



## GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

### FLORIDA STATE COMMITTEE NORTHERN AREA

November 17, 1971

TO ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES:

The fourth quarterly meeting of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous, Northern Florida Area, was held at Tallahassee, Florida, on Sunday, November 7, 1971.

Present were Delegate, Sam I [redacted] and Chairman, Earl M [redacted]. Committee Members present were Jess P [redacted], Barbara S [redacted]-N [redacted] and Bert I [redacted]. Committee Members absent were Dave C [redacted], Bill B [redacted], Buck R [redacted], Marie T [redacted] and Lamar P [redacted].

The meeting was opened by Earl who spoke about what AA is and the problems stemming from other people trying to complicate it. He talked about the Myers bill which will bring our drunk laws up to date in the State of Florida and help change the early treatment of revolving door drunks. He mentioned also the State penal system looking to AA for more help with their alcoholic parolees.

Brevard County Mental Health program, having established a half-way house for alcoholics, experienced poor luck, so they tried using AA and to good advantage. We can help and are uniquely equipped to do this. The AA program can be used along with other programs for the alcoholic. Doctors do what they can for their alcoholic patients and then send them to AA. We need to be prepared to meet this.

Dave W [redacted], chairman of the Public Information sub-committee, spoke about keeping professional and civic groups and private clubs aware of the help available to the still suffering alcoholic through AA. He suggested having available outside speakers through the Intergroup office for these groups.

It was asked how to help the sick alcoholic without recruiting him and it was felt that we can let people know that we are a member of AA as situations arise in everyday life. In just being informative each one of us can be a Public Information committee on his own. We must be certain that at all times we work within our Traditions and we need more study at the group level of what anonymity really means. Too often we tend to neglect the Traditions in favor of the Steps, forgetting that they are just as important to the individual who is trying to gain his sobriety and maintain it. When the real meaning of anonymity is gotten across to the people in our groups we won't have a problem with those who are trying to sober up the world and breaking anonymity.

We must learn to use discretion in order to be effective. The only people we can get sober are ourselves. With a broken tradition a character defect is usually showing. The December issue of our Grapevine has some very good articles on anonymity on pages 8 through 16.

Contributions to AA from clubs were discussed and it was noted that this topic will be discussed at the General Service Conference in New York this spring.

We talked about the AA Survey Pamphlet which grew out of a survey taken of over 10,000 AA members throughout North America during 1968. Among other things, this survey showed that over half (55%) of all new members came to AA through other members of AA.

The new wallet card on anonymity and the pamphlet A Student's Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous were discussed; the latter is one which can easily be placed in other locations besides our meeting rooms. Our literature is an important tool in carrying our message of help and recovery to the alcoholic and should not be overlooked.

More discussion was had on AA members learning to work with half-way houses and outside agencies. It was stressed that we need about a three-year period of growing and learning how to work with others within the framework of our Traditions. Emphasis was placed on cooperation without affiliation. One member put it very nicely when she stated that we need to realize that in the past AA has made mistakes and fumbled - we still do - and that as we grow and learn to work with others we need a mouth shut to criticism and much, much tolerance.

The meeting was closed in the usual manner. No date or place has yet been set for our next meeting, although it will be early in 1972. We will keep you advised, and meanwhile, I wish you all very happy holidays.

Sincerely,

*Barbara*