

Around AA

Items of AA Information and experience

Atmosphere of Unity Marks

30th General Service Conference

The theme of the 1980 AA General Service Conference (U.S./Canada), held April 20-26 at the Roosevelt Hotel, New York, N.Y., was "Participation: The Key to Recovery." Participation in AA service can work only if "trusted servants" are trusted — and trust one another. When the delegates come in from the 91 Conference areas across the continent and meet with their fellow Conference members — trustees, General Service Office and Grapevine staffs, and Grapevine and AA World Services directors — any feelings of "us vs. them" tend to vanish.

That was the outcome this year. Though there were the usual (and healthy) differences of opinion — over anonymity on film, over procedures for approving AA literature — on each point, Conference members reached a friendly consensus advancing the good of the Fellowship as a whole.

The following were the chief Advisory Actions taken, summarized as they appeared in the Conference edition of the GSO bulletin *Box 4-5-9*, and reprinted here with permission:

Agenda—recommended that the theme for the 1981 Conference be built around "AA Takes Its Inventory—General Service Conference Structure"; and that there be a "What's on Your Mind?" session for the full Conference.

Cooperation with the Professional Community—recommended in-person AA talks rather than videotaping; anonymity Traditions should be maintained on videotape.

Correctional Facilities—recommended emphasizing cooperation with correctional administrations and courts, prerelease sponsorship, and referrals to meetings through local committees.

International Convention—reaffirmed the 1979 Conference recommendation that simul-

taneous translation in French, Spanish, and German be provided free for the Big Meeting and the Spiritual Meeting.

Literature—recommended adoption and adaptation of a pamphlet from Great Britain entitled "A Newcomer Asks"; approved manuscript of book *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*.

Policy/Admissions—reaffirmed the importance of the committee system for accomplishing business of the General Service Conference.

Public Information—recommended that the film *AA—An Inside View* be released for general distribution:

Report and Charter—recommended that *The AA Service Manual* include additional material on the role of the alternate at all levels of service.

Treatment Facilities—encouraged the distribution of Guidelines for AA Members Employed in the Alcoholism Field in treatment, institutional, and other facilities where they apply.

Trustees—recommended that owners and operators of treatment facilities not be excluded from service on the General Service Board solely because of their occupations, nor retired GSO and GV people solely because of their past staff service.

Archives filmstrip—approved *Markings on the Journey*.

Grapevine—Advisory Actions involving the Grapevine (given here in full) recommended that:

- Shorter-term subscriptions for groups and treatment facilities not be considered at this time.
- Delegates continue their efforts in using the area and district service structure to achieve the goal of a Grapevine representative in every group.
- Grapevine Conference Display Kits be made available to district GvRs at cost.

- Groups make every effort to introduce newcomers to the Grapevine as one of our best tools in sobriety.

All those recommendations were just the culmination of a work-filled week, during which Conference members listened to presentations and reports and took part in floor discussions, committee meetings, and workshops. There was still time for brief coffee breaks and mealtime gatherings, where members could get to know one another personally and understand the special service responsibilities that each fills.