

A quarterly meeting of the North Florida Committee of the General Service Conference, Alcoholics Anonymous, was held at St. Augustine, Florida, Sunday, May 17, 1970, at 10:00 a.m.

Committee members present were William P. Bert L. Virginia R. and Dave C. Also present was Earl M. , delegate. Those absent were Marjorie M. Jess P. , Sam I. and Ben W.

The chairman opened the meeting and called on our delegate to present his report on the ~~annual~~ General Service Conference in New York ~~in April~~. The following is a summary of his report:

One of the interesting at the conference was the election

~~The first order of business at the Conference was nomination of Arthur Miles as non-AA trustee of the General Service Board, then the election of a trustee at large to strengthen the guidance of our fellowship. Thirty-nine names were submitted by the Conference areas, including Wesley P. from Florida. Voting sifted these down to the selection of Jim H. as general service trustee at large.~~

2. Refinancing of the delegates' yearly trip to the ^{annual} ~~April~~ conference was discussed and it was agreed that the General Service ~~Office~~ would bill each area treasurer 150.00 by March 1st of each year, beginning in 1971, ~~such amount to cover transportation, meals and lodging, regardless of distance traveled, and with the General Service Office making up the deficit within 100.00.~~

3. Questions pertaining to the use of mood changing pills and drugs were again raised and received the identical answers we reached in Ocala. It was pointed out that there is a need for increased sharing with members regarding the dangers of mood-changing pills and drugs. It was also emphasized that Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship for alcoholics and that those people having problems with other substances will have to turn elsewhere in their efforts to deal with them. [^] In the sense of keeping it simple, AA is for alcoholics. This is the only field in which we are effective, and the subject matter of our meetings should deal only with alcoholism. Nor can we lend our name to people with other problems. These people are welcome to sit in at our open meetings and listen, but closed meetings are for alcoholics only.

unless they also have an alcoholic problem.

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4. We need to improve the public image of the alcoholic. Once the illness is arrested we are normal people and we need to behave like normal people. Earl suggested that when we are speaking we exchange the word "arrested" for the word "recovering." We need to listen to the way we speak, take a new look at ourselves, dump the guilt. This is a treatable illness.
5. General Service has a new film dealing with the twelve traditions which will be shown for the first time at our international convention in July.
6. An increase in the size of our general service conference was again discussed, and again it was felt that our present ~~delegates~~ delegates were enough; that our remedy lay in closer and better communications between the groups; that more conference areas mean more money. We need to strengthen our committees and our GSRs instead.
7. The theme of the conference was service, the heart of AA, that pumps our life's blood to the alcoholic who still suffers. Service includes each individual effort, large or small, to sustain the group and to carry the message. Service to the newcomer and to one another, whether it is in emptying ash-trays, mailing notices, wielding a broom.....each ~~individual~~ individual can do as much or as little as he desires. We each have an obligation to "pass it on."
8. We discussed outside agencies and their experimental work. It was felt that they do a good job of getting the disease concept of alcoholism out in front of the public. AA is yet the last source of help for the sick alcoholic. However, it was recommended that the fellowship go on record as opposing the use of the title "AA counselor" by outside agencies desiring to hire members of AA as counselors. Again it was strongly felt that there are no experts in AA; that we are sober alcoholics only and are not qualified by sobriety to counsel anyone; that an individual may be hired because of special education but not because of recovery through the AA program.
9. Two new pamphlets have been added to our list of literature by GSO, "Alcoholism is a Management Problem" and the "Alcoholics Anonymous Survey" in which a cross-section of AA members answer questions about themselves. Both are available to groups.

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Earl, having presented his report, suggested a need for two committees to be formed, one to deal with public information and the other to be an institutional committee. He suggested that we begin the groundwork for discussion of these committees at our next quarterly meeting. Many of the people doing institutional work in AA are not aware of the material and help available from our General Service Office.

Before the meeting was ~~terminated~~ closed, Earl emphasized again the need for sharing in service and read "Why Do We Need a Conference" from page 31 of our AA Service Manual.

Barbara S-N.