especially love the month of

November, however, because it is a great time for reflection and, yes, gratitude. On the East Coast of the United States, hurricane season starts on June 1 and ends around November 30. I like to share that 'A.A. hurricane season' follows that pattern fairly closely, as warm summer weather and the autumn holidays can tempt an alcoholic to pick up a drink. I think about the words in the Big Book: 'It won't burn me this time, so here's how!' and recall all the picnics, Thanksgivings and Christmases that I had that very same thought. How could I have been so wrong? It's important for me to practice gratitude for my sobriety today by being on the lookout for potential hurricane victims and reaching out my hand. By stepping up my meetings and sharing about my gratitude for the new life that has been freely given to me, I am taking out a little disaster insurance and maybe passing on a little bit of hope to the alcoholic who still suffers. I am so grateful for A.A., so grateful for all the LIM members, and especially grateful to have a Higher Power who shows me how to survive life on life's terms today."

Daniel H., from Yap, Micronesia, shares, "It's happened. Despite feeling in the doldrums, I cleaned up my living area and have made some changes in my routines. Let me share that this fills me with gratitude. As an alcoholic whose modus operandi is to create crisis, it is a welcome respite to recognize that there are some healthy features to my personality these days. I live on a tiny island in Micronesia and am blessed with work that I enjoy and a beautiful environment. But alcohol abuse here is common, and maintaining anonymity is complex. There are only 8,000 people living here, and I have been very careful to carry the message in a way that leads by example, and I talk about the benefits of sobriety. It is complicated. I have a friend here who wants to be sober. I will suggest to him that we can have meetings. But anonymity won't be easy. Everyone here knows everyone else, and news travels quickly by word of mouth. It is a good situation, however, to practice the principles of the Fellowship and to offer the safety that being a member of a group can mean. And the bottom line is that my own sobriety benefits when I carry the message. It's not difficult. Years ago, when cell phones were not ubiquitous, finding an electronic copy of the Preamble and a Big Book with which to lead meetings wouldn't have been easy. But now, the typical readings for a meeting are not difficult to pull up on a screen. It is now even easier to start a meeting. Life is good! And here I am, trudging the Road of Happy Destiny in a tropical paradise. It really is far beyond my wildest dreams. All because I joined a club whose membership fee is so very dear. We've paid a lot to get here. A.A. is a way of living."

"I'm Greg H., an alcoholic from Park Forest, Illinois. I was ruminating on the fact that the things I got off

the ‘hint sheet’ I received 34 years ago when I reported onboard LIM are still solid hints in staying sober today. They still work. Simple things: 1. Keep a piece of A.A. literature with you for use when stinking thinking comes. 2. Keep ‘phone call money’ handy when away from home. (Now I suppose it would be ‘Keep your cell phone

charged and handy.’) There were, and are, many others: short, sweet and very practical. The ‘heebie jeebies’ can hit at any time, and if we can take sober action, they usually vanish after five or six minutes. Writing to another alcoholic daily kept me sober when I was new to the program in the Far East as a Loner. One Day at a Time.”

■ “About Those A.A. Group Problems”



Just past the middle of “The A.A. Group” pamphlet, at the end of a section titled “Principles Before Personalities,” the A.A. member or group can find a few short paragraphs subtitled “About Those A.A. Group Problems.” That section, on pages 30 and 31, begins with what more than one A.A. member has found — at first glance — to be a somewhat strange statement: “Group problems are often evidence of a healthy, desirable diversity of opinion among the group members.”

Group problems can be healthy and desirable? How can that be? That section goes on to share, “They give us a chance, in the words of Step Twelve, to ‘practice these principles in all our affairs.’”

We also read, “Group problems may include such common A.A. questions as: What should the group do about members who return to drinking? How can we boost lagging attendance at meetings? How can we get more people to help with group chores? What can we do about one member’s anonymity break, or another’s attempts to attract the romantic interest of newcomers? How can we get out from under those oldtimers who insist they know what’s best for the group? And how can we get more of the oldtimers to share their experience in resolving group dilemmas?”

“Almost every group problem can be solved through the process of an informed group conscience, A.A. principles, and our Twelve Traditions. Some groups find that their G.S.R. or D.C.M. can be helpful. For all involved, a good sense of humor, cooling-off periods, patience, courtesy, willingness to listen and to wait — plus a sense of

fairness and trust in a ‘Power greater than ourselves’ — have been found far more effective than legalistic arguments or personal accusations.”

Informed Group Conscience vs. Business Meeting

If “almost every group problem can be solved through the process of an informed group conscience,” what exactly is that process, and how does it differ from a business meeting? Perhaps not surprisingly, the same section “Principles Before Personalities” in “The A.A. Group” includes subsections “What Is an Informed A.A. Group Conscience?” (pages 28-29) and “A.A. Business Meetings” (page 30), separated by another subsection on suggested questions for an A.A. group inventory.

Experience shared in the pamphlet as well as that received by the General Service Office through correspondence suggests that group practices vary widely. Some groups consider a business meeting and a group conscience meeting to be the same thing. Other groups hold business meetings for everyday group matters such as rotation of trusted servants; budgets for group expenses including rent, literature and coffee supplies; and allocation of group funds to help other A.A. entities (intergroup, G.S.O.) carry the message. These everyday matters may be decided through a simple majority vote.

For matters facing the group that may not easily be determined by a simple majority vote, a group conscience meeting may be preferred over a business meeting. Examples of such issues include whether the group goes from an open to a closed meeting; changing the way that the group ends its meetings; or taking a scheduled group inventory.

Correspondence with G.S.O. About Group Problems

Once in a while, an A.A. group reaches out to the General Service Office staff for some shared experience in order to resolve a group problem. Some of these issues may have their roots in the history of A.A., while some arise out of current culture and technology.

One question that has been asked frequently over time — and that has resulted in a very thick correspondence folder of “shared experience” — is the difference between “open” and “closed” A.A. meetings. Some A.A. members have shared their belief that an open A.A. meeting means that anyone who shows up can speak about anything that comes to mind, including problems with drugs and other addictions, while closed meetings are about recovery from alcoholism. When asked to

respond, G.S.O. staff members will guide correspondents to the section of “The A.A. Group” pamphlet on page 13 that reads, “Closed meetings are for A.A. members only, or for those who have a drinking problem and ‘have a desire to stop drinking.’ Open meetings are available to anyone interested in Alcoholics Anonymous’ program of recovery from alcoholism. Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers.

“At both types of meetings, the A.A. chairperson may request that participants confine their discussion to matters pertaining to recovery from alcoholism. Whether open or closed, A.A. group meetings are conducted by A.A. members who determine the format of their meetings.”

Another question often asked is, What is the difference between a meeting and a group? The pamphlet notes on page 13, “The main difference between meetings and groups is that A.A. groups generally continue to exist outside the prescribed meeting hours, ready to provide Twelfth Step help when needed.” Or, as it has sometimes been paraphrased, “What goes on between the reading of the Preamble at the beginning and the prayer at the end is the meeting. What goes on outside of that time is the group.”

Love and Tolerance

Returning to the idea that one way to resolve group problems is “a good sense of humor, cooling-off periods, patience, courtesy, willingness to listen and to wait — plus a sense of fairness and trust in a ‘Power greater than ourselves,’” James S., a Manhattan A.A. member with over 30 years of sobriety, shares the following experience with recent meetings online:

“I was at my home group last week,” he says. “We’ve been meeting online throughout the pandemic, but things have slowly started going downhill. I guess people are getting tired of having all of their meetings online — I know I am — and I looked around the screen at all the little boxes. One guy was seated in front of his computer lifting hand weights. Two people were apparently texting each other and laughing about something totally unrelated during the speaker’s talk. A selection of cats moved back and forth, in and out of people’s laps. A dog — thankfully muted — jumped at the screen, barking to be let outside. A woman was sitting in her pajamas, listening on earphones. And many, if not most of the screens were blank, showing a name only, leading me to wonder if they were actually there at all.

“I was starting to feel that righteous indignation building inside of me that is almost always the precursor to a furious, power-driven diatribe, either real or taking place only in my mind, until I remembered the line from the Big Book (the chapter ‘Into Action’): ‘Love and tolerance of others is our code.’”

These challenging moments and others are played out in groups across the U.S. and Canada on a nightly basis, both in-person and online. Sometimes the concerns are more substantive and relate to the length or content of

a person’s sharing, the use of crosstalk or profanity at meetings, members talking excessively about drug use, or other issues that people can find upsetting.

Yet, somehow A.A. has been able to transcend these kinds of difficulties over the years, with the recognition that “We alcoholics see that we must work together and hang together, else most of us will finally die alone,” as Bill W. notes in the introduction to the long form of the Traditions in the Big Book. We need each other, as the saying goes, “warts and all,” and A.A. unity ultimately trumps the many peccadilloes that individual members may bring to meetings.

It’s not a new problem, by any means, as Bill W. described the state of things within A.A. meetings circa 1946 with this description: “Moochers mooched, lonely hearts pined, committees quarreled, new clubs had unheard-of headaches, orators held forth, groups split wide open, members turned professional, sometimes whole groups got drunk, and local public relations went haywire.” Alcoholics, it seems, can test the patience of just about anybody.

So, can group problems really be healthy and desirable?

“I realize,” says James, “that I can’t compel people to pay attention or to legislate against texting in meetings. But I can keep the focus on why I’m at the meeting myself in the first place. Trying to control people’s behavior has never worked well in A.A. and I don’t need to be a meeting monitor. I just need a little love and tolerance. As it says in Tradition Nine, ‘Great suffering and great love are our only disciplinarians; we need no others.’”

Seventh Tradition Corner

For decades, all correspondence to G.S.O., including our contributions, have been sent to Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Over the years, Box 459 became such an integral part of A.A. that we named this newsletter after it.

Now, your office and board are excited to announce that we are embracing a new method of processing our Seventh Tradition contributions that will reduce costs, ultimately allowing for more investment in services to members and groups. To this end, we are excited to announce that a separate post office box has been established for Seventh Tradition contributions only. This change will enable us to process contributions much more efficiently and at a significant savings to the Fellowship.

Effective immediately, please send contribution checks to:

Post Office Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

For more information, please contact our Member Services team at memberservices@aa.org or 212-870-3023.

box 459 BULLETIN BOARD

Items and Ideas on Area Gatherings for A.A.s — Via G.S.O.

Winter 2021

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

NOTE: Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, events may be canceled or moved to online formats. Please contact the event coordinators as listed before making your plans.

Calendar of Events

Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers, not as an endorsement by the General Service Office. Please note that we cannot attest to the accuracy, relevancy, timeliness, or completeness of information provided by any linked site. **For any additional information, please use the event contact information provided.**

December

8—*Online*. Monthly Area 19 Service Sharing Sessions via Zoom. Second Wednesday monthly, June through December, 6pm CT. Info: casa@chicagoaa.org.

January 2022

6-8—*Laughlin, Nevada*. 32nd River Roundup. Write: Ch., 603 Marina Blvd, Bullhead City, AZ 86442; riverroundup@rcco-aa.org

7-9—*Garden City, Kansas*. 51st Annual Southwest Kansas Conference. Write: 102 Carefree Lane, Garden City, KS 67846.

15-16—*Bismarck, North Dakota*. Rule 62 Rendezvous Woodstock of ND. Write: P.O. Box 268 Bismarck, ND 58502. Info: www.rule62rendezvous.org

21-23—*Spring, Texas*. 59th SETA Convention. Write: 3012 State Hwy 30 Suite 101, Box #168 Huntsville, TX. 77340; Info: http://www.setaconvention.org

February

11-13 — *Liverpool, New York*. Salt City Mid-Winter Roundup. Write: Ch., PO Box 367, Syracuse, NY 13209; www.saltcityroundup.com

18-20—*Lone Wolf, Oklahoma*. 19th SW Unity Conference Sunlight of the Sprit. Write: Ch., Box 3464, Lawton, OK 73502; sosconference@yahoo.com

March

17-20 — *San Jacinto, California*. Inland Empire AA Convention; Write: 1307 E. Citrus Avenue, Redlands, CA 92373. Info: www.ieaac.org

18-20—*Atlantic City, New Jersey*. 56th Area 45 Gen. Svc Conv. Write: Ch., Box 3724, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034; https://area45convention.org/

18-20—*Niagara Falls, New York*. 14th Annual Cataract City Conv. Write: Ch., Box 734, Niagara Falls, NY 14301; niagaraintergroup@gmail.com

25-27—*Ames, Iowa*. Aim for Ames. Write: Ch., Box 2522, Ames, IA 50010; www.aimforames.org

27-29—*Saratoga Springs, New York*. Saratoga Springfest. Write: Ch., 632 Eastline Rd., Ballston Spa, NY 12020 www.saratogaspriest.org

April

1-3 — *Tarrytown, New York*. 2022 SENY Convention. Write: convention@aaseny.org; Info: https://www.aaseny.org

14-16 — *Tegucigalpa, Honduras*. 40 Convención de Alcohólicos Anónimos en América Central; Info: aadehonduras.org

22-24 — *Saint Louis, Missouri*. Spring Fling Convention; Info: www.springflingstl.com

May

14-15—*Essington, Pennsylvania*. XII Convencion Hispana de AA de Pennsylvania. Write: pacohispana2020@gmail.com; Info: https://paconvencionhispana.org

27-29—*Anaheim, California*. XVI Convencion Estatal Hispana de California. Write: 330 N. State College Blvd. Suite 207, Anaheim, CA 92806; https://convencionestatalca.org

GRAPEVINE LA VIÑA

To sign up for our Daily Quote and monthly newsletter visit - **aagrapevine.org aalavina.org**

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Find us on YouTube at **The AA Grapevine Channel**

Listen to our Podcast **aagrapevine.org/podcast**

Planning a Future Event?

To be included in the *Box 4-5-9* Calendar, information must be received at G.S.O. four months prior to the event. We list events that are area, regional, national or international in scope.

For your convenience and ours — please type or print the information to be listed on the Bulletin Board page, and mail to Editor: Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 or literature@aa.org

Date of event: from _____ to _____, 20_____

Name of event: _____

Location (Please indicate if online): _____ CITY STATE OR PROVINCE

Address to list: _____ P.O. BOX (OR NUMBER AND STREET)

CITY STATE OR PROVINCE ZIP CODE

Website or email: _____ (NO PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESSES)

Contact person: _____ NAME PHONE # AND EMAIL