

Man On the Bed: A.A. Number Three

Do you ever wonder what it would have been like to be twelfth-stepped by Bill W. and Dr. Bob? Well, Bill D., a well-known attorney and Akron city councilman, who in the summer of 1935 had once again been admitted to Akron City Hospital, in DTs and strapped to a gurney this time, having already punched out two nurses, described it this way some years after the fact.

“I looked up and there’s two great big fellows over six foot tall, very likable looking,” said Bill in a conversation he had with Bill W. in 1953. “Before very long we began to relate some incidents of our drinking and, naturally, pretty soon, I realized both of you knew what you were talking about.... A lot of folks tried to talk to me about my drinking — the fact is, they’d come around...and I’d just dry up and wouldn’t listen to them. They told me I ought to quit. Of course, I knew that much better than they did, because on top of all the things they knew, only I knew how sick I got.

“Both of you were very likable fellows, and after a while I remember that I had been doing quite a bit of the talking.... So, after hearing some of my story, you turned around and said to Doc — I don’t think you knew I heard you, but I did — you said, ‘Well, I believe he’s worth saving and working on.’”

Bill D., who later came to be known in A.A. circles as the “Man on the Bed,” continued. “You both said to me, ‘Do you want to quit drinking?’ It’s none of our business

about your drinking. We’re not up here trying to take any of your rights or privileges away from you, but we have a program whereby we think we can stay sober. Part of that program is that we take it to someone else that needs it and wants it. Now, if you don’t want it, we’ll not take up your time, and we’ll be going and looking for someone else.”

They then asked Bill a number of questions. Did he think he could quit of his own accord, without any help? Did he believe in a higher power and, if so, would he be willing to go to this higher power and ask for help?

They left this with Bill to think over and, as he lay in the hospital bed, he went over his drinking history in his mind.

“I reviewed what liquor had done to me...the opportunities that I had discarded, went over the possibilities and things that had been given me and how I had wasted them, and I finally came to the conclusion that if I didn’t want to quit, I certainly *ought* to want to quit....”

When the two twelfth-steppers returned sometime later, Dr. Bob asked Bill if he wanted to quit drinking. “Yes, Doc,” said Bill, “I would like to quit, at least for five, six or eight months, until I get things straightened up, and begin to get the respect of my wife and some other people back, get my finances fixed up, and so on.”

Bill W. and Dr. Bob both laughed heartily. Then, according to Bill, one of the two turned to him. “We’ve got some bad news for you. It was bad news for us, and it will probably be bad news for you. Whether you quit six days, months, or years, if you go out and take a drink or two you’ll end up in this hospital, tied down, just like you have been in these past six months. You are an alcoholic.”



This full-color painting first appeared as a Grapevine center spread in the December 1955 issue. It proved so popular that four-color prints were made available separately. The artist, Robert M., was a volunteer illustrator for the Grapevine, and in 1956 he presented the painting to A.A. co-founder Bill W. In his thank you letter Bill wrote: “Your representation of ‘The Man on the Bed’ hangs in my studio at Bedford Hills. ...The whole heart and essence of A.A. can be seen just by looking at it.”

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“As far as I know that was the first time I had ever paid any attention to the word. I figured I was a drunk. And you said, ‘No, you have a disease, and it doesn’t make any difference how long you do without it, after a drink or two you’ll end up just like you are now.’ That certainly was disheartening news, at the time.”

The next thing Bill W. and Dr. Bob asked was whether or not Bill thought he could quit for 24 hours. “‘Sure ...anybody can do that, for 24 hours,’” said Bill. “‘That’s what we’re talking about. Just 24 hours at a time,’” the two A.A. co-founders said. “‘That sure did take a load off my mind,’” said Bill. “‘Every time I’d start thinking about drinking, I wouldn’t think of long, dry, arid years without having a drink, but this idea for 24 hours.’”

Noting that Bill W. and Dr. Bob seemed genuinely happy to be sober, Bill said, “You seemed to be so well pleased with your sobriety, and you looked it and seemed to talk so confidently yourselves that, really, after a day or two I began to, along with my wife, have confidence, at least to a certain extent, that it could be done... I wasn’t afraid that the program wouldn’t work, but I still was doubtful whether I would be able to hang on to the program. But I did come to the conclusion that I was willing to put everything I had into it....”

“I remained in the hospital eight days. During those eight days I had raw sauerkraut and raw tomatoes the whole time. On the Fourth of July, Doc came by the hospital and I had a friend who had told me I could have her cottage for a week out at the lakes.” Piling into a car, Bill W., Dr. Bob and his wife, and Bill and his wife all went together out to the cottage. “There wasn’t any liquor around. For the first week it was rather tough. The other folks would come out and visit us most every day, and we would go over on a little island there and take a picnic lunch and sit around and try to devise a means of staying sober, in addition to what we already had. Naturally, the fellowship and being busy all the time was a great help. I

was out there for more than a week and was helped a lot by these fellows coming out there. It was rather rough, but I still was willing and still wanted to go ahead and get rid of this problem I had....”

“Of course, as time went on, I began to get my health back and began to feel I didn’t have to hide from people all the time....”

“I still go to meetings,” said Bill from the vantage point of many years of sobriety. “Because I like to go. I meet the people that I like to talk to. Another reason that I go,” he concluded, “is that I’m still grateful for those good years that I’ve had.”

Bill D. died in Akron on September 17, 1954. In memoriam, Bill W. wrote, “That is, people say he died, but he really didn’t. His spirit and works are today alive in the hearts of uncounted A.A.s, and who can doubt that Bill already dwells in one of those many mansions in the great beyond. The force of the great example that Bill set in our pioneering time will last as long as A.A. itself.”

■ Grapevine Seeks Senior Editor

A.A. Grapevine, Inc., publisher of the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous, is currently seeking a senior editor to work in its New York City office. Written, edited and illustrated by A.A. members and others interested in alcoholism, Grapevine, La Viña and AAGrapevine.org, reflect the experience, strength and hope of its contributors and carry the message of thousands of alcoholics. A.A. Grapevine, Inc. also publishes collections of Grapevine and La Viña stories in books, e-books, CDs and other related products.

The senior editor is responsible for developing editorial content of the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and for overseeing the publication of the Grapevine and La Viña magazines and Grapevine or La Viña items, both in print and digital, and for leading a creative, committed editorial team. In addition, the senior editor participates in the annual General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous and at various A.A. events. The position reports to the Grapevine’s executive editor/publisher.

Requirements: Five years of editorial and management experience; demonstrated writing and editing skill; B.A. or the equivalent; and a working knowledge of the Steps and Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Fluency in English, proficiency in Spanish is a plus.

Interested members may forward their résumé and cover letter, by May 31, 2012, to resumes@aagrapevine.org.

■ ‘My name is... and I’m an alcoholic’

It’s a phrase heard in A.A. meetings around the world. But where does it come from? Why do we say it? And should we keep doing so?

Surely, identification is an important concept in A.A. In fact, it could be considered the keystone of the program’s entire philosophy: one alcoholic helping another.

Yet, as a Fellowship with lots of suggestions, but no official “rules,” must a person declare, as many do when introducing themselves at meetings, that he or she is an alcoholic?

In A.A.’s formative years, cofounder Bill W. struggled with this question and often wrote about the dilemma facing newcomers as they grappled with their disease, often for the first time and often in a relatively “public” way at A.A. meetings.

Bill wrote convincingly about allowing the newcomer as much freedom as possible in deciding just how and when he or she might identify as an alcoholic, noting in a 1946 essay written for the Grapevine, titled “Who Is a Member of Alcoholics Anonymous?” — an article which later formed the foundation of Tradition Three: “That is why we judge the newcomer less and less. If alcohol is an uncontrollable problem to him and he wishes to do something about it, that is enough for us... Nowadays, in most groups, he doesn’t even have to admit that he is an alcoholic. He can join A.A. on the mere suspicion that he may be one, that he may already show the fatal symptoms of our malady.”

Bill clarified further, as referred to in the “Twelve Traditions Illustrated” pamphlet in the section on Tradition Three: “Who determines whether or not newcomers qualify, whether they do want to stop drinking? Obviously nobody except the newcomers themselves; everybody else simply has to take their word for it. In fact, they don’t even have to say it aloud. And that’s fortunate for many of us who arrived at A.A. with only a halfhearted desire to stay sober. We are alive because the A.A. road stayed open to us.”

Bill rarely, if ever, introduced himself from the podium specifically as an alcoholic, and there is nothing in A.A. Conference-approved literature indicating how members should introduce themselves at A.A. meetings or whether it is necessary to do so at all.

Yet, in today’s A.A. environment, tense moments often follow in meetings when people don’t introduce themselves as alcoholics or, conversely, overidentify themselves with phrases like “I am a cross-addicted alcoholic,” or “I’m chemically dependent.”

Many A.A. members feel this second case is the more concerning, threatening our unity and singleness of purpose. “When I say at an A.A. function that ‘I’m a drug addict and an alcoholic’ or ‘I’m a cross-addicted alcoholic,’” wrote Rosemary P., a past delegate from Pittsford,

New York, in an enduring article in the January 1990 Grapevine, “I am telling you that I’m a special kind of alky — my case of alcoholism is different from yours! I add an extra dimension to my disease — one that, because of our singleness of purpose, should not be addressed at an A.A. meeting. I have just cut our common bond in half and, more importantly, have diluted my own purpose for being there.”

So, where did this custom of self-identification come from and how did it etch itself so indelibly into the A.A. landscape of the 21st century?

Like many things in A.A., nobody is really sure just where it came from, and with only a few of the Fellowship’s early-timers left, not many are able to provide plausible theories, leaving little more than speculation to go on.

However, according to an early friend of A.A., the late Henrietta Seiberling, the expression dates back to meetings of A.A.’s forerunner, the Oxford Group Movement, which had its heyday in the early 1930s. Mrs. Seiberling, a nonalcoholic who had sought spiritual help in the Oxford Group meetings, was the person who introduced Bill W. to A.A.’s other cofounder, Dr. Bob, who was then struggling to deal with his drinking by attending Oxford Group meetings in Akron.

At small meetings, the members knew one another and didn’t need to identify themselves. But in the large “public” meetings, where there was “witnessing” along the lines of an A.A. talk today, personal identification became necessary. Chances are that someone at some time said, “*I am an alcoholic*,” but Mrs. Seiberling couldn’t be sure. Nor did she remember that the phrase was used at early A.A. meetings in Akron, before publication of the Big Book.

One early New York A.A. does recall hearing the expression, however, sometime after World War II, in 1945 or 1946; and it is a matter of record that in 1947 a documentary film entitled “I Am an Alcoholic” was produced by RKO Pathe, lending further credence to the notion that the phrase was recognizable in recovery circles even then.

Growing from there, it has now become an almost obligatory part of the lexicon of recovery and, with its various alternatives and self-revelatory permutations, a somewhat controversial way of introducing oneself at meetings.

Today, there are many who feel that resolution of the conflict they feel when members introduce themselves as “addicts” or with some other categorization beyond simply “alcoholic,” lies within the Fellowship. Suggested Rosemary P., “Isn’t it the responsibility of each of us to keep our program intact, to pass it on to the newcomer as it was given to us? Importantly, can we do this with

patient explanation, tolerance toward differences — and more patient explanation? I believe we can, through committed sponsorship, strong home groups and active service. That way, our new members will learn how to be a part of A.A., not a fragment of it.”

Others feel it is important to be honest and reflective of “who they really are” in their introductions at meetings, while many feel it is important to separate our issues and take them individually to the programs designed to address them: Narcotics Anonymous for drug addiction; Overeaters Anonymous for addiction to food, and so on. And still others feel that it is less important how we identify ourselves, either as “addicts” or “alcoholics,” and offer an introduction at meetings simply as “a member of A.A.”

Finding a balance among these approaches is an ongoing exercise in humility, trust and acceptance within the Fellowship, as members seek to be inclusive yet cognizant of the singular bonds of alcoholism that keep us all connected.

As expressed in the Big Book, in the Chapter “Into Action,” “We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code.”

■ Opening for Class A (nonalcoholic) Trustee

The trustees’ Nominating Committee asks that trustees, delegates and directors submit any names they deem appropriate as candidates for Class A trustee, to replace the General Service Board trustee Judge Rogelio R. Flores, when he rotates in 2013. Class A trustees are chosen from

a variety of professional backgrounds, including doctors, lawyers, clergy, media, social workers and educators.

Please submit your candidate’s business or professional résumés to the Secretary, trustees’ Nominating Committee, General Service Office by July 31, 2012.

■ Résumés for Trustees Election due Jan. 1, 2013

Three new Class B (alcoholic) trustees — from the East Central and Southeast regions and the trustee-at-large/U.S. — will be elected at the General Service Conference in April 2013. Résumés must be received at G.S.O. no later than January 1, 2013, and must be submitted by delegates only.

The new East Central regional trustee will succeed Pam R., of Beverly Hills, Michigan; the next Southeast regional will follow El N. of Walhalla, South Carolina. The new trustee-at-large/U.S. will fill the position currently held by Don M., of Metairie, Louisiana.

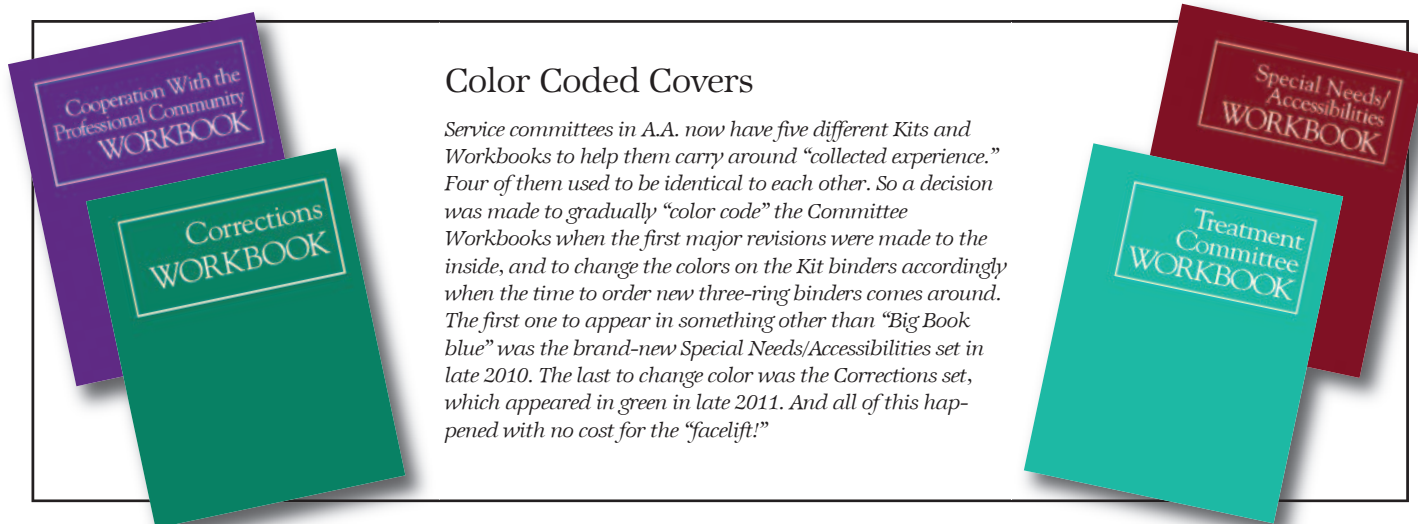
A sound A.A. background is a basic qualification for Class B trustees. Ten years of continuous sobriety is desirable but not mandatory. Candidates should be active in both local and area A.A. affairs; and, because trustees serve the entire Fellowship, they require the background and the willingness to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

Color Coded Covers

Service committees in A.A. now have five different Kits and Workbooks to help them carry around “collected experience.” Four of them used to be identical to each other. So a decision was made to gradually “color code” the Committee Workbooks when the first major revisions were made to the inside, and to change the colors on the Kit binders accordingly when the time to order new three-ring binders comes around. The first one to appear in something other than “Big Book blue” was the brand-new Special Needs/Accessibilities set in late 2010. The last to change color was the Corrections set, which appeared in green in late 2011. And all of this happened with no cost for the “facelift!”



■ International Convention Information

2015 International Convention Theme

“80 Years — Happy, Joyous and Free” was selected as the theme for our international celebration of A.A.’s 80th Anniversary, July 2-5, 2015, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Thank you for responding to the call; we received many suggestions from A.A. members. The trustees’ International Convention Committee considered each suggestion carefully and the General Service Board approved their selection at their January meeting.

Big meetings will be held in the Georgia Dome, and other meetings will take place in the Georgia World Congress Center and at local hotels.

Other Convention Information

Notifications about the Convention, including housing and registration information, will be mailed out and posted on G.S.O.’s A.A Web site (www.aa.org) as we get closer to the Convention. Until then, watch for articles in *Box 4-5-9*, which is mailed to the general service representative of every group in the U.S. and Canada listed with G.S.O and posted on the Web site.

In 2020 the International Convention will be held in Detroit, Michigan. Site selection for the 2025 International Convention will begin this fall, with a letter to all delegate areas seeing which areas have an interest in hosting the Convention. The final decision will be made by the General Service Board after consideration by the General Service Conference.

We look forward to seeing you in Atlanta — a day at a time!

■ Coming Soon — to a Place Near You

If you have never experienced a Regional Forum you are in for a treat. If you are a former Forum attendee you have probably been waiting for the next one in your area. Don’t miss an exciting and informative A.A. event.

Save the Date: 2012

- *Western Canada*—June 1-3, The Coast Edmonton Plaza Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta.
- *Eastern Canada*—July 6-8, Holiday Inn/Parkway Convention Centre, St. Catherine’s, Ontario.
- *East Central (Additional)*—August 10-12, Holiday Inn and Convention Center, Mt. Vernon, Illinois.
- *Pacific*—September 14-16, Westmark Hotel Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska.
- *Southeast*—November 9-11, Marriott Boca Raton, Boca Raton, Florida.

■ 62nd Conference — Maintaining Our Services

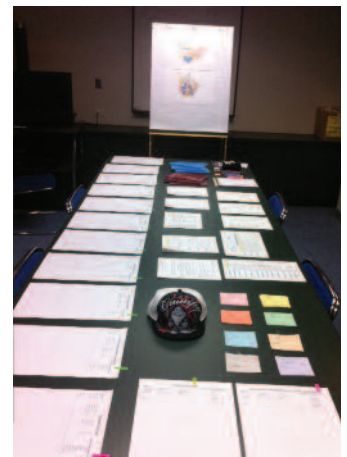
“So, since 1951 we have been holding these yearly Conferences, to see whether this movement was interested enough, was responsible enough, felt those services were worthwhile enough, to maintain so long as God will need this society. And I think it’s the conclusion of every delegate who has been there that yes, we should take these things over. So...on behalf of...Smithy [Dr. Bob Smith] and me, we shall say to you, here is the remainder of your Third Legacy.... To you we hand the last torch. Carry on.”

Just as A.A. co-founder Bill W. predicted above, speaking at the 1954 Texas State Convention, delegates to the 62nd General Service Conference will attend with the belief that A.A. as a whole still feels responsible for maintaining the society known as Alcoholics Anonymous. They will do this by carrying the conscience of their areas to the big meetings, listening to other delegates present their own area consciences, and then coming together with what has come to be known as “the closest thing that A.A. has to a group conscience of the whole.”

In the midst of all the preparations and local discussion of agenda items, it may appear to some onlookers to be “more of those darn politics,” but to those attending it looks more like their group business meetings — “just on a larger scale and in suits.”

This year the theme selected by previous years’ delegates is “Anonymity: Our Spiritual Responsibility in the Digital Age.” And this theme will be echoed at many local area conventions, workshops and other activities throughout the Fellowship of A.A.

Prior to the week of April 22-28, 2012, some of you reading this in your group or in your General Service position may be asked to take part in discussion around topics such as: “Consider a suggestion that A.A. establish a presence on Facebook for the purpose of providing information about A.A. to the public”; “Consider adding the phrase ‘nonalcoholics may attend as observers’ to the ‘Singleness of Purpose’ statement in C.P.C. literature”; or “Discuss a suggestion to develop a pamphlet for the alco-



The Conference Committee selection process takes place in December for the annual General Service Conference. The names of new delegates are drawn from the hat to replace outgoing delegates on each committee. This photograph illustrates some of the preparations involved in the process.

holic with mental illness.” If you are, please know that you will be taking part in “seeing whether this movement (A.A.) is interested enough, responsible enough, feels these services are worthwhile enough, to maintain so long as God will need this society.”

■ Openings for A.A.W.S. Nontrustee Directors

A.A. World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S.) has started its search to fill vacancies for two nontrustee directors, which will open following the 2013 General Service Conference. Interested A.A. members are encouraged to submit a résumé.

In seeking applications for all vacancies in Alcoholics Anonymous, the Fellowship is committed to creating a large applicant file of qualified persons, which reflects the inclusiveness and diversity of A.A. itself.

Basic qualifications for this position are: a minimum of seven years of continuous sobriety; a sound business or professional background is preferable, but not limited to the following areas—finance, management, publishing, legal, or information technology; the ability to work with others; availability to attend all regular meetings of the A.A.W.S. Board (currently, up to eight per year), three weekend meetings of trustees’ committees (to which corporate board directors are appointed), and the Conference, for one week in April.

In addition, directors may be called upon to attend subcommittee or other meetings and to represent A.A.W.S. at Regional Forums or other A.A. functions. Résumés should be sent to Director of Staff Services, at the General Service Office, no later than July 1, 2012.

■ Opening for A.A. Grapevine Nontrustee Directors

A.A. Grapevine’s Corporate Board has started its search to fill vacancies for nontrustee directors that may open following the 2013 General Service Conference. Interested A.A. members are encouraged to submit a résumé.

Basic qualifications for this position are: A minimum of seven years of continuous sobriety with a working knowledge of the A.A. service structure and familiarity with *The A.A. Service Manual*; ability to work with others in a group conscience setting; experience serving on boards of directors (nonprofit experience is most helpful); knowledge of organizational strategic planning, problem-solving and implementation of change; experience with organizational management and finances; and familiarity and experience with publications media including new communication technologies and methodologies.

The time commitment required is significant and includes availability to attend four planning committee

meetings of the A.A. Grapevine Board, as well as attendance at three General Service Board weekends, which include quarterly A.A. Grapevine Board meetings and meetings of trustees’ committees (to which corporate board directors are appointed). Trustees’ committees may also include conference calls between in-person meetings. In addition, directors attend the General Service Conference for one week in April and may be called upon to represent A.A. Grapevine at Regional Forums or other A.A. functions.

In seeking applications for all vacancies in A.A., the Fellowship is committed to creating a large applicant file of qualified persons, which reflects the inclusiveness and diversity of Alcoholics Anonymous. Résumés should be sent to Janet Bryan, office manager, A.A. Grapevine, by May 31, 2012.

■ Beyond the Call of Duty

Call the Denver, Colorado Area Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, asking for help or information, and chances are you will reach Jo N., the office manager, no matter where the physical office might be.

Jo became the office manager a few years ago, one August. The office, at that time, had been in the same building for 37 years. Just ten months later, in June of the following year, Jo came to work one morning to find the building was on fire. “When I arrived the building was surrounded by fire trucks and smoke was coming out of the lobby of the building,” she recalled.

Jo immediately called her roommate and said, “We need to transfer the office phone number to our house.” She then talked to the firemen, still battling the blaze, who said they had to secure the building before occupants could retrieve their belongings.

Jo continued: “So I walk to my house and the phone is ringing. I pick up the phone and it is the first forwarded call from our office. The caller said, ‘You talked to me in the middle of the night about five years ago, and you weren’t very nice to me?’ I asked the caller, ‘were you drunk when you called me,’ and he said ‘Yeah,’ and I said, ‘That sounds about right,’ Then he said that he had gone to the meeting I suggested that night and that he was coming up on his fifth birthday in A.A. and he just wanted me to know that. And that was the first call I took that morning.”

Jo added, “When I walked into my apartment that morning, I was thinking, ‘Where is the insurance? Are we covered for this? What if we don’t have the money?’ and then, when I walked in the front door and picked up the phone and talked to Dwayne, I knew that everything was going to be okay.”

Jo returned to the office later that day and retrieved the bare essentials — the check book, the insurance poli-


cy and the “when and wheres” — and returned to her home where she answered the rerouted phone as if she were at the office for the rest of the day. At the end of the day, she recalls, “I said, I don’t know what we’re going to do next.” So she called up the General Service Office, explained the situation, and requested extra literature for the area’s needs. “We had to keep providing literature for the Fellowship.” She had to rent a storage facility to house all the books.

Jo’s apartment is a 925 square foot two bedroom condo. “Sometimes it felt like a traffic jam in there,” she said. “We had some emergency insurance cash, a little scanner/copier/fax machine and the work station I already had set up and we ran that office out of my living room for three months, so I still had the privacy of my bedroom. It wasn’t until later that I realized my condo could have really hampered me for running a business out of a residence.”

When the area did finally find a new office, Jo was amazed at the kindness of the Fellowship. “The volunteers were great. One guy came in and painted, one moved walls, another moved the ceiling around and they all donated their time and energy and helped the Fellowship with a sense of ownership.” Today, the office is in a stand-alone facility.

Recalling that time, Jo said, “It did get a little bit overwhelming. I was a little oblivious, and I could have gone crazy trying to fill all those orders. I feel like I had more information than anyone should have to have to stay sober.” But, she added, “The woman who ran the office before me always said, ‘These are our adventures after... it is always an adventure.’”

John M., a fellow A.A. member in the Denver area, says that “Jo is an A.A. hero. She went beyond the call of duty.” Jo deflects the compliment lightly: “Wow. We tend to be a little dramatic! Just a tad. I didn’t really know what I was doing. I knew everything was just going to be fine, so I just did the next thing in front of me.”



The cover features a black and white photograph of a man sitting at a desk, reading a book. The background is dark and slightly blurred, showing a desk with a lamp and some papers. The title and author information are printed in white and red text on a dark red background at the bottom of the cover.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART
Bill W.'s
Grapevine Writings

Now in e-Book

The Language of the Heart, Grapevine’s volume of cofounder Bill W.’s writings for Grapevine, is now available in e-book format. Visit the aagrapevine.org store and click on the e-book section. Available for Apple, Kindle and Nook. \$9.99.

■ Creating the French and Spanish Voice of A.A.

With more than five different ways to say “hangover” in Spanish and numerous distinctions in how alcoholics write and speak French in Montreal as opposed to Paris, the translators at the General Service Office in New York face a multitude of challenges as they make an ever-widening range of A.A. materials and texts available for thousands of French- and Spanish-speaking A.A. members and groups.

For many years, G.S.O. has provided equivalent services in French and Spanish throughout the U.S./Canada Conference area 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. And on the publishing front, a quick look at the A.A. World Services, Inc. literature catalog gives evidence to the broad assortment of materials now available in all three languages.

Providing such services presents a host of opportunities to reach alcoholics in their native tongues with the life-saving information A.A. has to offer, but it also comes with some ongoing challenges — not the least of which is the critical aspect of translation.

“Languages are living realities, adapting to changing environments, local customs and various parts of the world where they are spoken,” says Lise P., who has been translating A.A. literature into French since 1971, when she was nine months sober.

“Languages change,” she explains. “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. The written style of the 19th century cannot be used any more,” she notes. “A new one has replaced it, more in keeping with contemporary realities.”

Working as an independent contractor with her partner, Fern L., the two provide the bulk of French translating for A.A.W.S. — from books and pamphlets to reports, newsletters, service material, and most recently a set of technical instructions for accessing A.A.’s new e-books online. Covering such a mix of materials requires an eclectic combination of skills and sensitivities, allowing the translator to adapt to the different linguistic styles of the original material, whatever it is.

“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 didn’t speak like a lawyer or a businessman or a judge. His style was down-to-earth, with occasional flights of poetry. We have to keep up with his personality; otherwise, the translation would lose a lot of its charm and meaning.”

Before getting sober, Lise worked as a journalist (noting wryly that she only covered events where alcohol was served), and Fern worked for many years in public rela-

tions for multinational corporations and as a consultant, where he wrote in both English and French, composing press releases, speeches, brochures and annual reports.

“In translation,” says Fern, “it is necessary to forget oneself, to avoid ‘overtranslation’ and to find the simplest way of saying the words and respecting the meaning.”

Creating a French voice for A.A.’s literature is the most rewarding aspect for this hands-on team and, through their work, according to Fern, “we have gotten a better understanding of A.A., not only in the U.S./Canada Conference, but around the world.” And, 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,” using an “international” French devoid of local expressions, slang or vernacular that can be understood most widely by all readers.

On the Spanish side, it is much the same, with the work of translating G.S.O.’s wide range of materials falling to two full-time translators, neither of whom is an A.A. member.

“In a day,” says Angel Calvillo, a native of Spain who started as a freelance translator at G.S.O. in 1988, “you might translate an article going into *Box 4-5-9*, something for the *Quarterly Report*, the revision of a pamphlet, and the translation and response to an e-mail sent in Spanish to G.S.O. There is no regular day.”

John deStefano, who gained fluency in Spanish through his work in the Peace Corps in South America in the late sixties, followed by several years of living and working in Spain, concurs. “You name it, it gets translated. We’ve done group news and activities updates, personal histories and committee sharing, budget summaries and financial updates. Recently, we’ve translated online copyright and privacy policies for the Web site, users guides for e-texts, and an Archives self-tour.”

Among the challenges, of course, is providing translations that are accurate, consistent and universally understood — no small task in a language spoken by approximately 350 million people in 21 countries.

“There has always been a question of addressing the many varieties of spoken Spanish,” says John, who started at G.S.O. in 1982 as an in-house freelancer, becoming a full-time employee in 1986. “But our efforts early on convinced us that the differences were not in the least an obstacle, and that there is an agreeable and accessible style with which we can effectively serve Spanish speakers worldwide.”

Whenever possible, say Angel and John, a word or expression translated in a certain way should be the same throughout. “If you translate ‘Fellowship’ as ‘Comunidad’ in one place, it shouldn’t appear in another as ‘Asociación.’”

Like Lise and Fern, John and Angel depend on each other’s strengths, with one a native English speaker and the other a native Spanish speaker. Working hard to avoid “obvious regionalisms,” each will pick up on different

aspects of a written piece that might elude the other.

“Working together helps us convey the nuances in the material we translate,” says Angel.

“The work is always interesting,” says John, “every sentence is new. And knowing that what we do can make a difference in people’s lives makes it all the more fulfilling.”

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.”

■ Adjusting to Change — Groups on the Move

The upper west side of Manhattan, in New York City, is home to over 60 A.A. groups — meeting in a variety of churches, synagogues, community centers, hospitals, schools, treatment centers and halfway houses — each with its own autonomous character and grateful members who fondly refer to each as their beloved home group. Yet, in today’s ever changing world, some of these groups are occasionally faced with the prospect of relocation — for any number of reasons: escalating rent, competition with other tenants for limited meeting space, groups outgrowing their original homes, etc. — and begin the difficult task of finding new space, keeping the group together, and setting up shop in new digs.

For any group, it can be a challenge. Do seasoned members drift off or do they stick with the group through the ups and downs of moving? How do newcomers react? And what lasting effect does the move have on everything from the group’s finances to individual friendships and overall group unity and strength?

Bob V., a member of the Chelsea-Riverside Group since the early 1980s when he first got sober, has been part of a number of group moves. “First it started with some temporary moves, where the church needed to undergo some renovations and asked us to relocate for a while. I remember a kind of esprit de corps feeling during that time — like it was an adventure, like sleeping out in a tent in the backyard or something. Everybody was excited and up to the challenge, even though it was a little unsettling. I’d have to remind myself every Monday and Friday night — retrain my feet to head for the new address.”

After the interim period, a more permanent move came about, as the church found some internal uses for the space on Friday nights and asked the group to either change its meeting schedule or find new space on that one night. “There wasn’t quite so much excitement this time,” says Bob, as the group decided to keep its meetings on the same nights but to split into two separate locations. “As

much as people tried — the new location didn't allow us to make coffee or have access to the kitchen like we had in the original space — the 'character' of the group began to change. It began to feel more like two groups than one, with a new configuration of chairs and different stuff on the walls in each place. And you know how you look for certain members who always seem to sit in the same seats every time? That all got disrupted."

Over the years a few more moves ensued for the Friday night meetings, finally spawning an entirely new group, with a new name, new coffee pots, new members — but the same primary purpose as the original group when it was together on both nights.

"Attendance at the meetings fell off, as did morale," says Bob, "but in the end each group settled into its new pattern. And, while change is not always the most pleasant thing to endure, there are certainly enough newcomers to go around and each group now has its hands full, setting up interim sponsorship programs, keeping the meetings going, getting people involved in service. Of course, I still miss some of those oldtimers from the original group — I can still picture where they sat — but there are a lot of new people filling the chairs who need our help."

The West End Group similarly has gone through a number of moves over the past fifteen or twenty years, moves one oldtimer characterizes as "rough on the serenity."

"It's amazing," says Laurie R., "how difficult a move from one location to another location literally two blocks away can be — and the changes it can bring about. It can feel a little like moving to another town."

For many years, the group met on West End Avenue and 86th Street, in the large roomy basement of an historic church, but when a new pastor took over, a new rental agreement was requested from all of the tenants that put the rent beyond the group's ability to pay.

"I remember a lot of emergency business meetings, a lot of attention being paid to our prudent reserve, and different groups of people canvassing other locations all over the west side to find a new space," says Laurie.

For a number of years, the group met in a church right around the corner in a basement large enough for the group to add a few different meetings in a separate room, a Step meeting on Tuesday nights and a new Beginners Workshop on Thursdays. But, unfortunately, a second move was ultimately necessary — along with another series of emergency business meetings — and the group moved a few blocks away to a church on 86th Street and Amsterdam Avenue.

"It was quite a difference, as the new location had to split us up into different meetings on different floors," says Laurie, "and the church had a gymnasium on the top floor, with an active kids' program, and regularly, throughout our main meetings on the floor below, the chandelier would shake and rattle like a herd of buffalo was passing through when the kids played dodge ball or whatever it was they were doing up there in the gym."

In addition, disembodied organ music and choir voices would often float up from the chapel through a back staircase as church members practiced for services on Sunday.

It was all par for the course, however, and the group continued carrying the message to newcomers, providing a home for its members, and trying to maintain its prudent reserve — a reserve it would need as yet another move brought the group back to its original location on West End Avenue a number of years later.

While group membership fluctuated with the different locations, and the character of the group evolved, attracting a progressively younger crowd, a core of regular members kept the continuity up throughout all these moves. "The Step meeting and the Beginners Workshop both survived," says Laurie, providing the group with a firm foundation in program principles and keeping it green for newcomers and oldtimers alike.

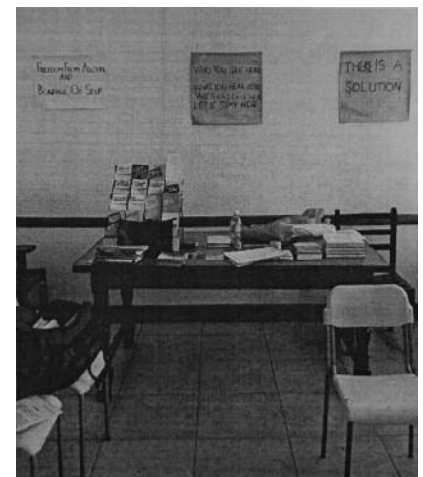
■ A.A. in Uganda

A.A. has been growing in the East African country of Uganda — with a translation of the Big Book into Luganda, one of the main local languages, just on the horizon. Meetings have been established in Kampala, the capital city, on every day of the week (except Monday), with other meetings taking root around the country as well. In addition, a meeting was recently started in a treatment facility in Kampala, where local members are trying to encourage use of the Twelve Steps as part of the treatment program.

Many Ugandans have embraced the program and their enthusiasm has spurred interest in translating A.A. materials into the additional languages of Luo, Ateso and Runyankole-Rukiga. Along with Luganda, these languages would cover most of the country.

In the interim, A.A.s in Uganda asked A.A. World Services, Inc. for permission to print an abridged version of the Big Book in English for English-speaking Ugandans. A.A.W.S. granted permission and even paid for the printing of 1,000 copies.

The 1,000 Big Books in English have the potential to help A.A. grow considerably in the months and years ahead and to continue taking root as the Luganda translation nears readiness.



■ Why the Conference Supports Grapevine

A small irony at every literature table of every A.A. meeting, is that while A.A. meetings sell Conference-approved A.A. literature, they are also selling non-Conference approved — but Conference *supported* — A.A. literature whenever they sell the A.A. Grapevine.

The A.A. Grapevine, the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous, began publishing in 1944, when A.A. was nine years old. It began as an eight-page newsletter containing book reviews and information of interest to recovering alcoholics. By 1948, it adopted the digest magazine format it retains today. Published twelve times a year, A.A. Grapevine contains first person stories from A.A. members regarding their recovery from alcoholism.

Every issue of A.A. Grapevine carries this disclaimer: “Conference Advisory Action 1986: ‘Since each issue of Grapevine cannot go through the Conference-approval process, the Conference recognizes A.A. Grapevine as the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous.’”

The Workbook for Grapevine, available online or from the Grapevine office, explains the deliberation process leading to this conclusion. It explains, “The process [for Conference approval] can take years for longer projects.... Since Grapevine comes out twelve times a year, and the Conference meets only once a year, the magazine would never be published if it had to go through the Conference review process. Thus, no individual issue is considered “Conference-approved.” In addition, Grapevine by charter must, as Bill W. put it, “be free to print articles expressing the widest differences of opinion on all topics of a strictly A.A. nature. They are not intended to be endorsements of A.A. policy.”

The distinction then follows, that while the Conference cannot logistically approve every issue of the Grapevine... “the Conference has always *supported* the concept of Grapevine and encouraged its distribution at meetings and other A.A. gatherings.” Hence the Conference Advisory Action is reprinted in every issue of Grapevine.

Further, the Workbook, points out, “And of course, Grapevine is part of the Conference itself. Grapevine staff members and directors are voting members of the Conference. A Conference Committee on Grapevine was formed in 1954, and any Grapevine matter of importance to the Fellowship as a whole is brought to the Conference through that committee. The Conference Charter recognizes Grapevine’s place in the general service structure and guarantees the right of Grapevine editors to accept or reject material for publication.”

As Bill W. expressed it in 1946, “The Grapevine will be the voice of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement. Its editors and staff will be primarily accountable to the A.A. movement as a whole.... Within the bounds of friendliness and good taste, the Grapevine will enjoy perfect freedom of speech on all matters directly pertaining to Alcoholics Anonymous.... Like the Alcoholics Anonymous movement it is to mirror, there will be but one central purpose: The Grapevine will try to carry the A.A. message to alcoholics and practice the A.A. principles in all its affairs.”

More information about Grapevine, the General Service Conference, and the Grapevine Conference Committee can be found in *The A.A. Service Manual*.

■ How to Support Your Grapevine

- Contribute your story or artwork.
- Utilize Grapevine in your meetings.
- Subscribe or give a gift subscription.
- Renew your subscription when requested.
- Give sponsees the gift of Grapevine books or other items.
- Pass Grapevine on to those who need it.
- Tell a friend about Grapevine and AAGrapevine.org.

Grapevine strives to be self-supporting through the sale of Grapevine items and subscriptions. Visit us at AAGrapevine.org.

Thank you for your continued support.



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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.

March

- 2-4—Cocoa Beach, Florida. Serenity Wknd Spring Women's Conf. Write: Ch., 8025 Gillette Ct., Orlando, FL 32836; www.serenitywomensconference.com
- 2-4—Dearborn, Michigan. March Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 185, Roseville, MI 48066-0185; www.semi.org
- 2-4—Billings, Montana. West Central Reg. Svc. Conf. Write: Ch., 2415 Patricia Ln., Billings, MT 59102; www.aa-montana.org
- 2-4—Albany, New York. 21st NERAASA. Write: Ch., Box 6328, Albany, NY 12206; www.neraasa.org
- 2-4—Bellevue, Washington. PRAASA. Write: Ch., Box 704, Bothell, WA 98041; www.praasa.org
- 9-11—Victorville, California. Sunshine of the Spirit Conv. Write: Ch., Box 1894, Apple Valley, CA 92307; www.highdesertconvention.com
- 9-11—Martinsburg, West Virginia. Area 73 Spring Assembly. Write: Ch., 127 W. South St., Martinsburg, WV 25401; www.aawv.org
- 14-17—Yuma, Arizona. Seventh Seniors In Sobriety International Conf. Write: Ch., Box 25659, Yuma, AZ 85367; www.seniorsinsobriety.org
- 15-18—Greenville, South Carolina. 65th SC State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 31337, Greenville, SC 29608; www.area62.org
- 16-17—Wichita, Kansas. 37th Wichita Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 1814, Wichita, KS 67201; www.aawichita.org
- 16-18—Virginia, Minnesota. 33rd Winter Rap-Up. Write: Ch., 10443 Sulin Rd., Orr, MN 55771; www.area35.org
- 16-18—Perrysburg, Ohio. 30th Area 55 Gen. Service Mini-Conf. Write: Ch., Box 401, Toledo, OH 43697-0401; area55chair.alternatedelegate@gmail.com
- 16-18—Banff, Alberta, Canada. Banff Roundup. Write: Ch., #2, 4015 1st St. SE, Calgary, AB T2G 4X7; www.calgaryaa.org
- 23-25—Ruston, Louisiana. 21st Upstate Conv. Write: Ch., Box 505, Ruston, LA 71273
- 23-25—Cherry Hill, New Jersey. 48th Area 45 Gen. Service Conv. Info: www.snjaaconvention.org

- 23-25—Niagara Falls, New York. Cataract City Conv. Write: Ch., Box 2006, Niagara Falls, NY 14301; cataractcityconvention@gmail.com
- 23-25—Tarrytown, New York. 44th SENY Conv. Write: Ch., Box 699, St. James, NY 11780; www.aasenyo.org
- 23-25—Morehead City, North Carolina. Crystal City Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 206, Harkers Island, NC 28531; ccr@ec.rr.com
- 23-25—Bayamón, Puerto Rico. 56^{va} Conv. Del Area 77. Inf.: Com. Org., Box 7075, Caguas, PR 00725; oficina@aa-pr.org
- 24-25—Moorhead, Minnesota. 32nd Winter Warm-Up. Write: Ch., 39953 340th Ave. SW, Climax, MN 56523
- 24-26—Aurora, Colorado. Area 10 Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 2644, Parker, CO 80134; www.coloradoaa.org
- 29-1—Hendersonville, North Carolina. 42nd Kanuga Lake Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 18412, Raleigh, NC 27619-8412; www.kanugalakeroundup.org
- 30-1—Saint Augustine, Florida. Fifth Internat'l Big Book Study Conv. Write: Ch., Box 830564, Ocala, FL 34483-0564; www.bbssconvention.com
- 30-1—Saint Augustine, Florida. North FL Area Assembly. Write: Ch., 728 West Ave., Cocoa, FL 32927
- 30-1—Ames, Iowa. Aim for Ames Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 2522, Ames, IA 50010; www.aimforames.org
- 30-1—Brainerd, Minnesota. Area 35 Northern MN Spring Assembly. Write: Ch., 1927 E. 21st St., Hibbing, MN 55746; www.area35.org
- 30-1—North Conway, New Hampshire. 46th Area 43 Conv. Write: Ch., 1330 Hooksett Rd., Hooksett, NH 03106; www.nhaa.net

- 30-1—Saratoga Springs, New York. EACYPAA X. Write: Ch., Box 191, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866; www.eacypaax.org
- 30-1—Rockville, Utah. Area 69 Pre-Conf. Assembly. Write: Ch., 1365 Ft. Pierce Dr., Ste. 30, St. George, UT 84791; www.utahaa.org
- 30-1—Paphos, Cyprus, Italy. Paphos Gathering. Info: paphos.gathering@gmail.com

April

- 5-9—Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. Australia Nat'l Conv. Info: www.melbourne2012.org
- 6-8—Independence, Ohio. 37th Area 54 Gen. Svc. Mini-Conf. Write: Ch., Box 22660, Beachwood, OH 44122; altdelegate@area54.org
- 13-15—Lake Charles, Louisiana. Lake Area Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 113, Lake Charles, LA 70602; lakearearoundup@gmail.com
- 13-15—Rutland, Vermont. 49th Area 70 Conv. Write: Ch., Box 634, Proctor, VT 05765; www.area70conventions@gmail.com
- 19-22—Eureka Springs, Arkansas. 36th Springtime in the Ozarks. Write: Ch., Box 264, Goshen, AR 72735; www.nwarkaa.org
- 19-22—Las Vegas, Nevada. 25th Men's Internat'l Conf. Write: Ch., Box 50355, Henderson, NV 89106; www.iaamclasvegas.org
- 20-22—Kailua Kona, Hawaii. 24th Big Island Bash. Write: Ch., Box 390727, Kailua Kona, HI 96739; www.bigislandbash.com
- 20-22—Erie, Pennsylvania. 37th Swing Into Spring Erie Area Spring Conv. Write: Ch., Box 1357, Erie, PA 16512-1357; www.aaeriepa.org

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 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 Editor: Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 or literature@aa.org

Date of event: from _____ to _____, 20____

Name of event: _____

Location: _____ CITY STATE OR PROVINCE

Planning Committee address: _____ P.O. BOX (OR NUMBER AND STREET)

CITY STATE OR PROVINCE ZIP CODE

Web site or E-mail: _____ (NO PERSONAL E-MAIL ADDRESSES)

Contact person: _____ NAME PHONE # AND OR E-MAIL

20-22—Bonnyville, Alberta, Canada. 50th Dist. 3 Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 7066, Bonnyville, AB T9N 2H4; aadistrict3@gmail.com

20-22—Dauphin, Manitoba, Canada. 62nd Dauphin Roundup. Write: Ch., 21- 4th Ave NW, Dauphin, MB R7N 1H9

20-22—Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, Québec, Canada. 39^e Congrès des Laurentides. Écrire: Prés., 551 Montée Alouette, Ste. Agathe-des-Monts, QC J8C 2Z7

27-29—Ridgecrest, California. 24th Indian Wells Valley Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 2021, Ridgecrest, CA 93556-2021; www.orgsites.com/ca/iwvroundup

27-29—Chipley, Florida. Chipley Country Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 677, Chipley, FL 32428; chipley_countryroundup@hotmail.com

27-29—Oliver, British Columbia, Canada. South Okanagan Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 392, Oliver, BC V0H 1T0

28-1—Alfáz del Pi, Alicante, España. I Conv. Internacional del Área 21. Info: convencion.int.area21@hotmail.com

May

4-6—Cocoa Beach, Florida. 22nd Spring Conf. Write: Ch., 3822 Oyster Ct., Orlando, FL 32812; www.woodstockofaa.com

4-6—Boise, Idaho. Area 18 Spring Assembly & Conv. Write: Ch., Box 8265, Boise, ID 83707

4-6—Kalispell, Montana. Area 40 Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 10274, Kalispell, MT 59904

4-6—Madison, Wisconsin. Area 75 Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 14062, Madison, WI 53708; www.area75.org

4-6—Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. 47th Niagara Blossom Time Conv. Write: Ch., Box 831, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6V6; www.blossomtimeconvention.com

4-6—Longueuil, Québec, Canada. 30^e Congrès Longueuil Rive-Sud. Écrire: Prés., CP 21061, Station Jacques-Cartier, Longueuil, QC J4J 5J4

11-13—Piatra Neamt, Romania. 21st Anniv. In Romania. Info: www.alcoolicianonimi.ro

18-20—Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. 52nd DE State Conv. Write: Ch., 1 Lindsay Ln, Ocean View, DE 19970; www.delawareaa.org

18-20—Port Angeles, Washington. 13th Olympic Roundup. Write: Ch., 1081, Port Angeles, WA 98362-0204; www.olympicroundup.com

18-20—Little Current, Ontario, Canada. 41st Rainbow Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 921, Little Current, ON P0P 1K0; rainbow-roundup@yahoo.ca

24-27—Dallas, Texas. 26th Gathering of Eagles. Write: Ch., Box 35865, Dallas, TX 75235; www.dallasgatheringofeagles.org

25-27—Riverside, California. XXXVII Conv. Hispana del Estado de CA. Inf: Com. Org.,

Box 3501, Riverside, CA 92519

25-27—Sandy Spring, Georgia. VII Conv. Hispana de Georgia. Inf.: Com. Org., 3146 Chamblee Dunwoody Rd., #215, Chamblee, GA 30341

25-27—Rosemont, Illinois. XXX Conv. De Estado IL. Inf: Com. Org., 725 N. Western Ave., Chicago, IL 60612

25-27—Covington, Louisiana. 23rd SE LA Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 4150, Covington, LA 70434; www.sites.google.com/site/aadistrict12/

25-27—Grayling, Michigan. Northern MI InterArea Spring Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 260, East Jordan, MI 49727

25-27—Bloomington, Minnesota. Gopher State Roundup XXXIX. Write: Ch., Box 65295, St. Paul, MN 55165-0295; www.gopherstateroundup.org

25-28—St. Petersburg, Florida. Summer Kickoff Classic. Write: Ch., 9925 Ulmerton Rd., #281, Largo, FL 33771; www.summerkickoffclassic.org

June

1-2—Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Québec, Canada. 28^e Congrès de Cap-de-la-Madeleine. Écrire: Prés., 1001 Rang St-Malo, Trois-Rivières, QC G8V 1X4

1-3—Council Bluffs, Iowa. Area 24 Spring Conf. Write: Ch., Box 228, Atlantic, IA 50022; area24spring2012@yahoo.com

1-3—Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Western Canada Reg. Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org

8-10—Tampa, Florida. Great Events Will Come To Pass. Write: Ch., Box 951903, Lake Mary, FL 32795; www.bigbookweekend.com

8-10—Akron, Ohio. 77th Founder's Day. Info: www.akronaa.org

15-16—Joliette, Québec, Canada. 36^e Congrès de Joliette et de Lanaudière. Info : congres0326@aa90.org

15-16—Richmond, Québec, Canada. 30^e Congrès du Dist. 88-10. Écrire: Prés., 438 Rte 222, Maricourt, QC J0E 2L2; www.ipdistrict10.wordpress.com/congres/

22-24—Tallahassee, Florida. Founder's Day Florida Style. Write: Ch., Box 38034, Tallahassee, FL 32315-8034; www.foundersdayflorida.org

22-24—Pearl City, Illinois. 12th Midwest Motorcycle Conv. Write: Ch., Box 8925, Rockford, IL 61126; www.mmaac.org

22-24—Sept-Iles, Québec, Canada. 33^e Congrès du Dist. 89-10. Écrire: Prés., 456 rue Arnaud, Sept-Iles, QC G4R 3B1

29-1—Grand Rapids, Michigan. 32nd East Central Reg. Conf. & 60th MI State Conv. Write: Ch., 2743 Henry St., #133, Muskegon, MI 49441; www.wmaa34.org

July

6-8—Saint Catherine's, Ontario, Canada. Eastern Canada Reg. Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org

13-15—Saint Augustine, Florida. North FL Area Assembly. Write: Ch., 728 West Ave., Cocoa, FL 33927

13-15—Wheeling, West Virginia. 60th Area 73 State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 6457, Wheeling, WV 26003; amazedinwv@aol.com

20-22—Windsor, Ontario, Canada. 37th Windsor/Essex County Conv. Write: Ch., Box 231, 401 Ouellette Ave., Windsor, ON N9A 6K1; www.windsoraa.com

20-22—Truro, Nova Scotia, Canada. Dist. 6 Mid-Summer Roundup. Write: Ch., 5-8 Munroe Ct., Truro, NS B2N 6P4; www.area82aa.org

August

1-5—Palm Harbor, Florida. 56th FL State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 10395, Largo, FL 33773; http://56.flstateconvention.com

3-5—Newton, Massachusetts. MSCYPAA 16. Write: Ch., Box 1621, Framingham, MA 01702; www.msccypaa.org

10-12—Mount Vernon, Illinois. East Central Add'l Reg. Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org

17-19—Reston, Virginia. 62nd VAC Conv. Write: Ch., 45751 Maries Rd., Sterling, VA 20166; vacconvention2012@hotmail.com

24-26—Springfield, Illinois. IL State Conf. Write: Ch., Box 9186, Springfield, IL 62791-9186; www.aaspringfield.org

24-26—Alta, Wyoming. 11th Teton Canyon Campout. Write: Ch., Box 153, Driggs, ID 83422