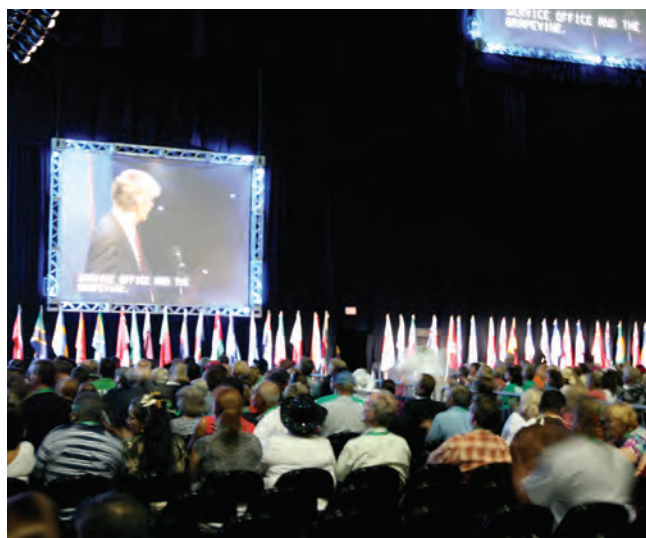


A.A.'s 75th Birthday Celebration

Under the theme “A Vision For You,” over 53,000 A.A. members and friends gathered together in San Antonio, July 1-4, to celebrate A.A.'s 75th Anniversary. This was the largest group San Antonio, a frequent convention city, had ever seen, and shop owners, cab drivers, hotel personnel and average citizens were quick to comment on the joyful, orderly, well-behaved group of sober drunks who had taken over their city.



Ward Ewing, Chairman of the General Service Board, addressing the audience at the Opening Ceremony.

More than 4,000 volunteers, from local towns and neighboring states, were on hand to greet people at the airport. In bright green jerseys they were all over town and the Convention Center, answering questions and giving directions.

Over 212 meetings and workshops took place at the Convention Center and at several hotels. Meetings were available in French, Spanish, Italian, German, Japanese, Russian, Portuguese, Polish and Swedish. The Marathon Meetings, in English and Spanish, began at midnight Thursday and ran until 7:00 a.m. Sunday.

Thursday evening was intended to be a “Party in the Park,” with live music and dancing. The proximity of Hurricane Alex required some quick reorganization and these activities were soon moved into the Convention Center.

Hurricane Alex did not come to San Antonio, but the rain and cloud cover provided a welcome relief by reducing the temperature by 10 degrees.

Beginning Wednesday morning the Convention Center became a hub of activity with registration, A.A.W.S. and GV literature sales, information booths and food vendors. A popular area was the G.S.O. Archives exhibit, where visitors could listen to tapes of A.A. pioneers and watch the film *Markings on the Journey*.

Friday evening was the Opening Flag Ceremony, with flags representing over 90 lands of those attending the Convention. This was followed by a three-speaker meeting, chaired by Conley B., Southwest regional trustee.

Saturday evening everyone was back at the Alamodome for the Oldtimers Meeting, chaired by Phyllis H., G.S.O. general manager. Over 575 A.A.s with over 40 years of sobriety put their names in the hat and twelve were drawn to share.

Southeast regional trustee El N. chaired the Sunday morning three-speaker Big Meeting. The 30 millionth copy of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, was presented to the American Medical Association, which in 1956 formally declared alcoholism an illness. The book was accepted by Rebecca Patchin, M.D., immediate past president of the American Medical Association.

All A.A.s have stories and they love to tell them—but even more they love to hear other A.A. members relate what it used to be like and how the miracle happened. Here are a few stories from San Antonio:

After the Toronto Convention, five years ago, one



Box 4-5-9 is published quarterly by the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115, © Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 2010.

Mail address: P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

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

Subscriptions: Individual, \$3.50 per year; group, \$6.00 for each unit of 10 per year. Check—made payable to A.A.W.S., Inc.—should accompany order. To have issues delivered by e-mail, register on the A.A. Digital Subscription Service on G.S.O.'s Web site.

woman knew she *had* to be in San Antonio, so she started a change jar. Then she found out she had cancer, lost her job and lost her home. “But I still had my change jar,” she said, “and here I am in San Antonio.”

Another change story: One member showed up at on-site registration with \$120.00 in rolls of quarters. Kevin Sunkel (nonalcoholic), A.A.'s independent auditor, layed them out to form AA and took a picture of them.

One man came up to the G.S.O. booth asking to see Gayle. He was promptly taken to Gayle S.R., G.S.O. staff member. It seems that when Gayle was on the Corrections desk she had sent this young man a Big Book when he was in prison—and here he was, sober and filled with gratitude.

Two guys were discovered sitting on a bench, drunk—not a surprising scene. A couple of A.A.s brought them into the Convention Center, where they were offered a Big Book. Only one took the book; the other said he “had already read it”—not surprising either.

Until we meet again in Atlanta in 2015 clusters of sober drunks will gather everywhere—in large groups, medium-sized gatherings, one-on-one. They will meet every hour of the day or night around the globe—in



church basements, on phones, and various mobile devices, by letters and e-mails. They will meet to celebrate another day of freedom, and to carry the A.A. message to the thousands we have not yet met.

■ St. Louis to Host Intergroup Seminar

The 25th Annual Central Office/Intergroup Seminar will be held Sept. 24-26 at the Sheraton Westport Lakeside Plaza Hotel in St. Louis, (314) 878-1500.

The theme is “Practicing A.A.’s Principles—the Pathway to Unity.” The Seminar is an opportunity to meet with other special workers and representatives to share on topics relevant to local offices and intergroups.

Registration forms for the event were mailed in March from the host committee to U.S. and Canada central offices and intergroups. For more information about the Seminar, phone Don B., Central Services of A.A. in St. Louis, at (314) 647-3677, or e-mail him at alano@aastl.org.

■ Reminder: Résumés for Trustees Election due Jan. 1, 2011

Three new Class B (alcoholic) trustees—from the Southwest and Northeast regions, and trustee-at-large/Canada—will be elected at the General Service Conference in May 2011. Résumés must be received at G.S.O. no later than January 1, 2011, and must be submitted by delegates only.

The new Southwest regional trustee will succeed Conley B., of Redfield, Arkansas; the new Northeast regional will follow John K., of Collingswood, New Jersey. The next trustee-at-large/Canada will succeed Jo-Anne L., of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

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

■ Contributions Online: Self-Support Goes Electronic

Self-support is one of A.A.'s most cherished Traditions. As Bill W. noted in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, "There was a place in A.A. that money and spirituality would mix, and that was in the hat!"

Time, of course, has elapsed since Bill first uttered those words, and while the practice of passing the hat has not evolved much further than passing wicker baskets, tin cans and manila envelopes, the General Service Office has taken a quantum leap in an effort to provide A.A. members with the broadest range of options for this significant Fellowship activity: G.S.O. has begun accepting Seventh Tradition contributions online.

Under consideration for quite some time, the new Contributions Online system was launched on June 11, 2010—the day after A.A.'s 75th birthday. So, who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks?

"It's the first time we're using this kind of technology," says G.S.O. general manager Phyllis H. "It was very carefully reviewed—many, many times," she says, noting that board members and members of the General Service Conference were included in the process all the way along in order to maximize the Fellowship's familiarity with the project and to work through any lingering concerns there might be regarding contributions and this new technology.

"Test, test, and retest," was the mantra in the year leading up to the system's launch. "It started over a year ago," says Constance Ivey, supervisor of the contributions department and one of the project's core group, a group that included G.S.O.'s chief financial officer, Don Meurer; G.S.O.'s information technology consultant, Charlie Shell; personnel from G.S.O.'s systems software provider; and a financial consultant with expertise in the area of credit cards.

"It took time to walk everything through from the beginning," says Constance. "We bounced everything off each other—how it was going to affect the accounting department, the members, what kind of reports people were going to get. You know, those kinds of things."

Often suggested by A.A. members, the idea of an online contributions system has been percolating for a number of years within the Fellowship and the methodology recently introduced by G.S.O. is the result of many hours of discussion and debate, trying to find the most effective means of increasing the size of A.A.'s "hat." Legitimately it can be said that A.A. sometimes moves slowly, especially in matters concerning computers and the application of the Traditions, but with this online system G.S.O. seems to be catching up with the times.

Contributions Online is a web-based Internet application that allows members to make contributions to the U.S./Canada General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, using either of the two possible methods of payment: credit card or "E-Check" from U.S. banks, a form of payment in which funds are electronically trans-

ferred from the contributor's checking account directly to the checking account of the General Service Board.

"There was a lot of discussion about security and anonymity as this project developed," says Charlie Shell. "The bottom line was that if we were going to put something up on the web it had to be secure, both in terms of the application itself and where it was hosted."

With this in mind, G.S.O. decided to stay within their existing digital infrastructure, using the same company to host the Contributions Online Web site that currently hosts many of their other online services.

"These days you can put up a Web site almost anywhere and not even know where the machines are," says Charlie. "So, from the physical aspect of where the Web site is hosted, we feel quite secure." In terms of the application itself, he continues, "we wanted to make sure that it was encrypted; that it was the same sort of thing as when people do personal banking online."

So for maximum protection of confidential member information and financial transaction security, A.A.W.S., Inc. purchased an extended digital validation certificate from the leading Internet provider for secure e-commerce. The digital certificate ensures that all information sent between members' computers and the Contributions Online Web site is protected by state-of-the-art encryption technology. Additionally, A.A.W.S. contracted the services of a company providing independent security audits to verify that the Web site is in compliance on an ongoing basis with the best security practices in the industry.

To access the system, which is initially available only in English, with French and Spanish to follow soon, users must create a confidential user profile, which allows each member to define a user ID and password of their choice—"all procedures that should be familiar to anybody who does stuff online," says Charlie. "We wanted to make things as easy as possible, without making them too easy," he says. "The process had to be streamlined, with as few steps as possible."

Once these initial steps are taken, steps clearly outlined and articulated on G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site by clicking on the "Contributions Online" icon at www.aa.org, A.A. members may proceed to make either an Individual or a Group contribution. (In accordance with A.A.'s Seventh Tradition, contributions are accepted from A.A. members only.)

G.S.O. suggests, however, that members use the online contributions system from a personal computer that they own or completely control, as entering confidential personal and/or financial information on a public or shared computer can pose security risks. It is suggested, therefore, that members using computers in libraries, hotel business centers, Internet cafés and even workplace computers and computers owned by friends or acquaintances continue to make their contributions through the traditional telephone or postal methods.

“Whatever delivery method is chosen by the Fellowship,” says Phyllis H., “we at G.S.O. are always deeply grateful for the contributions from A.A. members and groups.”

So, how has the new online service been received? “Very well,” says G.S.O.’s controller, Bob Slotterback. “There were a few glitches early on,” he notes, but those have been addressed and straightened out. “People also appreciate the e-mail acknowledgement of their contribution that comes as soon as the transaction has been approved. They get a more formal acknowledgement by mail later on, but knowing right away that their contribution has been received is a real comfort.”

Of the amount that has been received in the very early stages of the service, Bob says, “While we’re not seeing a large amount each day, there is *something* each day. It’s consistent.” And, for a Fellowship that operates one day at a time, that’s not a bad start.

As Bill W. once noted, “. . . We must never lose sight of the fact that progress is nearly always characterized by a series of improving compromises” (*The A.A. Service Manual*, p. S51), and as the Fellowship gets more and more comfortable with online technology and learns more about the Contributions Online system, it is hoped that more and more members will avail themselves of this new methodology for self-support. Over the years, G.S.O. has seen an increase in the way members utilize online A.A. services, as evidenced by the large number of members who registered electronically for the recent International Convention in San Antonio, and by providing this new contributions service it is hoped that the comfort level and convenience will continue to grow.

So, why not visit G.S.O.’s A.A. Web site and try out a different kind of hat?

■ Disruptive Members at A.A. Meetings

In the Big Book, the chapter “Working with Others,” lists some possibilities that may occur when an A.A. adopts the attitude that “Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery.” Helping a drunk may mean “. . . innumerable trips to police courts, sanitariums, hospitals, jails and asylums Another time you may have to send for the police or an ambulance. Occasionally you will have to meet such conditions.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 97) In short, during the course of laying the foundation stone of recovery and helping others, an A.A. may find him or herself with a troublesome member. In meetings, where A.A.s find other drunks to work with, the possibilities described in helping drunks are also present, and occasionally, members disrupt meetings.

Although A.A.s strive to adopt certain attitudes and behaviors, such as “Love and tolerance of others is our

code” (*ibid*, p. 84), members sometimes find that a troublesome individual’s behavior is so violent or threatening that it has become difficult or impossible for the group to fulfill its primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message. Furthermore, Tradition One reminds the group that “Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first.” (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 189)

How a group handles disruptive and/or threatening members can cause conflict and controversy, so many group members rely upon the shared experience of others who have successfully dealt with a similar situation. Often, groups or group members contact the General Service Office regarding disruptive members at A.A. meetings. G.S.O., in addition to upholding actions of our Conference and board, also functions as a repository for the shared experience of A.A. groups.

Some groups have shared suggestions on how to handle disruptive behavior. One group recommends that a member first approach the individual, informally and one-on-one, in order to discuss the problem and look for solutions. This group reminds one another to let the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions guide all communication, striving always to place principles before personalities and to treat all with kindness, patience, compassion, tolerance, and love.

In another example, one group shared how they dealt with disruptive and/or threatening members who did not respond to polite requests or one-on-one approaches: The group set up a group conscience/business meeting and, prior to all discussion, agreed to the following format: 1.) Each member can speak only twice on each topic, and 2.) Each member can share for only two minutes at a time. Further, the group also found it helpful to define a disruptive/threatening member as anyone who interrupts the good orderly direction of the meeting so that the message of Alcoholics Anonymous cannot be carried. A disruptive and/or threatening member was also defined as one whose actions intimidate or frighten newcomers so that they cannot hear the A.A. message. Under these circumstances, the disruptive A.A. member is asked to attend the group conscience/business meeting. Whether or not he or she attends, the group discusses the problem. If present, the procedure is explained to the disruptive member. The disruptive member may be asked to stop attending the meeting for a specific period of time.

In the above instance, the member is not being “thrown out” of A.A., just asked not to attend the meeting. The First Tradition assures A.A.s that no member “can compel another to do anything; nobody can be punished or expelled.” (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 129) It is always hoped that the individual member will see the difficulty as an opportunity for personal growth and will attend other meetings in the area in order to maintain his or her sobriety. Usually, this sort of action is taken as a last

resort—after an individual has been asked to change his or her behavior.

Bill W., who always emphasized the loving, helpful, and tolerant attitude A.A. members should show each other, wrote in a letter in 1969: “This amount of charity does not mean that we can not exclude those who disturb meetings or seriously interfere with the functioning of the group. Such people can be asked to quiet down or go elsewhere, or, to come back when they are better able to participate.”

Indeed, Bill W. was no stranger to tumult, controversy, or disturbances at A.A. meetings. He also had faith that growth and good could come out of trouble. In *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, he writes, “Within A.A., I suppose, we shall always quarrel a good bit. Mostly, I think, about how to do the greatest good for the greatest number of drunks Surmounting such problems, in A.A.’s rather rugged school of life, is a healthy exercise.” (p. 233)

■ A.A. and the Law

Alcoholics Anonymous is a microcosm of the larger society within which it exists. As such, problems often found in the outside world can also make their way into the rooms of A.A. We are not immune to the difficulties that plague the rest of humanity, and when questions of the law and its application do occasionally arrive at our doorstep, there are not always easy or simple answers.

For the most part, A.A. has been able to avoid a considerable number of the world’s most debilitating ills, principally through adherence to the set of principles embodied in our Traditions, such as anonymity, autonomy, attraction not promotion, and adherence to a primary purpose—that of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Yet, when problems do arise, they can cause as great a disturbance within A.A. as they do in the outside world.

Legal matters, as seen through the eyes of A.A. members, can be especially disconcerting and, over the years, some A.A.s have turned to G.S.O. to help them negotiate complicated circumstances that put groups and individuals in a difficult position. A member sharing in a Fifth Step, for example, divulges the details of a crime that has gone unsolved. An alcoholic speaks from the floor at a meeting about difficulties at home, perhaps involving spousal or child abuse. Local police arrive at a meeting looking for an individual who has violated parole.

These are not easy situations to resolve, and G.S.O. has no hard and fast response. Ultimately, there may be circumstances that extend beyond A.A.’s experience. Questions that require legal answers are outside the scope of Alcoholics Anonymous. As stated in the essay on Step Twelve in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* about alcoholics, “We are problem people who have found a way up

and out.” With desperate pasts and difficult futures, many current and prospective members have found themselves on the wrong side of the law; yet A.A. as a whole has no opinion on legal matters, has no authority—legal or otherwise—to control or direct the behavior of A.A. members and groups.

While we share in a spirit of trust, both at meetings and individually with sponsors and friends, A.A. members are subject to the same laws as every other person. Our communications are not privileged in the legal sense nor do we have any special protective status under local, state, or federal statutes. A.A. membership does not grant immunity from local laws and being at an A.A. meeting does not put anyone beyond the jurisdiction of law enforcement officers. As has often been expressed throughout the Fellowship, as individuals, A.A. members are also “citizens of the world,” and as citizens we are not above the law.

Carrying our message and abiding by our Traditions is, essentially, an internal affair—we can’t expect others to be guided by them in the same way that we are. Yet, A.A. is not a world unto itself.

As those familiar with carrying the message into treatment or correctional facilities can attest, A.A. members doing such service are held to the standards those institutions expect; similarly, A.A. meetings and groups pay rent and must adhere to the conditions established by their landlords.

When it comes to A.A. and matters of the law, it is much the same. We exist within the society that surrounds us. Ultimately, the experience of how these situations are handled can be as varied as our Fellowship, but in most cases good judgment and common sense seem to provide the greatest guide.

■ Three New Class B Trustees Join the General Service Board

The General Service Board of A.A. welcomes three new Class B (alcoholic) trustees: Donald C., Eastern Canada regional; Rod B., Pacific regional; and Roberta L., general service trustee. Elected at the 60th General Service Conference in April 2010, these new trusted servants will represent the Fellowship as a whole, while bringing to the board’s deliberations specific professional and A.A. experience that will be invaluable.

Donald C., of Terrebonne, Quebec, sober since 1994, succeeds Denis V. as Eastern Canada regional trustee. (Denis died in 2006 and the position remained vacant until now.) “My hope as the new trustee from Eastern Canada is to keep up the good work that is already being done by the board and the General Service Office,” says Donald, “and I want things to be done efficiently and with respect for our members.”

A 2004-2005 (Panel 54) delegate, Donald has always been grateful. "When I arrived in A.A.," he says, "I just wanted to know how to drink normally. I had a tough time accepting the A.A. way of life at first, but it got to me after a while."

In his life outside of A.A., Donald is a self-employed businessman, wearing multiple hats as manager, accountant, customer service representative and marketing manager of a pest control company he has owned for the past 20 years. He is part of a business group in Terrebonne and leads an active lifestyle, enjoying sports, walking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and swimming. Family is also very important to Donald and he has been married for 34 years, with a daughter, two sons and four grandkids.

In his business life, he has dealt with "people from every class of society," a reality which has brought him to be at ease with anybody. "I treat my customers very well. Many of them have been with me from the beginning."

Surprised by his selection to the board, Donald is excited about the prospect of serving the Fellowship he loves. "I have a good knowledge of A.A.," he says, "and know that I can help the suffering alcoholic through service. But, I never thought that one day I would be a trustee. God works in some strange ways."

Rod B., of Salt Lake City, Utah, selected to replace outgoing Pacific regional trustee Madeleine P., is a past delegate as well, serving from 1997-98 (Panel 47). "When I got the call that I had been selected, I was overwhelmed, intimidated, and grateful," says Rod. "And each one was taking turns at being 100 percent."

Sober since 1984, Rod sees his upcoming service as a unique opportunity to give back to the Fellowship some of what he received. "The first A.A. meeting I ever went to," he relates, "there was just this one guy sitting there. He told me later on that he was the only person who had showed up at that group for about a year or so. But, he kept showing up and I shudder to think what might have happened if he had decided 'I think I'll just stay home tonight and watch TV.' What a wonderful example. It's not anything that's going to be in the newspaper or on TV, but it certainly made an impression in my life."

A licensed clinical social worker in the Veterans Administration health care system, Rod works with a number of different groups on a part-time basis at a local treatment program—one that Rod went through himself at one time—and at a well-known treatment center in the area. A Native American, he has been involved with the state Indian Health Advisory Board and served as the treatment facilities director for the Indian Alcoholism Counseling and Recovery House Program in Salt Lake City.

As delegate, Rod was a member of the Conference Literature Committee, which provided one of the highlights of his service career, as he was a part of the committee recommendation that ultimately resulted in the development of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, an edition, he notes, that included two new stories from Native Americans. "I kind of saw it as a higher power

thing, and was grateful to have been a small part of A.A. history."

Roberta L., of Minden, Nevada, is also a past delegate from 1997-98 (Panel 47), where she served as chair of the Conference Public Information Committee. She has been on the A.A.W.S. board as a nontrustee director since 2006, and hopes as a new general service trustee to bring to the General Service Board an open mind and a healthy respect for the views of fellow board members. "I plan to work cooperatively to provide the best possible service to the Fellowship and preserve the integrity of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts."

Sober since 1984, Roberta has been active in the program from the very beginning, serving, among other positions, as a G.S.R., district Grapevine representative, D.C.M., other area offices, and chair of a number of Area 42 service committees. "Co-chairing PRAASA 2003 in Reno was a spiritual experience," she adds, "and I have many wonderful memories of that event." She also served as program chair for the first Northern Nevada Native American Alcoholics Anonymous conference, which "was a great opportunity to better understand the problems created by alcoholism in the Native population and to appreciate the work being done by Native alcoholics in recovery."

A secondary school English teacher for over 20 years, Roberta is the owner of an educational consulting company involved in program and grant development, budget planning and amendments, professional development and program improvement for educators, and program evaluation and grant writing for five school districts. She has been under contract with the Nevada Dept. of Education for the past four years for statewide evaluation of 72 after-school programs.

"As a secondary school teacher I was very passionate about helping young people," notes Roberta, and, later, as a licensed secondary school counselor replicated that passion in helping persons of all ages. "I want to see people succeed and be happy and I believe this has carried over with the women I sponsor and in my various interactions in A.A. My focus on group interaction and inclusion of all has helped me to participate in the group conscience process of our Fellowship in all venues, and I believe the listening skills I developed as a teacher, counselor and school administrator will help me to stay in tune with the board and the Fellowship."

■ Two New 'Friends of A.A.' Join the General Service Board

A.A. has always relied on its many nonalcoholic friends to provide professional expertise, sound business judgment, and balance to the dedicated group of trustees who donate their time and interest in service to Alcoholics Anonymous. Of the 21 members on A.A.'s



Michelle Grinberg, J.D.,

General Service Board, seven are specifically designated as Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees. Historically, the Fellowship owes a tremendous debt to these nonalcoholic friends, men and women from a variety of disciplines whose vision and faith not only helped the struggling movement through its difficult early years but were instrumental in shaping the principles

that continue to guide its present course.

Today's Class A trustees remain a rich resource of wisdom and perspective, and, importantly, can do certain things the Class B (alcoholic) trustees cannot, such as facing the camera head-on or using their last names without violating A.A.'s principles of anonymity.

Elected to two consecutive three-year terms, the two most recent Class A trustees, Michele Grinberg, J.D., of Charleston, West Virginia, and John A. Fromson, M.D., of Waban, Massachusetts, began their service to the Fellowship following the 60th General Service Conference in April 2010.

Both have long been familiar with A.A. and its program of recovery on a professional basis, yet recognize they have much more to learn about the Fellowship and how it operates.

For Michele Grinberg, an attorney specializing in the areas of health care policy and legislation, joining the board is an opportunity to expand her knowledge base about recovery and to give something back to the Fellowship she has grown quite fond of. "There is so much to learn; so much history," she says.

"In reading Bill's writings on the Traditions, he had very thoughtful instruction. So, to respect that you've got to know it, and you've got to know everything that came after. That means there is a lot of reading," she says good-naturedly. "But I've always enjoyed reading and learning. I started out as a teacher, then I became a librarian, then I became a lawyer, then I got active in nonprofits. So I know there is always something more to learn."

Michele first came into contact with A.A. over 20 years ago, she says, having seen the miracle of recovery in people around her—family members, friends and colleagues. "I've seen people in the throes of the disease and then have seen the change. Being the kind of person that I am, I began to ask some questions." What she discovered led her to A.A.

"On a one-to-one basis, the answer that I would hear from those who stayed sober was that they were in A.A. Again, being the inquisitive type person that I am, I wanted to understand what that was. So, I went to some open

A.A. meetings, did some reading, had some profound conversations that helped me to understand and attracted me to the Fellowship."

Semi-retired now, her interest in recovery and her fondness for the Fellowship has only increased over the years and she hopes that her professional background as a lawyer will be an asset to the board as she begins her term of service. Her extensive background in health care policy, experience in employment relations and familiarity with nonprofits will be the principal areas of strength she brings to the board.

"I like problem-solving," she says, noting that Bill W., in particular, had a lot of use for lawyers in A.A.'s early days, with such notables as Bernard Smith, who helped draft the Conference structure and, later, his protégée, Michael Alexander, trustee emeritus, who recently passed away after many years of service.

A self-described skeptic, Michele has found a growing spirituality in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. "It's my path to a healthy spiritual life," she notes. "I'm normally very analytical, but I have learned to have a healthy respect for the spiritual side. With all the evidence of a higher power in people around me, I have to put aside some of that skepticism. It doesn't serve me anymore."

Noting that her primary hope in becoming a trustee is to help A.A. grow and prosper, Michele adds that she has a soft spot in her heart for young people in A.A. "Maybe it's because I never had children myself, but I'm one of those people who really likes teenagers. Over the years, I've seen some young people who are really struggling with alcoholism and to think that somebody gets to A.A. while they are still young so that they don't have to do all the terrible things that they're going to do otherwise, I just think is breathtaking and wonderful."

John Fromson, of Waban, Massachusetts, has high hopes for his term as a Class A trustee, too. A graduate of New York Medical College and a Certified Addiction specialist, John is an associate director of postgraduate medical education in the department of psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital. He lectures widely and is the author of many articles on a broad range of health-related topics.

Of primary concern, however, is his work with impaired physicians, helping those colleagues in the medical profession who have become overwhelmed by alcoholism and addiction.

John was first exposed to A.A. "in a didactic sense" in medical school, "but it didn't have much meaning," he



John A. Fromson, M.D.

says. “I remember seeing a woman being interviewed about her alcoholism and recovery in front of our class of 180 students. It was a very moving thing to behold, but I really didn’t think too much about it as I went through my psychiatric training after that. I would refer people to A.A. and I felt that it was something very important, but I didn’t really have any meaningful connection.” Until a number of years later, that is, when he was asked by the state Medical Society to be on a physician’s health committee.

“I hadn’t even known this committee existed. It was to help identify, refer to treatment, guide and monitor physician colleagues who had alcoholism and other addictive disorders. I was asked to be on it, ironically, because I had child psychiatry training and they felt that they needed to have a child psychiatrist on this committee to help with the families and the children of these people who were going through this incredible experience.”

By the time they reached his committee, John notes, these impaired physicians either had lost or were about to lose their licenses, their jobs; perhaps their families, their homes. “These were people in pretty difficult situations,” says John.

Unlike the more cursory medical school experience, this real-world application brought John into closer contact with A.A. where he saw, firsthand, the miracle of recovery. Over time, the committee morphed into a full-fledged physician’s health program of the Massachusetts Medical Society, known as the Physician’s Health Services, of which John became the founding director. As this program developed, and through his exposure to A.A. in various treatment centers associated with the program, John came to fully appreciate the power of A.A. “It reaffirmed my belief that taking part in the Twelve Steps is really the path toward recovery.”

In terms of his contribution to the board and to the Fellowship, John hopes to be a bridge to the larger medical community where he perceives a failure to understand the disease of alcoholism and to recognize the solution that A.A. offers.

“I just hope I can be a catalyst,” he says. “The organized medical community knows about A.A., but I don’t think they really appreciate how important it is. I think people in the addictions field do, but the addictions field is really tiny. Ultimately, I hope on a broad scale that my physician colleagues and those in the corporate world can learn more about A.A. and accept it; to recognize that the disease of alcoholism is not simply a moral or character flaw and that there’s a well defined, step-by-step path to a recovery that works.”

As the board and the Fellowship welcome these two new friends into service, both Michele and John look forward to becoming the latest links in the long and notable chain of nonalcoholics who have helped Alcoholics Anonymous become what it is today: a worldwide source of help and hope for countless sufferers.

■ A.A. in Haiti

It was a keen hope of the first A.A.s, expressed in the Big Book chapter “A Vision For You,” that “Some day . . . every alcoholic who journeys will find a Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous at his destination. To some extent this is already true. . . . Little clusters of twos and threes and fives of us have sprung up in other communities, through contact with our two larger centers Thus we grow. And so can you, though you be but one man with this book in your hand. . . .” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 162)

Seventy-one years later, this same hope of growth and fellowship remains constant and current, although time and progress may have altered gender and profession. For example, Molly L., an A.A. from the U.S., sought to establish a meeting in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, after attending an A.A. convention, in October 2009. Eight years prior, Molly found A.A. and sobriety in the U.S., and after a job transfer, found herself in Haiti, doing relief work. Familiar with online A.A. meetings, she also belonged to the *Loners-Internationalists Meeting (LIM)* through the General Service Office (G.S.O.). While at the convention, Molly shared with past and present trusted servants from South Florida (Area 15), that she was interested in starting a meeting in Haiti. Could they help? They put her in touch with still other trusted servants on the General Service Board. Then she was put in touch with the International Desk at the General Service Office.

Molly was given a listing of an A.A. meeting in Haiti, but it no longer met at the published location. Over the course of many weeks, Molly began to search for a good gathering place for a new A.A. meeting. After finding one, she distributed flyers and put up a Web site. Unfortunately, when she went back to the meeting place, she was informed that she would have to show identification and provide information on why she was there. Aware of our Twelfth Tradition, Molly had to scratch that location and continue her search for a place where people were safe and their anonymity was protected.

After input by a few other A.A.s it was agreed that a hospital was a wonderful place to start. And, since the language spoken by Haitian professionals was French, Molly thought she could use some A.A. literature in French.

In the beginning of January 2010, Molly reported that she had found some success after meeting with the head doctor at the local hospital. He suggested that she contact the local treatment facility. In the meantime, a contact at G.S.O. sent Molly an e-mail regarding a group and its last known location. Although the phone contact information was no longer current, the e-mail was, and Molly was able to make contact with an A.A. named Pierrot who was sober over 20 years.

On January 7, 2010, thrilled and elated, Molly called her friends in the U.S. and shared that she was standing

in front of the A.A. meeting room, and it was “filled with A.A. stuff! There are window shades, books, and some pamphlets. Thank you, God!” Later, in an e-mail to another A.A., she related that she finally felt like she was home: “I cannot describe the feeling I had when I drove up to a building and saw a small door with the A.A. [sign beside it]. It was the best homecoming ever.” Molly continued, “The meetings are held at a place called APAAC . . . There are meetings *every day* in Creole . . . I have spoken to a few other English speakers who have worked for years in Haiti and never found meetings. I was so happy to send them this information . . . that A.A. *does in fact* exist here.”

Molly’s excitement increased — she reported that she was going to meet with Pierrot, the A.A. long timer who is responsible for starting A.A. in French/Creole. “He wants to support me in starting English-speaking meetings, and tomorrow will be the first organizational meeting to do this. From there, the work will be to get some English literature and get out some information (such as the Web site that I already created) so that foreigners like me are able to find some meetings.”

Unfortunately, as much of the world is aware, Haiti suffered a catastrophic earthquake on January 12, 2010, just a few days after Molly’s ebullient e-mail. The country was thrown into a state of emergency as tens of thousands suffered loss of life, livelihood, and home. Molly’s new friends waited anxiously for word about her health and well-being. A few days later, their concerns were put to rest with an e-mail: “Communication is limited — I’m at the office now and writing critical e-mails for relief aid. I know all are worried, but I’m okay. Thanks for your thoughts and prayers and I’ll be in touch when I can.”

Although Molly’s efforts to bring a little more A.A. into Haiti may have been slowed by disaster, the hand of A.A. will continue to remain outstretched and ready to help. At the time of the earthquake, work was underway at A.A.W.S. to translate the service piece “Information on Alcoholics Anonymous” into French/Creole, the language spoken in Haiti. And, judging from the tenacity of A.A.s like Pierrot and Molly, efforts and actions to carry the message of recovery from alcoholism will continue wherever there is a desire for the fellowship of alcoholics and the hope A.A. offers — even when A.A. company is scarce. In the Big Book, a reassurance is written to the lone A.A. who voices worry that “‘I will not have the benefit of contact with you who wrote this book.’ We cannot be sure. God will determine that, so you must remember that your real reliance is always upon Him. He will show you how to create the fellowship you crave.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 164) Despite the passage of time and a myriad of changes in culture and thought, this reassurance is as relevant today as it was when this was written.

■ When Disaster Strikes

Disaster is a fact of life for thousands of people around the world. Tornadoes, torrential rain storms, earthquakes, hurricanes, acts of war, all with the power to change life as we know it. Families can be uprooted, communities shattered, physical landscapes changed forever. And for those of us in A.A., much of what we hold dear can also be lost — our connections with other sober alcoholics severed, our meeting places destroyed, our literature damaged beyond reclamation.

There have been quite a few such disasters in recent memory, and the General Service Office is often inundated with questions about how to help A.A. members in distressed areas where a disaster has occurred. Each situation has its own set of circumstances and it is often difficult to establish what is needed immediately. In many cases, the most pressing needs are for survival items—food, water, shelter and medicine—items that A.A. does not provide. Often, it takes time—days, weeks, in some cases months—for the local A.A. community to determine precisely what is needed so that A.A. groups can get back on their feet.

On the Gulf Coast, following Hurricane Katrina, and in New York City after the fall of the Twin Towers, what A.A.s needed most were places to meet. In one area of Mississippi, A.A.s gathered in the parking lot outside the building where their group used to be. The building itself was uninhabitable, but they were able to set up folding chairs “alfresco” to accommodate the A.A.s who gathered there each day.

“Each day saw members pulling into the parking lot—hot, sunburned, dirty, and tired from a day of cleaning debris from what, for many, used to be their homes,” wrote an anonymous member from Ocean Springs in the April 2006 Grapevine. “Food, water, and other essentials were shared among members during the meeting-before-the-meeting and meeting-after-the-meeting. Many tears were shed at meetings in the weeks that followed. Members shared stories of miracles, hope, and personal tragedies. One member’s father died in his arms at the height of the storm when medical personnel were not able to respond. Another was forced to stay in a tree for several days until floodwaters receded. Many recalled that their comfort — as the wind howled and the water rose — was found in prayer. We were all grateful for our lives.”

In New York, the A.A.s working at Ground Zero, exhausted from long shifts and stressed by a search for survivors, desperately needed A.A. meetings they could easily get to. A Red Cross worker got wind of this and passed the request on to her colleagues in the mental health division. “They in turn contacted A.A.’s General Service Office,” reported Richard S. in the April 2006 Grapevine, “who then contacted me.” Richard was serving as the area chair for Cooperation With the Professional Community. “It’s another example of A.A.’s long tradition of working with professionals outside the Fellowship to

bring the message of recovery to alcoholics wherever it's needed," he continued. The request for meetings was also passed on to the New York Inter-Group Institutions Committee, which brings A.A. meetings into various local facilities, and two days later a group of A.A. volunteers set up a meeting in the Red Zone.

"The first man who walked into the room that night looked around at us and blinked, so surprised that he could hardly smile," wrote Richard. "He told us how glad he was to see us, how he and others knew they needed to get to A.A. meetings but were usually so exhausted when their shifts ended that all they could do was make it home. Soon others showed up, and even though at that time the room was rather bare, just the fact that we were there seemed to lift some awful weight off them. That night five men, whose sobriety ranged from many years to seven months to just two days, joined us for a meeting.

Whether hurricane, earthquake, fire, flood, or any other type of disaster, the General Service Office is always ready to support the efforts of local A.A. members. G.S.O. contacts and offers support to intergroups, central offices, general service delegates and trustees in the affected communities. So as not to interfere with emergency relief efforts, however, G.S.O. usually waits until local conditions are stabilized and local A.A. members have an opportunity to determine exactly what is needed.

A.A.'s shared experience suggests that after a disaster, local A.A. offices and groups often require very few contributions of money or complimentary literature. In many cases, local groups and offices view disastrous circumstances as an opportunity for Twelfth Step work and try to meet the needs of the local A.A. community before asking for help from G.S.O. or other A.A. entities. Additionally, due to local conditions, many affected areas may not even have mail delivery, electricity or appropriate storage space to accommodate any contributed materials.

Some A.A. members have wanted to send money to G.S.O. specifically to support disaster relief activities. G.S.O., however, does not accept A.A. funds that are earmarked for any specific project. G.S.O. responds whenever and wherever there is an expressed need. Thanks to the continuous and generous contributions from A.A. groups in the U.S. and Canada year round, when requests to replace literature lost or damaged during a disaster do come in from distressed areas, G.S.O. is happy to meet those needs.

On a personal level, as private citizens and individuals, many A.A. members choose to support non-A.A. relief organizations in the wake of particular disasters, feeling compelled to reach out and assist with efforts to bring food, water, shelter and medicine into affected areas. In keeping with A.A.'s Traditions, these members donate under their own names and do not credit A.A. in any way.

Disaster can pull apart a family, a community, even a country. Yet, in A.A., our purpose is clear: to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. As the anonymous member in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, noted, "The greatest evidence for me that life goes on despite the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, and that God's world is in perfect working order, is this: Future members of Alcoholics Anonymous

have walked through the door of our recently rebuilt meeting hall and have found love, understanding, and hope among those who, like themselves, have all gone through their own personal hurricanes."

■ 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 or intergroup offices, the relationship between A.A. and Al-Anon, the Internet, and serving alcoholics with special needs, 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 asking 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 together 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 (2 to 6 pages) are a distillation of specific trial-and-error experience that is 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 should arise.

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 our literature catalog, are available singly or in complete sets. They may also be accessed on G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site (www.aa.org).

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.

September

- 3-5—*Denver, Colorado.* CO State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 721, Parker, CO 80134; www.coloradoaa.org
- 3-5—*Polson, Montana.* 27th Sunlight of the Spirit Camporee. Write: Ch., 43062 Labella Ln, Big Arm, MT 59910
- 3-5—*Reno, Nevada.* Sierra Fall Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 5874, Sparks, NV 89432
- 3-5—*Chautauqua, New York.* 57th Tri-State Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 58, Waterport, NY 14571
- 3-5—*Arlington, Virginia.* 38va Conv. Hispana de Estados Unidos y Canada. Inf: Com. Org., Box 15015; Alexandria, VA 22309; http://www.convencionhispanaaa38va2010.com
- 3-6—*Tampa, Florida.* 24th Tampa Bay Fall Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 262545, Tampa, FL 33685-2545; www.tampabayfallroundup.com
- 3-6—*Powell River, British Columbia, Canada.* 63rd Powell River Rally. Write: Ch., 5903 Arbutus St., Powell River, BC V8A 4S2
- 10-12—*Cromwell, Connecticut.* 52nd Area 11 Conv. Write: Ch., 21 Private Grounds Rd., Ellington, CT 06029; area11convention@ct-aa.org
- 10-12—*Dodge City, Kansas.* 53rd Area 25 Conf. Write: Ch., Box 274, Pratt, KS 67124; www.kansasaa.org
- 10-12—*Minneapolis, Minnesota.* 20th Bridging the Gap Workshop Wknd. Write: Ch., 2618 Patee St., St. Joseph, MO 64507; www.btgww.org
- 10-12—*North Mankato, Minnesota.* Southern MN Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 146, Mankato, MN 56002-0146; somnroundup@gmail.com
- 10-12—*Park Rapids, Minnesota.* 20th Heartland Roundup. Write: Ch., 30284 Oakland Dr., Detroit Lakes, MN 56501; www.heartlandroundup.com
- 10-12—*Houston, Texas.* SETA CF Conf. Write: Ch., Box 925241, Houston, TX 77292-5241
- 10-12—*Hampton, Virginia.* VA State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 7704, Hampton, VA 23666; www.2010vaconvention.com
- 10-12—*Dunnville, Ontario, Canada.* 44th Dunnville Conv. Write: Ch., 79 Duncan St., Welland, ON L3B 2C9; dunnconvention@hotmail.com

- 17-19—*Natchez, Mississippi.* Southern Hospitality Hoopla. Write: Ch., Box 18182, Natchez, MS 39122; www.rtcwd.com/hoopla
- 17-19—*Taos, New Mexico.* Taos Mtn Fiesta. Write: Ch., Box 195, El Prado, NM 87529; www.taosmountainfiesta.com
- 17-19—*Minot, North Dakota.* ND State Round-up. Write: Ch., Box 1922, Minot, ND 58702-1922
- 17-19—*Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.* Autumn Leaf Roundup. Write: Ch., 627 Main St. E., Suite 205, Hamilton, ON L8M 1J5; autumnleafroundup@aahamilton.com
- 17-19—*Trois-Rivières, Québec, Canada.* Eastern Canada Regional Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org
- 18-19—*Kingman, Arizona.* Hualapai Mtn Roundup. Write: Ch., 212 First Street, Kingman, AZ 86401
- 18-19—*Saint-Sauveur, Québec, Canada.* Congres du 90-25. Écrire: Prés., 33 rue de l'Église, St. Sauveur, QC J0R 1R0
- 24-26—*Crescent City, California.* Sobriety By The Sea. Write: Ch., Box 871, Crescent City, CA 95531; sbs.rally@gmail.com
- 24-26—*Plymouth, California.* 24th Gold Country Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 184, Ione, CA 95640; www.goldcountryroundup.com
- 24-26—*Grand Junction, Colorado.* Color Daze. Write: Ch., Box 4013, Grand Junction, CO 81502

- 24-26—*Duluth, Minnesota.* 65th Duluth Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 16771, Duluth, MN 55816; www.duluthroundup.org
- 24-26—*Somerset, New Jersey.* 54th NNJGS Area 44 Conv. Write: Ch., Box 3223, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; www.nnjaa.org
- 24-26—*Gatineau, Québec, Canada.* 12^e Congres du Dist. 90-22. Écrire: Prés., 5, rue Schingh, Gatineau, QC J8P 2B5

October

- 1-3—*Troy, Michigan.* 23rd Tri-County Conf. Write: Ch., 380 Hilton Rd., Ferndale, MI 48220-2548
- 1-3—*Tahlequah, Oklahoma.* Serenity Harvest Conf. Write: Ch., Box 54587, Oklahoma City, OK 73154; www.serenityharvest.org
- 1-3—*Longview, Washington.* Area 72 Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 1153, Kelso, WA 98626
- 1-3—*Milwaukee, Wisconsin.* Midwest Woman to Woman Conf. Write: Ch., Box 259711, Madison, WI 53725-9711
- 2-3—*Thief River Falls, Minnesota.* Area 35 Fall Assembly. Write: Ch., 1921 E. 21st St., Hibbing, MN 55574
- 8-10—*Denver, Colorado.* SW Reg. Service Assembly. Write: Ch., Box 603, Canon City, CO 81215; www.swraasa.org
- 8-10—*Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada.* 40^e Congres de Sherbrooke. Écrire: Prés., 1291 rue McManamy, Sherbrooke, QC J1H 2P1; congresaa2010@bell.net

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 E-MAIL _____

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

- 15-17—*San Bernardino, California*. 23rd Inland Empire Conv. Write: Ch., Box 12056; San Bernardino, CA 92423; www.ieaac.org
- 15-17—*Mackinac Island, Michigan*. 22nd Fall Wknd. Write: Ch., 1915 E. Michigan Ave., Ste D, Lansing, MI 48912; www.aalansing.org
- 15-17—*Greensburg, Pennsylvania*. 70th Laurel Highlands Conf. Write: Ch., Box 6, Bovard, PA 15619
- 15-17—*Angeles City, Philippines*. 15th International Fall Round-up. Write: Ch., PSC 517, Box RC, FPO AP 96517-1000
- 22-24—*Santa Barbara, California*. 26th Santa Barbara Conv. Write: Ch., Box 91731, Santa Barbara, CA 93190-1731; www.sbaaconvention.org
- 28-31—*Athens, Georgia*. GA Prepaid Conv. Write: Ch., Box 7082, Athens, GA 30604; www.aageorgia.org
- 28-31—*Hagerstown, Maryland*. Area 29 Fall Conf. Write: Ch., 5320 Wright Ave., Baltimore, MD 21205
- 29-31—*Groton, Connecticut*. Women to Women New England Conf. Write: Ch., 1392 Boston Tpke, Coventry, CT 06238-1205
- 29-31—*Bossier City, Louisiana*. 65th Tri-State Conv. Write: Ch., 2800 Youree Dr., #362, Shreveport, LA 71104-3646; www.aacentraloffice.us
- 29-31—*Branson, Missouri*. Western Area of MO Conv. Write: Ch., Box 187, Reeds Spring, MO 65737; www.wamo-aa.org
- 29-31—*New Brunswick, New Jersey*. 22nd NE Woman to Woman Conf. Write: Ch., Box 279, Rahway, NJ 07065; www.newmantowoman.org
- 29-31—*Amherst, New York*. 69th Buffalo Fall Conv. Write: Ch., Box 686, Williamsville, NY 14231; www.buffalooaany.org

November

- 4-7—*Honolulu, Hawaii*. 49th Hawaii Conv. Write: Ch., Box 23434, Honolulu, HI 96823-3434; www.annualhawaiiiconvention.com
- 5-7—*Anchorage, Alaska*. Area 2 Fall Service Conv. Write: Ch., 2120 E. 36th Ave., Anchorage, AK99508
- 5-7—*Boulder, Colorado*. Area 10 Assembly. Write: Ch., 2920 Bluff St., #223, Boulder, CO 80301; www.coloradoaa.org
- 5-7—*Saint Augustine, Florida*. Ancient City Gratitude Wknd. Write: Ch., 34 Glen Falls Dr., Ormond Beach, FL 32174; www.ancientcityaa.com
- 5-7—*Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada*. Keystone Conf. Write: Ch., 208-323 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3C 3C1
- 5-7—*Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico*. XXXIII Congreso Regional Region Norte Poniente. Info: 33congresoregional@gmail.com
- 12-14—*Framingham, Massachusetts*. 47th MA State Conv. Write: Ch., Box 361, Weymouth, MA 02188; mastateconvention@aaemass.org
- 12-14—*Rapid City, South Dakota*. West Central Reg. Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; regionalforums@aa.org
- 19-21—*Joplin, Missouri*. Winter Holiday. Write: Ch., 19289 Norway Rd., Neosho, MO 64850
- 19-22—*Cape May, New Jersey*. 4th Waves of Sobriety Roundup. Write: Ch., Box 905, 32 E. Black Horse Pike, Pleasantville, NJ 08232; www.caigrp.org
- 26-28—*St. Louis Park, Minnesota*. Founder's Day Wknd. Write: Ch., Box 8327, Minneapolis, MN 55408-9998; www.foundersdaymn.org
- 26-28—*Durham, North Carolina*. Conv. Hispana del Estado de NC. Inf.: Com. Org., 319 Chapanoke Rd., Ste. 114, Raleigh, NC 27603
- 26-28—*Fuengirola, Spain*. 21st Costa del Sol Conv. Info: www.aaspain.org

December

- 10-12—*Myrtle Beach, South Carolina*. SE Reg. Forum. Write: Forum Coord., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; Regionalforums@aa.org