

*Interim Service Meetings:* The United States and Canada were represented at three zonal service meetings, which are held in the year when the World Service Meeting does not meet. In 1997, George Dorsey attended the Asia-Oceania Meeting in Auckland, New Zealand; Michel Girard and Dean Rinehart were delegates to the Meeting of the Americas in Guadalajara, Mexico, and were accompanied by Danny Mooney; and Richard Bush was at the European Service Meeting in Frankfurt, Germany.

We continue to be encouraged and inspired by the international A.A. community and General Service Boards in other countries, who carry our message to countless thousands in new regions and across difficult linguistic, cultural and economic barriers.

*Michel Girard, chairperson*

**Staff report:** The International desk receives requests for help from alcoholics in the depths of misery that we all understand; letters from new groups asking for literature and the reassurance of identification and shared experience; from professionals seeking information on how A.A. works; and from members staffing a new office that is struggling to stay afloat. Each request is answered with a letter, often accompanied by A.A. literature. Where there is a nearby office, we share the location and telephone number. The emphasis is on our faith that these members can maintain sobriety, help others and become independent in their own countries.

The staff member on the International desk benefits by the experience of G.S.O. staff, great cooperation with the Publications Department, and, most importantly, the complete support of the trustees' International Committee, to which he or she serves as secretary.

Some responsibilities on this assignment are:

- Serving as coordinator for the biennial World Service Meeting (WSM) and maintaining contact with delegates and their offices throughout the year.
- Maintaining close communications with our Publications Department on requests for new translations of literature (most touching are the unanticipated translations of the Big Book lovingly prepared by an A.A. member), and the beginnings of new central offices that may be able to distribute literature to local members and groups.
- Translation of A.A. literature: Each year, the A.A. World Services Board receives offers to translate our literature into a foreign language. Primary in consideration of each request is the need to ensure the integrity and authenticity of A.A.'s message. To that end, the Publications Department has the responsibility of checking each translation against the English original. In countries where there is a general service board licensed to publish A.A. literature, an approved translation is often financed and published there. Where a stable A.A. structure is not yet present, the A.A.W.S. Board undertakes the new publication when funds are available. The Big Book has been translated into 34 languages, and additional translations are pending approval and/or funding.

Responsibilities in regard to translations include close cooperation with the Spanish Services staff member, who may first receive up-to-date details on A.A. in a country where Spanish is the primary language, and communications related to overseas trips, including Interim Service Meetings. Our board sends one or two representatives to the Asia-Oceania Service Meeting, the European Service Meeting and the Meeting of the Americas (formerly the Ibero-American Meeting).

*Richard Bush*

Several delegates were dumbstruck to see a man walking down Broadway with a boa constrictor wrapped around his body. New Yorkers didn't even notice]

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS/ A.A. REGIONAL FORUMS

### Trustees' committee:

*International Convention*—The purpose of the trustees' committee as it relates to International Conventions is to work on plans for each forthcoming International Convention. The committee acts and makes recommendations in order to effect the broad purposes of the General Service Board, as those purposes relate to the strengthening of the Fellowship and the advancement of its message, through well-planned International Conventions.

The committee reviewed procedures for taping at International Conventions and recommended that A.A. members invited to speak at Internationals be presented with an option to be taped or to decline to be taped. The committee also discussed a request that A.A.W.S. be responsible for taping International Conventions and decided to take no action on this request.

The committee discussed a request for Financial Inducement Guidelines for International Convention Bid Presentations and tabled consideration of Guidelines for discussion closer to site selection for the 2010 International Convention.

We considered 16 final theme suggestions out of 253 proposed themes for the 2000 International Convention and recommended that the theme be "Pass It On — Into the 21st Century." The theme selected will support the objectives of this International Convention: To provide opportunities for a rededication of attendees to the primary purpose of A.A.; to enable attendees to witness the success and growth of the A.A. program around the world; to let the world know that A.A. is alive, flourishing and available as a community resource, locally and internationally.

The committee adopted the following policy regarding vendors of goods and services at the 2000 International Convention:

During the 2000 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous from June 29 to July 2 in Minneapolis only those purveyors of goods and services that are part of or under contract to the convention management will be permitted to operate on any of the facilities or grounds that are assigned or under contract to the convention management.

Don Meurer, A.A.W.S. controller, gave the committee a brief report on the 2000 International Convention budget process. The final budget will be submitted to the committee in January 1999. The General Service Board accepted this committee's recommendation for a celebratory design for the 2000 International Convention logo pending determination that this design does not infringe on any other mark.

We discussed inviting 21 non-A.A. speakers to participate in the 2000 Convention program at A.A.'s expense and will seek approval from the 1998 General Service Conference to continue this custom. It was agreed to include a booth in Minneapolis to provide information about the Birthday Plan.

The committee reviewed and accepted the following broad categories for the 2000 International Convention: Workshops; Panels; Regional Meetings; Topic Meetings; Marathons; Mini-marathons; Special Interest Meetings; Special Needs Meetings, and Special Language Meetings.

The committee discussed the December 5, 1997 Minority Report addressed to the General Service Board regarding financial incentives in 1995 (San Diego) and in 2000 (Minneapolis) and agreed to forward this Minority Report to the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee.

*A.A. Regional Forums*—Four regions have held Forums since the last Conference: East Central, Northeast, West Central and Southwest. All were lively and well-attended with substantive sharing on important A.A. topics. A Special Forum, was held in Alaska