

The NIGHT CAP

Published monthly by the San Antonio Central Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous in the interest of greater unity of members in local and Southwest Texas area groups.

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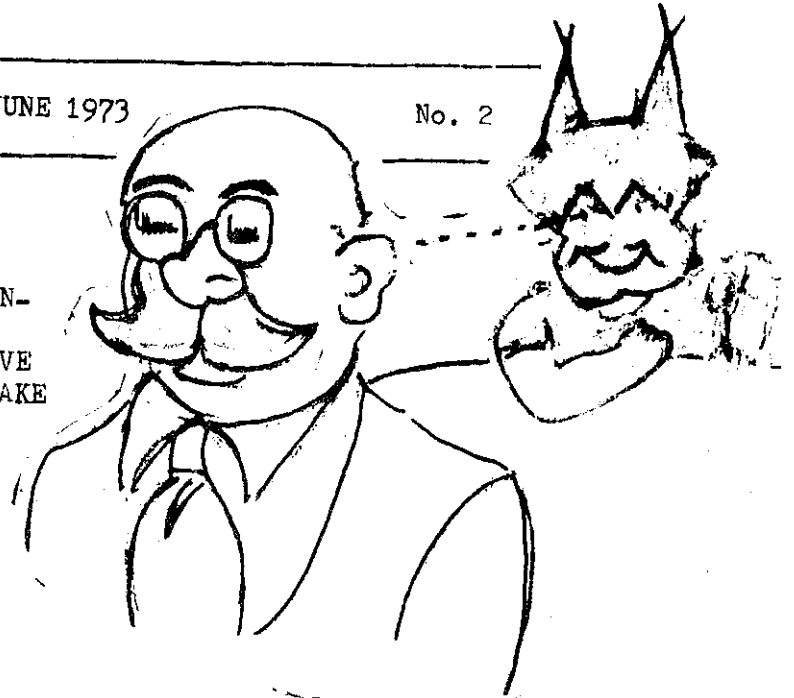
VOLUME TWO

JUNE 1973

No. 2

WE HAVE EMPHASIZED WILLINGNESS AS BEING INDISPENSABLE. ARE WE NOW READY TO LET GOD REMOVE FROM US ALL THE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE ADMITTED ARE OBJECTIONABLE? CAN HE NOW TAKE THEM ALL -- EVERY ONE? SHOULD WE STILL CLING TO SOMETHING WE WILL NOT LET GO, WE ASK GOD TO HELP US BE WILLING....

--ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS



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AN INTERPRETATION OF THE 12 STEPS

STEP SIX: WERE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL THESE DEFECTS OF CHARACTER...

Ole Jim was in bad shape. Yes, he had let his health get in a heckuva condition. The Doc told him he had a bad gall bladder, a peptic ulcer, poor circulation and high blood pressure for starters. He also suffered dizzy spells and was 60 pounds overweight. Good grief...

This hadn't happened overnight, of course... Ole Jim at 48 had been soaking up the sauce for about 25 years and had been overeating all his life... Now he was off the juice, but could still moonlight as a baby blimp...

The Doc was kind but firm.

"Jim," he said. "You've got a lot of things wrong with you and it's going to take some time to get you back in shape..."

"Well, Doc," replied Jim "I'll go to any lengths to recover. You just tell me and I'll do it."

"Okay. First, we've got to operate on that gall bladder. We'll take one thing at a time. The ulcer will probably heal itself since you've ripped off the Vodka diet. And speaking of diets, I'm putting you on 1200 calories a day until you lose that 60 pounds of blubber..."

"If that's what it takes, Doc, I'm entirely ready. I trust your judgment and I will do the best I can to cooperate."

"Good. You've got the right attitude. But you've got to keep it. So each morning I want you to recharge your emotional battery by saying to yourself that you are ready and willing to get better and that you will follow your rules for dieting and exercise... Okay?"

"Okay, Doc. I'm ready."

And that's just about the story. We have finished Step 5 and are aware of our defects. We have been our own doctor. We know what is wrong. Now we need to go to a Specialist who can remove these defects of character with our cooperation... one at a time... or as He knows best... and it won't be tomorrow because it does take time.

All we have to do in this Step is to be ready and willing to have these defects removed... and to trust the judgment of the physician... Trust that He will do the job with the least amount of pain and in the least amount of time... if we cooperate.

We can cooperate by following the diet prescribed, which in our case includes meetings, working the 12 Steps and reading the Big Book. A steady diet of these will melt away the undesirable weight of loneliness, compulsion to drink, and a lack of purpose in life.

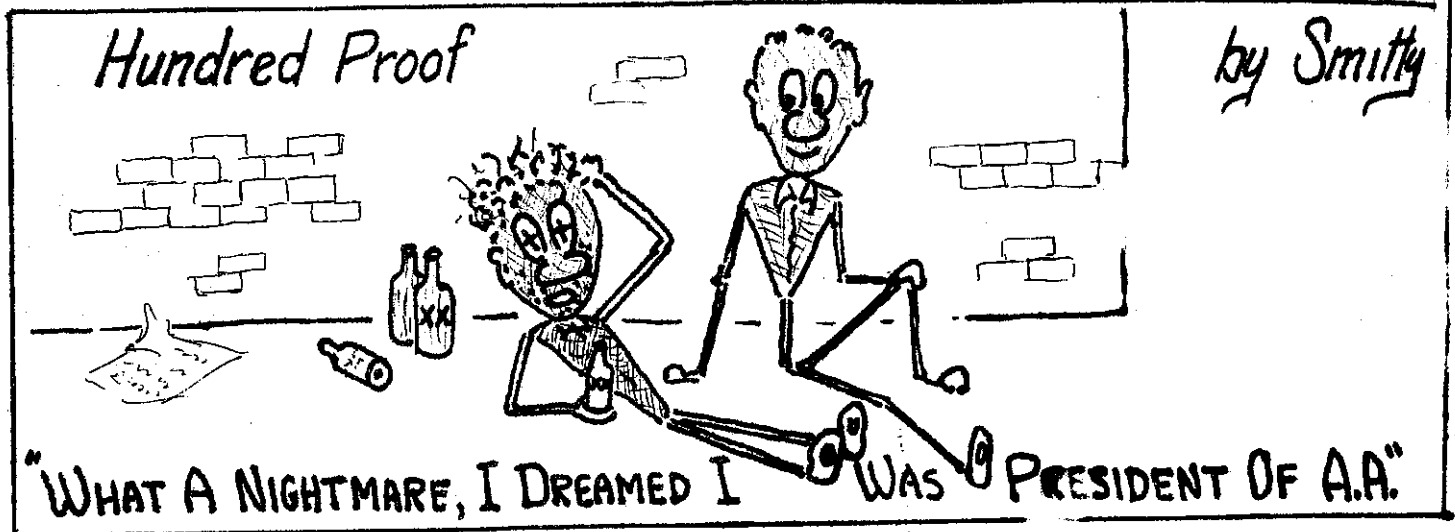
The beautiful thing about Step 6 is that we receive all the help we need to improve just by being ready to accept the help... and showing this readiness by hanging in there on our A. A. diet....

But, gee, how can I be ready to have Him remove ALL my defects? A few maybe; but ALL?? (I never did look well with wings...) Well, I'll try it and see what happens... What do I do? Say it out loud or write it down, or what? How do I know when I really mean it?

Like the Doc told Him, it may help to repeat it every morning for a while or to write it down in your own words or meditate on it... And if it still seems to be elusive, it might be helpful to ask for courage to take Step 6 sincerely... because it does take courage...

"Okay, Doc, I'm ready." That's what Jim said... and he meant it. I don't know about you, but I trust my doctor. He knows me and he has done me lots of good. In the 6th Step, all we have to do really is to trust the number one Physician who knows us better than we know ourselves... Trust that He will do the job if we just give Him a chance.

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ONE ALKY'S OPINION

The meeting subject was: "Is there a difference between a defect of character and a shortcoming? If so, what?"

Prior to this meeting I had thought of defects of character and shortcomings as one and the same. I thought the writers of the Big Book had changed the wording in steps six and seven to avoid repetition.

After several people had talked at the meeting and I had searched my memory, I changed my opinion.

Today-- I think this:

Shortcoming: A shortcoming is a feeling or emotion I have, and keep to myself, that can be harmful to me or others.

The feelings include fear-- and its many offshoots-- tension, anxiety, dread, worry, uncertainty and apprehension. Also included are the feelings of self-pity, remorse, resentment, intolerance, jealousy and suspicion. The feelings that make me uncomfortable or miserable are the ones that should be labeled "shortcomings".

The emotions, when you define emotion as a strong feeling, include: anger, hate and the desire for revenge. I believe that the emotions that should be labeled "shortcomings" are the strong feelings we have that if acted upon will certainly be harmful to others and possibly to ourselves. I do know that if I have these strong negative emotions and hang on to them, even though I do not act on them, I become very self-centered and miserable.

Defect of Character: In my opinion, today, a defect of character is any of the emotions or feelings of a negative nature that have been revealed to other people by word or action, but have not been acted upon and caused harm to others. I do believe that if we have held these defects for any length of time that we have harmed ourselves. One of the most damaging results, for an alcoholic, that suppressed negative emotions can produce is depression.

The only way I know of today to relieve my-

self of a "shortcoming" or "defect of character" is to honestly reveal my feeling or emotion to myself, to God and to another human being. I must admit verbally that it is wrong for me to harbor these negative feelings or emotions and proceed with steps six and seven.

Now, for a phrase that was not included in the subject for the meeting that I attended:

The Exact Nature of Our Wrongs: In my opinion, the exact nature of our wrongs is the action taken when we harmed ourselves or others.

Example: I am jealous of Mr. X because he has been flirting with my wife. I make my wife admit she has been enjoying Mr. X's attention. I blacken her eye. The exact nature of my wrongs was my wife's black eye. But the character defects revealed when I blacked her eye were jealousy, anger and fear.

If I had caught the jealousy when it was a shortcoming and only a single negative feeling or emotion and before anger entered my mind, had admitted it to myself, to God and to another human being; had become entirely ready to have God remove this shortcoming before it became a defect of character, and had asked Him to remove this shortcoming; I would not have blacked my wife's eye, but would have, with help from outside myself, found a satisfactory, civilized way to handle the situation.

My life would have been happier and less complicated as a result of applying the steps of A. A. in my life.

Today, I try to catch my shortcomings and seek their removal by admitting them to myself, to God and to another human being. I try to become entirely ready to have God remove these negative feelings and emotions. I humbly ask my Higher Power to remove these negative feelings or emotions before they fester and cause permanent harm to myself or others.

I'm not always immediately successful. But my life, today, is better because I am trying to apply the steps of A. A. in my life, and I'm not drinking, one day at a time.

- Dick D.
The Center Post
Houston, Texas

GROUP NEWS

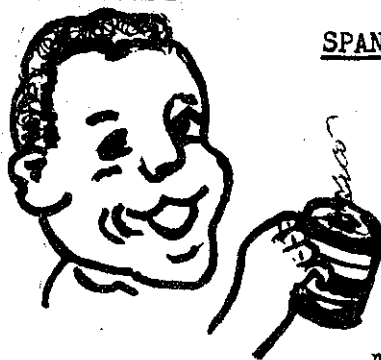
GRUPOS EN ESPAÑOL

Hay en la actualidad cuatro grupos de alcohólicos anónimos en San Antonio que son: Wesley, Santa Fe, Sta. Inez Y Unidad; en Lockhart se acaba de formar otro llamado Lockhart Spanish Group y tienen juntas los jueves.

El Grupo Unidad se reúne los sábados en el local del Unity Club, 311 N. W. 24th; el segundo sábado de cada mes a las 8 P. M. efectúan bingos. Asista ud. y diviértase Antojitos Mexicanos. El Grupo Wesley celebra diez y seis años de vida el jueves 17 de Mayo de 1973 a las 19:00 horas. Miembros de habla hispana empezaran a llevar el programa bi-mestralmente a los campos de prisión Ramsey y Darrington cerca de Houston. Si se interesa en participar, comuníquese a la Oficina Central.

Se han estado formando grupos de A. A. en español en varias partes del país: Nueva York, Washington, D. C., Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles y muchas mas. Recibimos invitación para asistir a la primera convencion Hispana de Alcohólicos Anónimos en E.E.U.U. que se efectuara en la Ciudad de Akron, Ohio, durante los días 29 y 30 de Junio y 1° de Julio de 1973! Que les parece, la primera convencion hispana en la cuna de Alcohólicos Anónimos!

-Raul M.



SPANISH SPEAKING GROUPS

There are four A. A. Spanish speaking groups in San Antonio, which are: Wesley, Santa Fe, St. Agnes and Unidad. There has been another formed in Lockhart called "Lockhart Spanish Group" and they meet Thursday nights. The Unidad has meetings Saturday nights at the Unity Club, 311 N. W. 24th St.

Unity Club holds bingos every second Saturday of the month at 8 P.M. Mexican "Antojitos" are served. Attend and enjoy it. The Wesley Group celebrated its 16th Anniversary Thursday, May 17 at 7 P.M. Spanish speaking members have been invited to participate once every two months at the A. A. groups of Texas Department of Corrections: Ramsey and Darrington Camps. If you wish to join us, call the Central Office.

Spanish speaking groups are being formed all over the country: in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and many others. We just received an invitation to attend the FIRST CONVENTION OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IN SPANISH to be held June 29th and 30th and July 1st 1973 in the birthplace of A. A.: Akron, Ohio.

-Raul M.

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THE HAVEN, 1640 W. Woodlawn, will hold its monthly dinner at 1 PM Sunday, June 10, followed by the Haven Group Meeting at 3 PM. On other Sundays the meeting hour remains at 5 PM.

24 HOUR GROUP, 24 Hour Club, 1203 Fredericksburg Rd., holds its monthly dinner and Bingo on Sunday, June 24, at 1 PM.

DOWNTOWN GROUP, Sahara Club, 809 E. Euclid, has Poor Boy Bingo at 8:00 PM each Saturday. The monthly dinner will be Sunday, June 3, at 1 PM.

NORTHEAST GROUP will celebrate all June birthdays at an Open Speakers Meeting on June 16th. One June birthday gal, Jerri McC., will be our chairman Saturday at 8:15 PM, Calvin Presbyterian Church, Walzem and Mid-crown in Windcrest. See you there!

GROUP TWELVE, Club 12, 102 Thames: Regular dinner and Bingo June 30 at 7 PM. Bridge is played each Friday after the meeting. Everyone is invited!

THE GOLIAD GROUP, 104 Avondale, will hold its monthly Barbecue on Sunday, June 17, at 6 PM.

Remember REALITY! 8:15 Fridays, Calvary Missionary Church, 1518 Steves.

RAMELING 'ROUND THE AREA

Thanks to Mary H., Killeen Group, for sharing her feelings about talking at meetings:

When I was invited to speak recently at an A. A. meeting other than my home group, for the first time, I was filled with doubt and fear and desperately wanted to say, "No, I will be busy that evening." I felt that my sobriety of some 15 months did not qualify me as any sort of an authority on a program which I had struggled with for about 5 years before I finally and honestly accepted the first three steps.

My long-suffering sponsor, George W., reminded me that only by sharing can we grow in this beautiful program. He advised me to seek the help of my Higher Power, that I might be given a message which would perhaps help some struggling skeptic and also strengthen my own sobriety.

The afternoon we were to go to Temple, I closeted myself in my room, and on my knees, meditated quietly for a time and then reached out for Gbd's help that evening.

My prayers were surely answered, for as I spoke a feeling first of anguish and pain, and then a sense of release and calmness seemed to flow through me as I shared the misery of my drinking years with its numerous hospitalizations, brushes with the law, wrecked cars, self-centeredness, self-pity and attempts at self-destruction. Then to recall, aloud, the memory of finally seeing for what I had become, and at that moment, turning myself and my life over to a God of my understanding with complete honesty, recalled to me, an alcoholic, that "We have done what I could not do by myself," and only so long as I continue to practice these 12 steps of the A.A. program in my daily life, and give freely what was given to me by other recovering alcoholics, will I retain my own wonderful sobriety.

Today is all I have
Another chance to exercise your gift
Et me not forget from whence it came
Each opportunity- a responsibility
Never let me doubt your sustaining strength
Timidty will flee if I am truly glorifying thee.

From Marilyn H., Victoria Group:

B. D. H. has been named as Coordinator of Talbot House, the multi-purpose residential recovery center, located in Victoria, Texas. This facility serves a seven county area and is under the supervision of Gulf Bend M. H. M. R. Center.

Port Lavaca Group will celebrate their 4th Anniversary on Saturday, June 2, with an "eatin' meetin'". It will be held at their regular meeting place - Coastal Bend Savings and Loan. "Eatin'" at 6:30 - "Meetin'" at 8:00.

Don't be afraid to ask dumb questions, they're easier to handle than dumb mistakes.

* * *

A workman fell three stories from a scaffolding. "Water- get him water," called the foreman. The worker looked up. "How far must you fall for whiskey?" he asked.

* * *

--Thank you, Marilyn. Keep the news circulating!

HURT IS HELP by Eloise C., Austin

One day a man who had been in and out of A. A. for several years was taking a ride with an A. A. member and his wife. He mentioned he had driven by the new Clubhouse many times trying to make himself go in. The wife said "That is what a non-alcoholic cannot understand. If I had anything wrong with me and knew where I could get help, I'd break my neck getting there." The A.A. member, who was a dentist, said "Wait a minute. Have you ever had a cavity in your tooth?" She replied "Of course." The dentist then said, "You know that a cavity never heals by itself but always gets worse. And the longer you put off having it filled, the more it costs and the more it hurts. But do you do anything about it until it really starts hurting?"

Most often it is human nature not to seek help until we hurt, and some of us have to hurt real bad before we go for help.

ANNOUNCING : Magic Valley AA Group
 meets :
 Monday Night 8 P.M.
 Grace Lutheran Church
 10th & E. Jackson
 Harlingen, Texas

1st Meeting
 8pm 3/19/73

Alcoholic Anonymous meetings for everyone throughout the Rio Grande Valley

Monday 8 P.M.

- Ferrell's Bar-B-Que - West Highway 83 between McAllen & Mission
 Phone - 585-1033
- First Methodist Church Annex - 800 So. Nebraska - San Juan
- ✓ - Christ of the Advent Episcopal Church - Brownsville - Phone 542-2371
- Grace Lutheran Church - 10th & E. Jackson - Harlingen - Phone 425-3920

Tuesday 8 P.M.

- ✓ - Alcoholics Anonymous - 1901 E. Harrison - Harlingen - Phone: 425-9988
 425-9988
- Pharr Methodist Church - 119 E. Kelly - Pharr, Texas - Phone: 686-5275

Wednesday 8 P.M.

- Latin-American Group - 1901 E. Harrison - Harlingen - Phone: 425-9988
- ✓ - All Saints Episcopal Church - 499 No. Keagan - San Benito
- Court House Group - 1150 E. Madison - Brownsville

Thursday 8 P.M.

- ✓ - First United Methodist Church Gym - 220 No. Main - McAllen, Texas
- ✓ - St. Andrews Episcopal Church - Port Isabel, Texas

Friday 8 P.M.

- ✓ - Alcoholics Anonymous - 1901 E. Harrison - Harlingen, Texas
- AA Group - Rodriguez Hospital Building - Rio Grande City, Texas

Saturday 8 P.M.

- ✓ - Christ of the Advent Episcopal Church - 104 W. Elizabeth - Brownsville

Alcoholic Ward - Mental Health & Retardation Center - Harlingen Air Port
 Complex:
 Monday thru Saturday 10 A.M. to 11 A.M.
 Sunday Evening - 8 P.M.

Boca Chico AA Club - Central Blvd. & Boca Chico Blvd. - Brownsville
 Monday & Saturday 8 P.M.

A. A. GROW---I---N---G-----

In the summer of 1934 Dr. Silkworth had given up on trying to save Bill and pronounced him hopeless and doomed to alcoholic insanity or death.

By November of 1934 an old school friend, another chronic alcoholic who had also been told he was beyond help, called on Bill. Ebby was sober and happy. He did not want to drink with Bill. He said he had gotten religion, and told Bill about the principles of recovery he had learned from the Oxford Movements.

December 11, 1934, was Bill's sobriety date.

Mother's Day, May 1935, Bill first called on Dr. Bob.

June 10, 1935, the first group was formed in Akron, Ohio. At the end of 1935 there were three members: Bill, Dr. Bob, and Bill O.

In 1937 there were 40 members.

In 1938 there were 60, all in Akron, Cleveland and New York.

The book "Alcoholics Anonymous" was published in April of 1939; there were less than 100 members. The members by this time had withdrawn from the Oxford Group, and named their fellowship "Alcoholics Anonymous" after the book title.

In April 1939 Fulton Oursler's article was published in Liberty Magazine; at the end of the year there were 800 members.

A. A. came to Texas in 1940 when Larry J. came to Houston from Akron and assisted Bishop Quinn in forming the first group west of the Mississippi.

In 1941 there were 2,000 members.

After Jack Alexander's article about Alcoholics Anonymous was published in the Saturday Evening Post in 1941, the membership jumped from 2,000 to 8,000.

In 1944 there were 12,000 members (35 in Houston and a few in Dallas).

A. A. came to San Antonio in 1945.

In 1949 there were 80,000 members.

In 1951 after the publication of an article in the May issue of Fortune Magazine, there were 120,000 members.

In 1955 there were 150,000 members.

In 1956 there were over 200,000 members.

Today there are more than 650,000 members.

This is an appropriate time to remember the Declaration of the 30th Anniversary International Convention, 1965:

"When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A. A. always to be there. And for that: I AM RESPONSIBLE."

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Contributions to the Nightcap are NEEDED and welcome. Send news, cartoons, jokes, articles and stories pertaining to A. A., up to 500 words in length, to: THE NIGHTCAP, Lexington Bldg., 109 Lexington Ave., Suite 215, San Antonio, TX, 78205.

Share your thoughts and experiences with us!

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WANTED: September 1965 issue of The Grapevine. Call Kate R., TA6-6615

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MEETING CHANGE: PILGRIM GROUP meetings moved from 102 Lorenz to 2011 N. Alamo, beginning Sunday, June 3. Meeting begins 8:15 PM.



SMILE WITH US

A liquor store is known as an A. A. Stupor Market.

! ! ! !

A Cocktail Party is where alcohol removes the veneer from the furniture and the guests.

! ! ! !

CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE NEWS

HANDSOME NEW RACK FOR A. A. PAMPHLETS pictured in the April-May Box 4-5-9 is available in the Central Service Office for \$7.50 each.

A. A.'s LEGACY OF SERVICE is a new pamphlet available in the Central Service Office at a cost of 11¢. "In this foreword to the A. A. Service Manual, Bill describes basic A. A. service, the pioneers' struggle for the Big Book, the beginnings of group and world services, the origin of the Twelve Traditions, GSO today and the birth of the General Service Conference." -World Services, Pamphlets on A. A. Unity and Service.

28TH TEXAS STATE A. A. CELEBRATION will be in Dallas June 28, 29, 30, and July 1, 1973. Lois W., "wife of our late beloved co-founder Bill W., will attend our celebration all four days. A packed program presents the best speakers you said you wanted to hear again." Send registrations to: 28th TEXAS STATE CELEBRATION, P.O.Box 2081, Dallas, TX, 75201.

REMINDER TO MEMBERS - CALL ON 226-2164 so that our main number can be left open for incoming 12th Step calls. Also, we pay the Answering Service a monthly rate up to 60 calls and we must pay for additional calls. 226-2164 is not connected to the Answering Service; it is used to forward 12th Step calls to the groups and is the number for members to use when calling the Central Service Office.

WELCOME HOME, ELVES! Elves S., Southwest Texas Area Delegate, has returned from the General Service Conference held in New York April 24-29. He says it was a marvelous, exciting conference and he will be visiting the Districts in this Area during the next few months sharing the conference actions with you.

GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES Meeting will be held Sunday, June 10, 7:00 PM at Club 12.

MONTHLY INTERGROUP MEETING will have Sandy and Scott L., local residents, as speakers June 10 at 8:15 PM at Club 12. The Trinity Group will host.

YOUR CENTRAL OFFICE

Many thanks to our A. A. members for your continuing support of your Central Office. There's been a decided increase in membership and we want you to know our gratitude. Our today depends on your support.

Regarding the Central Office: A. A. Comes of Age, page 140-143... "The test of an A. A. service really is whether it is a book, a translation, a service conference or an anniversary convention, the principle is the same; the test is identical- Do we need this particular service or do we not? That is the only question." Our Central Office needs to be there to receive that call for help. Thanks for your Buck-A-Month.

--Jeannie W.

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Since the last issue of the Nightcap, Thala C. and Company have answered many calls for speakers. Gary M., Bob W. and Jose O. answered three requests from Holmes High School. Pat F. spoke to the Social Services at Randolph AFB. Rex S. talked at Sam Houston High School and Dell C. at Judson High. Pat O'F. answered a call from SAC and Karen C. and La Ree M. talked at Lee High. Edna McG. talked at TOPS, Lee E. at the Arsenal and Jane R. at Alamo Heights High School.

A picture and news release from the General Service Office of President Nixon receiving the one millionth copy of "Alcoholics Anonymous" will be given by Ed C. to the local newspapers.

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IN MEMORIAM

In Memory of B. C. E. M., 11 July 1905 - 30 April 1966

Gladys T. died May 1, 1973

Frank P. died May 9, 1973

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"A good example is the best sermon."