

August 1982

Around AA

Items of AA Information and experience

32nd General Service Conference Is an Experience of Unity

It was a week of hails and farewells for the members of AA's 1982 General Service Conference, meeting at the Hotel Roosevelt, New York City, April 18-24. Dr. Milton Maxwell, Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee since 1971 and chairman of the General Service Board since 1978, retired at the end of the Conference (he will continue to serve as a chairman emeritus). He handed the gavel over to his successor, Class A trustee Gordon Patrick of Ontario, who has been a member of the board since 1975.

Milton Maxwell's involvement with AA began with the writing of a master's thesis on Alcoholics Anonymous. His interest has continued, in the form of participation (including two years as chairman of the Grapevine Corporate Board) and further research and study of the Fellowship.

A highlight of the week was the nomination of three regional trustees (elected by the General Service Board at its April 24 meeting). Two will serve regular four-year terms: In the Pacific Region, Natalie S. follows rotating George D., and in Eastern Canada, Ken D. succeeds Fern I. Serving two years for the West Central Region will be Joan U., completing the unexpired term of Bud G., who died unexpectedly last December.

The Conference both examined and exemplified its theme, "The Traditions—Our Way of Unity." The 130 Conference members (delegates from the 91 areas, trustees, A.A. World Services and Grapevine directors, and Grapevine and General Service Office staffs)



As the 1982 US/Canada Conference closed, Milton Maxwell (left) turned the trustees' chairmanship over to Gordon Patrick, first Canadian to serve in that office.

worked together in lively discussions, workshops, presentations, and Ask-It Basket sessions. The 32 Advisory Actions that emerged were the result of truly "substantial unanimity."

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

Agenda — that the 1983 Conference theme be one of the following: "Group Responsibilities in Service—Back to Basics"; "The AA Member — Service, Privileges and Responsibilities"; "Anonymity — Our Spiritual Foundation."

That the following be presentations at the 1983 Conference: "How Is the AA Member's Voice Heard at the General Service Conference?"; "The Member, the Group, and Their Money"; and "Sponsorship."

Cooperation With the Professional Community — that a draft for a new pamphlet, "AA as a Resource for the Medical Profession," be approved, replacing "AA and the Medical Profession."

Correctional Facilities — that the statement "AA does not provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials" be added to "Memo to an Inmate" and "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell." That the pamphlet "Memo to an Inmate" continue to be published.

Finance — that a new concept for a pamphlet to replace the "60-30-10" piece be considered. **Grapevine** — that the prices of miscellaneous items be increased as needed.

Literature — that we develop a draft of a pamphlet for the homosexual alcoholic, to be considered by next year's Conference.

Policy/Admissions — that each Conference committee strive to make recommendations to the Conference at the policy level.

Public Information — approved a distribution method for two additional TV public service spots.

Report and Charter — that the modifications made by the 1978 Conference to Article 5 of the Conference Charter be reaffirmed.

Treatment Facilities — that, in light of recent statistics showing the greater influx of members from treatment facilities, a bulletin directed primarily to treatment facilities committees be instituted.

Practicality Is the Watchword For New AA Materials

From various committees, the 1982 Conference heard reports of new communication materials — both print and audiovisual — produced since the 1981 Conference. "AA works" is a favorite saying, and these new items all have practical value in carrying the message.

The CPC Workbook offers specific guidance to local committees on cooperation with the professional community. It is sent free to CPC chairmen; additional copies may be ordered at \$7.00 each.

So we may reach the active alcoholic at that crucial time when the job is at stake, "Alcoholics Anonymous and Occupational Alcoholism

Programs" explains to management or union officials the help AA offers. It's a brief leaflet (5¢) for busy people.

The latest membership survey provided continued proof that AA does work, and its results are reflected in new versions of the leaflet "The AA Member" (10¢) and the display (\$10.00) and poster (free for health fairs) of the same title.

Our anonymity principle sometimes puzzles non-AAs and AAs alike. The new edition of "Understanding Anonymity," expanded to pamphlet size and priced at 15¢, is a useful means of clearing away confusion.

AAs interested in service work can be grateful to the 1981 Conference, which recommended publishing *The AA Service Manual* and *Twelve Concepts for World Service* in a single volume. The 1981-82 edition of the manual and co-founder Bill W.'s discussion of the Concepts now appear in one booklet (\$2.00), combining the procedures and the principles of the AA service structure.

The U.S./Canada structure includes some 300 Spanish-speaking groups. For the first time, we have a Spanish edition of *The AA Service Manual* applying to that particular structure. (Write to GSO at the address below for the price.)

And it isn't the printed word alone that meets today's practical needs. Last year, 1,700 copies of the Big Book cassettes were distributed. There is now a companion: *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* on tape (also \$25.00). Listening to the AA message must work, too, for the 1982 Conference recommended that "the taping of our books and booklets be continued."

All of the foregoing material is available from the AA General Service Office, PO Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Write to that office for a complete order form.

