

ALTERNATIVE

"INTER-GROUP NEWSLETTER FOR THE READING AREA" August, 1993

I AM RESPONSIBLE

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

I AM RESPONSIBLE

MEETING SCHEDULES MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE REGULAR INTERGROUP MEETING ON THE FOURTH TUESDAY AT 7:30 IN THE THE FLAME ROOM OF THE UGI BUILDING.

!!!! W A N T E D !!!

A FEW GOOD MEN AND WOMEN

WHEN: 8:30 TO 10:00 A.M.
THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

WHERE: READING REHABILITATION HOSPITAL
ROUTE 10 - MORGANTOWN ROAD - READING

REQUIREMENTS: AT LEAST ONE DUI AND
ONE YEAR OF CONTINUOUS SOBRIETY

SUBJECT: EDUCATIONAL TOUR FOR DUI OFFENDERS
SENTENCED BY JUDGE SPRECHER

SPEAKER MAY ATTEND ALL OF THE 1-1/2 HOUR SESSION OR ARRIVE AT 9:30 A.M. PREPARED TO SHARE HOW YOUR DUI EXPERIENCE AFFECTED YOUR LIFE AND CONTRIBUTED TO GETTING SOBER. EACH PERSON WILL SPEAK FOR LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES.

CONTACT: YOUR INTERGROUP REP OR ATTEND OUR NEXT MEETING AT 7:30, TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, IN THE FLAME ROOM OF THE UGI BUILDING

DISTRICT 33 WORKSHOP: Sunday, September 26 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Muhlenberg Recreation Center. "The Twelve Traditions Skit"; food; roundtable discussions. English/Spanish interpreter provided.

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY: Into Action Group, Monday, September 13 at 8:00 p.m. Speaker (Elizabeth H.), followed by fellowship and refreshments.

**IS YOUR GROUP CELEBRATING AN ANNIVERSARY SOON?
CALL OR WRITE US AND WE'LL PRINT IT.**

TRADITION EIGHT

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

By Bill W.
(from the July 1948 Grapevine)



Throughout the world AAs are twelfth-stepping with thousands of new prospects a month. Between one and two thousand of these stick on our first presentation; past experience shows that most of the remainder will come back to us later on. Almost entirely unorganized, and completely nonprofessional, this mighty spiritual current is now flowing from alcoholics who are well to those who are sick. One alcoholic talking to another; that's all.

Could this vast and vital face-to-face effort ever be professionalized or even organized? Most emphatically, it could not. The few efforts to professionalize straight Twelfth Step work have always failed quickly. Today, no AA will tolerate the idea of paid "AA therapists" or "organizers." Nor does any AA like to be told just how he must handle that new prospect of his. No, this great life-giving stream can never be dammed up by paid do-gooders or professionals. Alcoholics

Anonymous is never going to cut its own lifelines. To a man, we are sure of that.

But what about those who serve us full time in other capacities—are cooks, caretakers, and paid intergroup secretaries "AA professionals"?

Because our thinking about these people is still unclear, we often feel and act as though they were such. The impression of professionalism subtly attaches to them, so we frequently hear they are "making money out of AA" or that they are "professionalizing" AA. Seemingly, if they do take our AA dollars they don't quite belong with us AAs anymore. We sometimes go further; we underpay them on the theory they ought to be glad to "cook" for AA cheap.

Now isn't this carrying our fears of professionalism rather far? If these fears ever got too strong, none but a saint or an incompetent could work for Alcoholics Anonymous. Our supply of saints being quite small, we would certainly wind up with less competent workers than we need.

We are beginning to see that our

few paid workers are performing only those service tasks that our volunteers cannot consistently handle. Primarily those folks are not doing Twelfth Step work. They are just making more and better Twelfth Step work possible. Secretaries at their desks are valuable points of contact, information, and public relations. That is what they are paid for, and nothing else. They help carry the good news of AA to the outside world and bring our prospects face to face with us. That's not "AA therapy"; it's just a lot of very necessary but often thankless work.

So, where needed, let's revise our attitude toward those who labor at our special services. Let us treat them as AA associates, and not as hired help; let's recompense them fairly and, above all, let's absolve them from the label of professionalism.

Let us also distinguish clearly between "organizing the AA movement" and setting up, in a reasonably businesslike manner, its few essential services of contact and propagation. Once we do that, all will be well. The million or so fellow alcoholics who are still sick will then continue to get the break we sixty thousand AAs have already had.

Let's give our "service desks" the hand they so well deserve.

