

The **MESSENGER**

Middle Tennessee Central Office Intergroup

JULY 2012

The Messenger is available at an annual subscription price of \$12.00. A limited number of free subscriptions are available upon request by writing or calling the Central Office.

It is also available on-line at www.aanashville.org. If you read *The Messenger* on-line, a contribution to The Middle Tennessee Central Office would help and be appreciated.

**PLEASE MAKE A NOTE
STATING YOUR DONATION
IS FOR THE MESSENGER.**

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Sober but Bored

**If it happens to you, take another good, hard look at the Twelve Steps.
Sharing and Service can be the answer**

RECENTLY, I found myself passing judgment on a member who was celebrating her sixteenth year of sobriety. As she accepted the group's congratulations, she mentioned that she had not attended a meeting for a year. I said to some AA friends that she was depriving me of her presence by not attending meetings and making herself available to all newcomers. In fact, I rather hotly declared that the Big Book says we share our experience, strength, and hope--and how could she do this if she wasn't at meetings?

Among my AA friends are wonderful people who shoot me down every time my thinking goes awry. I was promptly asked who *I* was to say how many meetings someone else should attend, and that led me to some quiet reflection on attendance at meetings and active participation or involvement in AA functions.

Although I do have some years of continuous sobriety, I realize I have but a toehold on the long path ahead of me. From this vantage point, I look around and see that many times lately I have been bored at meetings. I have been performing duties perfunctorily. The thrill of leading a meeting or giving a talk has abated. Many of my contemporaries on the program also seem to be experiencing boredom. A friend with two years of sobriety has returned to patronizing the local gin mills, sober, to have some "fun." Another friend attends only one or two meetings a month,

"because I'm tired of hearing the same stories." Maybe the woman with sixteen years of sobriety had stopped attending meetings because she was bored.

Boredom, I discovered, was a topic rarely mentioned from the podium; but when I asked other members whether they were ever bored, the answer was usually in the affirmative. I went to the dictionary to find out what Webster had to say. One definition of the verb bore that seemed to fit was "make one's way laboriously." Other words for boredom were ennui or tedium, and ennui was described as "a feeling of weariness and dissatisfaction."

These definitions crystallized the vague discontent I had noticed lately. It had started with a ho-hum detachment toward some of my favorite meetings, and a general diminishing of enthusiasm and anticipation had followed. Life has become good for me in sobriety. My close personal relationships seem to have good balance, and my drinking past seems remote. I had reached a point where, when I was asked to talk at a meeting and began to say what I used to be like, I felt as though I was talking about someone else. Now, almost three years sober, I was bored. I could sum up my attitude in the words "Is this all?"

An explanation of my feelings came from my sponsor, who believes that a major character defect of many

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We at the Middle Tennessee Central Office apologize for the late arrival and posting of your *Messenger* newsletter. Personnel issues and illness have delayed the issue, and as often happens in

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Sober but Bored (cont)

(Continued from page 1)

alcoholics is an inability to make a long-term commitment. We are all great in the fifty-yard dash,



she says, but then we find out that life is not one short race, but a continuing, daily call for effort. This inability to commit ourselves explains our history of being job-hoppers, apartment-hoppers, marriage-hoppers, to name just a few instances. We avoid commitment because we keep thinking that *the* answer will be found tomorrow in a new career, different friends, or any something-new. We are haunted by the nagging thought that we are missing out on something somewhere. We are forever dissatisfied with reality.

Now that I no longer seek solutions to my problems in alcohol, I know I have to look elsewhere for the answer to my boredom. I also know that, for me, a slackening of attendance at meetings, with its consequent loss of personal identification as an alcoholic, plus the creeping and sometimes strangling tedium of life, will provide fertile soil to nourish the thinking that will return me to drinking.

My personal solution to boredom has been, first of all, to become aware that this feeling exists and threatens to take over all my attitudes. I cannot seek a solution to any problem until I am aware of its existence. Second, I try to be involved in as many different AA activities as are available to me. In simple terms, this means being active in my home group, making

Twelfth Step calls, participating in Institutions Committee panels, calling newcomers and driving them to meetings, as well as washing the cups and emptying the ashtrays after a meeting.

Since boredom has a way of infecting every area of life, I try to remember to be grateful that I am now able to be a responsible woman and wife. I find a daily joy in maintaining a clean, comfortable home. I also try to avoid routine in whatever free time I have. It isn't necessary for me to do the laundry every Saturday morning. If the weather is nice, I pack a lunch and we go off to the beach or explore a different road or town. One of my gifts of sobriety is a new and loving husband, and when the two of us get out of our self-made ruts, we discover a special companionship as we share these breaks in our routine.

Truly, my answer to boredom was stated very simply many years ago when Step Twelve was formulated. It's the two-part answer of action--carrying the message and trying to practice the principles in all my affairs. I believe my sobriety is a God-given gift, as is everything else that has come to me during my AA years. When I forget to be grateful for these gifts, when I treat them as something I have earned, when I forget where I came from and where I could end up if I returned to drinking, then I become bored. Practicing the Twelfth Step on a daily basis is my recourse when I find myself enjoying many of the fruits of sobriety, yet wondering, "Is this all?" Some days all I may have is my sobriety; some days I am catapulted into high adventure; but on all days carrying the message and practicing the principles remain the first order of business.

As someone once said, if you are bored, it's because you are a bore. So, if I am a bore, I am the only one who can do something about it. It's still an inside job.

Reprinted with permission—AAGrapevine—
July 1969

Anonymous—Los Angeles, California

A man walks up to the bar with an ostrich behind him, and as he sits, the bartender asks for their order.

The man says, "I'll have a beer" and turns to the ostrich. "What's yours?" "I'll have a beer too" says the ostrich. The bartender pours the beer and says "That will be \$3.40 please," and the man reaches into his pocket and pays with the exact change for payment.

The next day, the man and the ostrich come again, and the man says "I'll have a beer," and the ostrich says "I'll have the same." Once again the man reaches into his pocket and pays with exact change.

This became a routine until late one evening, the two enter again. "The usual?" asks the bartender. "Well, it's close to last call, so I'll have a large Scotch" says the man. "Same for me" says the ostrich. "That will be \$7.20" says the bartender. Once again the man pulls exact change out of his pocket and places it on the bar.

The bartender can't hold back his curiosity any longer. "Excuse me, sir. How do you manage to always come up with the exact change out of your pocket every time?"

"Well," says the man, "several years ago I was cleaning the attic and I found this old lamp. When I rubbed it a Genie appeared and offered me two wishes. My first wish was that if I ever needed to pay for anything, I just put my hand in my pocket and the right amount of money will be there."

"That's brilliant!" says the bartender. "Most people would wish for a million dollars or something, but you'll always be as rich as you want for as long as you live!" "That's right! Whether it's a gallon of milk, or a Rolls Royce, the exact money is always there," says the man.

"That's fantastic!" says the bartender. "You are a genius! ... Oh, one other thing sir, what's with the ostrich?"

The man replies, "Oh, my second wish was for a chick with long legs."



OUR TRADITION of self-support (long form) indicates that "the AA groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members . . . that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous"; that we should maintain "prudent reserves"; and "that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority."

I believe the perpetuation of this Fellowship, the continuation of its growth, and the maintenance of its effectiveness are fundamentally associated with our willingness to share in the financial costs within the spirit of the Seventh Tradition.

I think self-support is concerned with having group contributions provide the funds for the services involved in keeping AA active and alive, attractive and growing, and spiritual and democratic. By broadening the base of group support--that is, by increasing the amount contributed and the percentage of groups contributing, up to a fully self-supporting level--we can be assured that those services will be provided.

From a spiritual standpoint, self-support can help us avoid the corrupting influences that come from:

- (1) establishing dues or fees,
- (2) relying upon outside donations,
- (3) resorting to the sale of our recovery program for profit or personal gain.

So long as we can rely upon our own group contributions and so long as we can limit the amount on individual contributions, the problems associated with perilous wealth and authoritative powers will not erode our unity or effectiveness.

Self-support not only avoids corrupting influences, it includes principles that contribute to our spiritual growth, such as self-respect and freedom to express our feelings, as well as to question our own motives, without fear of retribution or worry over loss of operating funds.

It fosters the justice and sense of fairness that come from voluntary sharing in the costs according to our own abilities and our own conscience. With each of us doing our part, the principle of group autonomy is automatically practiced and protected.

Self-support gives us a sense of belonging and the satisfaction of being part of a fellowship that we have helped to foster and nourish.

It brings serenity to our souls through doing our share today. This action both helps us and, at the same time, provides a positive influence in the destiny of others.

Self-support makes for prudence through the exercise of reason and skill in the management of our practical financial affairs.

It is gratifying to note that, in a true sense, we *have* broadened the base of group support. We have reduced the cost of literature. We have kept costs in line. We are providing good services. Our Fellowship is growing. And in days of rampant inflation, these accomplishments provide more than sufficient evidence, I think, of the spirituality associated with prudent management.

It is not gratifying to note that, in a true sense, many of our groups are not contributing. In a good many cases, the amount from those contributing falls short of even the outdated standard "A Penny a Day for Sobriety." The rate at which we are broadening the base is tediously slow. But here again, I believe there is sufficient evidence to indicate that whenever the groups are properly informed, they themselves *want* to be fully self-supporting.

In my judgment, there is no area in which prudence plays a greater part in giving a spiritual meaning to a temporal act than in the area of self-support. It can help us become sensitive in our understanding of the meaning of love and service. It can help us become responsible in our approach to unity and recovery. It can strengthen us in the conviction that our concern for those who are yet to come is part of the caring and sharing that ultimately contribute to our own spiritual progress.

It is my belief that, as we individually broaden our own horizons through a more active enjoyment of the spiritual values of self-support, we will collectively improve in our efforts to broaden the base of group support. And if we can do both, I feel certain that God will bless all of us for having done our part in contributing an increased measure of happiness to the "Road of Happy Destiny" that this Fellowship has so generously provided.

*Reprinted with permission – AAGrapevine –February 1981
F. B. - Spanish Fork, Utah*

At a McDonalds in Tuba City, Arizona last year, I dined with a minister. This man had lived and served the Navajo and Hopi Indian community for many years. Alcoholism and alcoholics are almost part of the culture with these Indian tribes. He believed that continuing to say, "I am an alcoholic" after not drinking for a period, was a lack of faith and an admission the obsession had not been lifted. As he spoke, I recalled all the challenges and failures I shared with many others. We thought God, the church and a belief in divine healing would work for us. I know it has worked for many, and I am glad it did. I do not believe we should ever forget, however, that we *are* alcoholics.

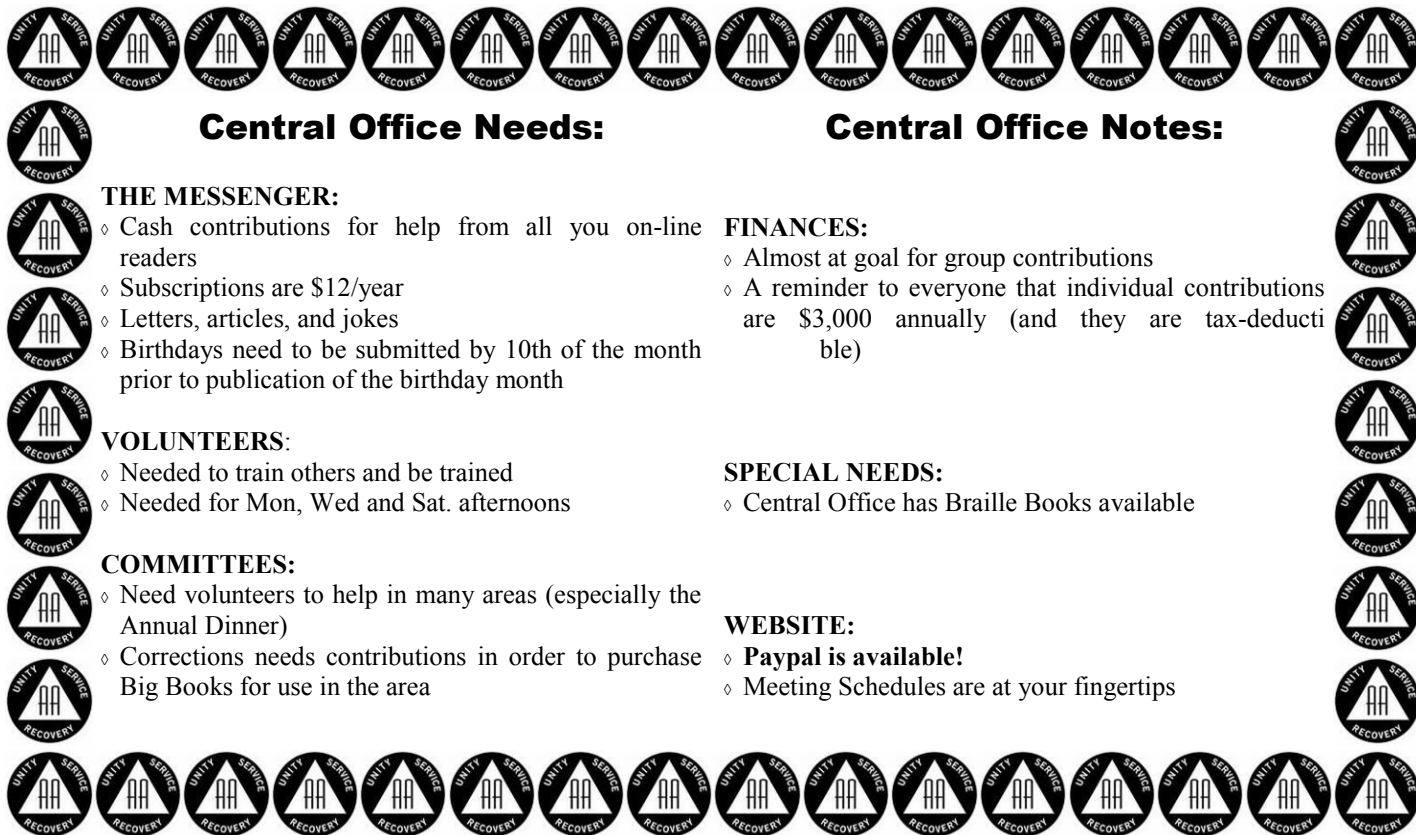
Just before he ate, he pulled out diabetic supplies and gave himself an insulin injection. With my past, I have to always ask if I am debating or sharing with others. I saw this as a chance to share the disease concept of alcoholism with the professional community (CPC work). I asked if since the insulin stabilized his blood sugar and he lived a normal life, was he still a diabetic? You know his answer.

If alcoholism is a disease and it is treated successfully, leading to sobriety and usefulness to others...we are

still alcoholics. I think that often clergy and many well meaning folks do not see the parallel between other diseases and alcoholism. Some diseases have cures; some can be remitted (neglected); and some require acceptance and daily change in our activity and mindset.

I do believe a seed was planted with the diabetic minister, and I hope his views about AA principles were changed. As a diabetic on insulin or other medication, we are granted but a daily reprieve contingent on treating, acknowledging and accepting our disease. The same is true of alcoholism.

On a personal note, I am a Type II diabetic, and I forgot I could not eat like a normal (not diabetic) individual for an extended period. Actually, I did not forget, I just chose not to treat my disease. I know the treatment. Guess what? My blood sugar level has come roaring back to a dangerous level that requires serious treatment that may result in serious consequences if not treated seriously by me. If I do not do the daily deal with the diabetes, I shall have to call that preacher and tell him I am a hypocrite. Actually, I have been a hypocrite! Thanks for the 10th Step!



Central Office Needs:

THE MESSENGER:

- ♦ Cash contributions for help from all you on-line readers
- ♦ Subscriptions are \$12/year
- ♦ Letters, articles, and jokes
- ♦ Birthdays need to be submitted by 10th of the month prior to publication of the birthday month

VOLUNTEERS:

- ♦ Needed to train others and be trained
- ♦ Needed for Mon, Wed and Sat. afternoons

COMMITTEES:

- ♦ Need volunteers to help in many areas (especially the Annual Dinner)
- ♦ Corrections needs contributions in order to purchase Big Books for use in the area

Central Office Notes:

FINANCES:

- ♦ Almost at goal for group contributions
- ♦ A reminder to everyone that individual contributions are \$3,000 annually (and they are tax-deductible)

SPECIAL NEEDS:

- ♦ Central Office has Braille Books available

WEBSITE:

- ♦ **Paypal is available!**
- ♦ Meeting Schedules are at your fingertips

On December 28, 2006 God revealed to me something that changed my life and directed me towards A.A. It was on that day I found a small object, a Hidden Treasure, which led me to a Moment of Clarity. That Moment of Clarity offered Hope for a man who had become hopeless; a man who did not believe he could ever stop drinking.

That December day happened to be my brother's birthday. My family was visiting his family in Atlanta during the post-Christmas holiday season. My six year old son and his three younger cousins were having a good time with each other. They wanted to watch a movie together in the play room.

As I was trying to set up a portable DVD player for the children my hand came across a small object that was hidden from my view under the TV stand. I picked up the object which was a rather large coin, the likes of which I never saw before. The coin was heavy brass and it had writing on it.

On one side of the coin was a triangle with an X in the middle of it. The words *Recovery, Unity and Service* bordered the three sides of the triangle and *To Thine Own Self Be True* was also inscribed. I turned the coin over which had a vaguely familiar prayer on it. ***GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY TO ACCEPT THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE, COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN, AND THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE*** was printed.

As I examined the coin I knew it was important but I had no idea this Hidden Treasure would help change the direction of my life so completely! I also knew this coin did not belong to anyone in my brother's home as they were not religious and possibly Atheist or Agnostic. I stopped what I was doing and took the coin to my sister-in-law.

She recognized the coin immediately and told me something that would reveal the Moment of Clarity. As she explained to me that the coin belonged to her other brother-in-law and that it was his recently earned Ten Year Sobriety Medallion, the hairs on the back of my neck and my arms stood up. I felt the immediate Presence of God as the question came to me head, "How could anyone stay sober ten years?"

I was still drinking at the time but desperately wanted to stop. The thought that someone could stay sober for any length of time, let alone ten years, offered a vision of Hope I had lost. I couldn't go a day without drinking. Little did I know that in less than a month I would walk into my first meeting of Alcoholics

Anonymous and remain sober until today. I now have one of those coins for myself; mine has a V in the middle of the triangle.

Arriving at my first meeting came via another Hidden Treasure. When I found that coin I was on break from school while attending a local university working on my undergraduate degree. When I registered for the upcoming semester I found a class that satisfied several requirements. It was a chemistry class that focused on the brain and the effects of drugs and alcohol. I thought I knew enough about the subject matter to be able to teach the class yet I also had a feeling that I might learn something about alcoholism, a disease I couldn't fully admit I had.

In January 2007 semester began and low and behold the professor of that class noted on the syllabus the requirement that all students must attend a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. The week that contained that requirement arrived quickly and I was full of fear. Fortunately, one of my classmates broke her anonymity as a sober member of A.A. and I mustered up the courage to speak with her about it. I told her I was afraid to go to a meeting. She asked why and I told her, "Because I am an alcoholic." Those are five of the most freeing words I ever spoke. The next day, January 23rd, I walked into my first meeting.

Interestingly enough I learned that the professor of the class attended the church I went to the last two years. That church has some Hidden Treasure of its own. There happened to be five A.A. meetings there a week and for the previous two years I encountered the A.A. meeting schedule every time I walked into the men's room. Some angel had the foresight to post a notice in the bathrooms which read ***Did you know there are five A.A. meetings a week at St. Paul's?*** Every Sunday the thought that I should probably check out one of those meetings ran through my head.

There are other Hidden Treasures I encountered through my journey to sobriety. Some of them did not seem very valuable at the time. Others took a long time to experience the value they hold. Totaling a car, field sobriety tests, AA pamphlets in the mail; these are some examples of the Treasures it took time to realize the benefits of. Today I get to share those experiences with other alcoholics and perhaps offer something they can relate to as well as offer them some Hope. What a wonderful Treasure it is to carry the message of Hope to another alcoholic!

There is an ancient parable that speaks of the man who finds a hidden treasure in a field. The man sells everything he owns so he can buy the field and keep the treasure hidden. I believe we don't have to sell everything we have in order to keep that Treasure. We don't even have to lose everything either in order to keep that Treasure. All we have to do is pass it on. We have to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. The only way we get to keep the Treasure is by giving it away!

What are some of the Hidden Treasures you encountered along your journey? If you can't see them right now, that's alright. They will appear, and many more...

May God bless you and keep you till then.

Michael A.—Brentwood, TN

(Continued from page 1)

Alcoholics Anonymous, all we can do is extend grace and tolerance to one another.

All subscriptions will be extended for one month due to the delay. Thanks so very much for your understanding and overall support for *The Messenger*. Please note in the contributions to Middle Tennessee Central Office that over 200 groups and meetings have shared their contributions. Some of them are new groups, off to a good start applying The Traditions for their groups.

On a somber note, David W.'s Mother died in southern Illinois on Friday, July 6th. David is bookkeeper at your Central Office, handling accounts and special orders among his duties. If you need assistance in next few days, please call Charles at the Central office.

Once again, thanks for your understanding and support.

Rather than do a full review this month, I want to tell you about three books available at Middle Tennessee Central Office.

First, there is *Young & Sober*, (\$9.95) a new book available for the very first time. In this collection of Grapevine stories about the joys and challenges of getting sober at an early age, AA members talk about recognizing their disease even though their drinking may have only lasted a few years. Written by members who got sober in their teens, 20's and 30's, the stories in this book are about growing up young in AA, finding ways to connect when feeling different, getting involved in service and learning how to live a sober life joyously.

Many of the stories are two to three pages, and would make great topics for any meeting, but especially for young people.

Second, is *Voices of Long-Term Sobriety*. (\$9.95) Though published in 2009, The Central Office has not stocked this book before. This collection presents 42 stories from old-timers about how they hit bottom and got sober, as well as vivid descriptions of the early days of AA. Those who like glimpses into AA history can find firsthand accounts in this Grapevine publication.

Third, is *A Rabbit Walks Into a Bar*, (\$9.95) containing the best jokes and cartoons from AA Grapevine. The book reeks of corn, and uses humor to remind us of some real basics. Many of you will enjoy the pictures, as well as the jokes. Here is one example:

The speaker was going on and on. A man in the fifth row stood up and walked out. As the speaker was winding up, the man returned. After the meeting, the speaker asked the man where he went.

"I went for a haircut," he said.

"A haircut? Why didn't you get a haircut before the meeting started?"

The man replied, "I didn't need a haircut before the meeting started."

The following prices are the catalog prices without tax.

We will be glad to ship to groups, and include freight charges on the invoice.

Young and Sober- \$9.95

Voices of Long-Term Sobriety- \$9.95

A Rabbit Walks Into a Bar- \$ 9.95

Evils of Liquor

A professor of chemistry wanted to teach his fifth grade class a lesson about the evils of liquor, so he produced an experiment that involved a glass of water, a glass of whiskey, and two worms.

"Now, class. Observe the worms closely," said the professor as he put the first worm into the water. The worm in the water writhed about, happy as a worm in water could be.

The second worm, he put into the whiskey. It writhed painfully, and it quickly sank to the bottom, dead as a doornail. "Now, what lesson can we derive from this experiment?" the professor asked.

Little Johnny, who naturally sits in back, raised his hand and wisely, responded, "Drink whiskey and you won't get worms!"

MEETING CHANGES

NEW

37046

Limitless Lode
College Grove UMC
8568 Horton Hwy
Tues 7pm

37203

WANGL
OutCentral
Cultural
Community Center
1709 Church St.
Fri 6:30pm

37115

SERENITY HOUSE
102 Harris St.
Madison
12 x 12 Wed 8pm

37067

**Cool Springs
Newcomers**
Bradford Hlth Services
1897 General George
Patton Dr., Franklin
Wed 7pm CD/Beg.

37209

Made A Decision
Holy Trinity
6727 Charlotte Pike
Tues - OD/Gay

38562

Old Time AA
First UMC
Gainesboro
302 S. Main St.
Fri 8pm OD

37388

Drop the Rock
106 N. Anderson St.,
Tullahoma
Sat 8:30am Men/Lit

37076

**Hermitage Women's
Group**
Hermitage UMC
205 Belinda Dr.
Mon Noon OD

37115

Women's Serenity
Now Meets
Mon 5:30pm OD

37129

Serenity Group
435 S. Molloy Ln.
Murfreesboro
Sat 2:30 OD/Gay

37027

Brentwood BB Study
Sun 7pm
Now 60min

37080

Joelton Mtg.
Thur 7pm OD

37148

Portland Unity
Fri 6:30pm

37221

Keep It Simple
Holy Trinity Lutheran
Church
Sneed Rd. Nashville
Mon 8pm 12x12 CD

37013

**Lighthouse Fellowship
Church**
5100 Blue Hole
Antioch
Wed 6pm OD

37072

Ladies Night Out
Cedar and Church
Goodlettsville
Tues 6pm

37086

**LaVergne Solutions
Group**
Right Road
Ministries
188 Old Nashville Hwy
LaVergne
Tues - Fri 5pm OD

37174

**New Women's AA
Meeting**
Beginning May 6th
Grace Episcopal
Church/Community
Hall
Corner of Main St
(Hwy 31) and Beechcroft
Rd, Springhill
6:30 - 7:30

37129

Murfreesboro Group
Grapevine Mtg
801 N. Maney Ave.
Sun 8pm

Moved

37064

Garden Variety
St. Andrew Lutheran
Church
908 M'boro Rd. Tues/
Thurs 7:15

37027

Brentwood Full Moon
Otter Creek Church
409 Franklin Rd

37034

Chapel Hill New Life
Community Baptist
Church
5216 Nashville Hwy.

37087

Lebanon By the Book
Mon changed to
6:30
Tues changed to 6:30
Fri changed to 7:00

Cancelled

37172

Ex-Offenders

38501

**Cookeville Weekend
Recovery**
Thurs 6pm

38570

Livingston
Tues & Fri

38556

Jamestown
Tues 7pm

37217

Love & Laughter
Thurs 8:15

37015

OISVAL Valley View
Ashland City
Fri 8pm

37027

Turning Point
Brentwood UM Annex
Al-Anon
Tues 7pm

37212

Natchez Trace
Wed 11am

37066

Search for Serenity

37211

Young Timers
Sunday 8pm

42223

The Power of Now

FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH:

District 32 Meeting

When: 6:30pm - 7:30pm

Where: Central Office
Conference Room
176 Thompson Lane

District 35 Meeting

When: 6:30pm - 7:30pm

Where: 5925 O'Brien Ave

SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH:

Intergroup Meeting (Central Office)

When: 5:45pm - 6:45pm

Where: Central Office
Conference Room
176 Thompson Lane

July 20th - 22nd

Area 64

3rd Quarter Assembly

**HOMEGROUP
HEARTBEAT OF AA**

Clarion Inn

Cookeville

931.526.7125

\$72.00 plus tax

Mention the Assembly

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
IS THE ONLY PLACE IN THE
WORLD WHERE YOU CAN
WALK INTO A ROOM FULL OF
TOTAL STRANGERS AND
REMINISCE.**

Selfless Program For Selfish People

Step Seven, carefully read, ruins the often misquoted cliché:

“AA is a selfish program for selfish people.”

WRONG!

The correct way to present this idea is:

“AA is a selfless program for selfish people.”

Although AA Fellowship members may never be completely rid of selfishness, the Twelve Step program of action helps us face and be rid of at least enough of it to maintain sobriety.

The AA Fellowship
and
The AA Program of action
are two different things.

Let us review an excerpt from the Seventh Step Prayer on page 76: *“I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows.”*

Now, this doesn't exactly sound like a selfish prayer does it? One of Bill W's spiritual mentors, Rev. Sam Shoemaker, stated his consensus of the AA Steps at the 1955 International Convention, in St. Louis:

Out of self Into God Into Others

This phrase certainly resonates with the spirit of Step Seven . . . and notice the next phrase did not say, “Grant me strength as I go out from here, so I won't get thrown in the clink (jail) again.”

No! We are asking for the strength to do what God wants.

Reverend Sam Shoemaker made the following statement from the podium of that same St. Louis Convention:

What God Wants:

“There is a great hue and cry today on the part of some people about those who seek benefit from God. I would like to know where in Heaven's name a bewildered and defeated person is going to go for the help he desperately needs if he doesn't go to God for it. Of course he is concerned about himself. He can't help it. He ought to be. He must be if he is ever going to be made useful to other people. But later on he must also grow up and stop just using God and begin to ask God to use him. Stop asking God to do what he wants, and begin to try to find out what it is that God wants.”

I have pasted this quote in my Big Book and read it to newcomers quite often.

Bob S.

Fourth Dimension Group, Richmond, IN



The Buffalo Theory

A herd of buffalo can move only as fast as the slowest buffalo. When the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members.

In much the same way the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, we all know, kills brain cells, but naturally it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first.

In this way regular consumption of alcohol eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine.

That's why you always feel smarter after a few drinks.....

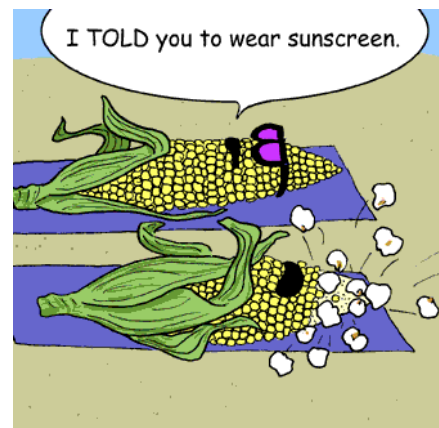
Group	Amt	YTD Amt
21ST AVEUNE		105
24 HOUR	80	160
ANONYMOUS GROUPS	74	366
ANY LENGTHS		50
BACK DOOR AA		100
BACK ROOM	370	2,319
BACK TO BASICS		25
BELLEVUE		274
WINNERS AND BEGINNERS	20	70
BIKERS IN RECOVERY	12	156
BRENTWOOD FULL MOON		400
BY THE BOOK (LEBANON)		25
BY THE BOOK (DICKSON)	54	54
CAME TO BELIEVE		25
CLUB 62 UNITY		12
COLUMBIA	20	80
COMFORT ZONE		400
COMMUNICATIONS		157
COOKEVILLE		50
CROSSVILLE NON-SMOKING STEP		71
DAILY REPRIEVE		146
DAVIDSON RD	400	1,900
DAVIDSON RD WOMEN'S		241
DONELSON YET	100	100
DOWNTOWN LUNCH		103
DRUNKS IN THE PARK		243
EAST SIDE SATURDAY		300
EASY DOES IT	130	130
EVERY NIGHT AT 6	227	266
FAIRFIELD GLADE		54
FAYETTEVILLE		40
FIRST THINGS FIRST		244

Group	Amt	YTD Amt
FIVE & FIVE		473
FRANKLIN	610	610
FREE TO BE		131
G.O.D. (GROUP OF DRUNKS)	50	50
GOODLETTSVILLE A.A.		200
GRATEFUL ALIVE		116
GRATITUDE		113
HAPPY HOUR	5	105
HARDING ROAD		400
HIGH NOON		475
HILLSBORO ROAD		673
IBI-UBU		125
KEEP IT SIMPLE		
BELLEVUE	111	459
KEY TO SOBRIETY		86
KICKOFF'S NOT TILL NOON		103
LAMBDA	150	150
LATE LUNCH BUNCH		1,462
LAVERGNE SOLUTIONS		175
LET IT HAPPEN		50
LINDEN		100
LIVING BY THE PRINT		200
MCMINNVILLE		100
MID-DAY BREAK		608
MT JULIET FELLOWSHIP		125
MUSIC ROW		150
MUSTARD SEED	50	250
NATCHEZ TRACE MEETING		220
NEEDED MEETING CLOSED		144
NIPPERS CORNER MEETING		28
NORTH BORO	50	50
NORTHSIDE, CLARKSVILLE		150
OUT TO BREAKFAST		60

Group	Amt	YTD Amt
OUT TO LUNCH BUNCH		200
PORTLAND UNITY		25
PRIMARY PURPOSE		133
PULASKI	5	15
REBOS (SOBER)		233
ROBERT E. LEE WOMEN'S		100
SANGO SOLUTIONS		25
SATURDAY NIGHT ALIVE MEETING	30	150
SEARCH FOR SERENITY		120
SEEKING SANITY		716
SERENITY	50	250
SHADE TREE		1,022
SMOKE FREE-Sobriety 1st	66	126
SMYRNA GRATITUDE	100	500
SUNDAY NIGHT BUNCH		300
TEMPLE HILLS		125
THE BASEMENT BUNCH	50	150
THE UNITED		200
THE WAY OUT		950
TRUDGING THE ROAD		100
TURNING POINT	296	462
WANGL		54
WAVERLY		60
WEST NASHVILLE		105
WESTMINSTER		184
WINNERS AND BEGINNERS		95
WOMEN IN THE SOLUTION		100
WOODBURY		570
YOUNG GUNS		92
YOUNG TIMERS		33
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	3,109	24,001

MIDDLE TENNESSEE CENTRAL OFFICE
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES ACTUAL AND BUDGETED
FOR THE MONTH AND FIVE MONTHS ENDING MAY 31, 2012

	Actual	CURRENT MONTH	Budget-Var	Actual	YEAR TO DATE	Budget-Var
INCOME						
LITERATURE SALES	\$ 8,717.80	12,434.87	(3,717.07)	\$ 59,434.04	62,174.35	(2,740.31)
COST OF GOODS SOLD						
LITERATURE	6,010.28	8,333.33	(2,323.05)	43,324.67	41,666.65	1,658.02
FREIGHT	1.56	0.00	1.56	157.70	0.00	157.70
DIRECTORY	188.06	437.50	(249.44)	916.67	2,187.50	(1,270.83)
TOTAL COST OF GOODS SO	6,199.90	8,770.83	(2,570.93)	44,399.04	43,854.15	544.89
GROSS PROFIT - LITERATUR	2,517.90	3,664.04	(1,146.14)	15,035.00	18,320.20	(3,285.20)
GROUP	3,163.90	4,666.67	(1,502.77)	23,777.88	25,292.10	(1,514.22)
INDIVIDUAL	417.94	291.67	126.27	7,534.90	1,458.35	6,076.55
MESSENGER	300.00	208.33	91.67	699.00	1,041.65	(342.65)
SPECIAL EVENTS	0.00	333.33	(333.33)	0.00	1,666.65	(1,666.65)
INTEREST	8.68	16.67	(7.99)	45.94	83.35	(37.41)
TOTAL INCOME	6,408.42	9,180.71	(2,772.29)	47,092.72	47,862.30	(769.58)
EXPENSES						
CASUAL LABOR	150.00	150.00	0.00	450.00	750.00	(300.00)
PAYROLL	3,861.00	4,121.67	(260.67)	23,607.80	22,488.15	1,119.65
LEGAL & PROFESSIONAL	145.00	155.42	(10.42)	725.00	777.10	(52.10)
SALES TAX EXPENSE	(0.30)	0.00	(0.30)	13.54	0.00	13.54
RENT	2,165.03	2,197.08	(32.05)	11,374.60	10,985.40	389.20
PRINTING	265.00	412.50	(147.50)	1,704.20	2,062.50	(358.30)
PAYROLL TAXES	295.34	313.57	(18.23)	1,729.23	1,711.65	17.58
MAINTENANCE	91.35	74.17	17.18	332.35	370.85	(38.50)
TELEPHONE & FAX	479.71	475.00	4.71	2,405.48	2,375.00	30.48
COMMUNICATIONS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
ANSWERING SERVICE	163.50	190.50	(27.00)	817.50	952.50	(135.00)
POSTAGE	195.49	100.00	95.49	616.77	500.00	116.77
OFFICE SUPPLIES	144.38	166.67	(22.29)	885.59	833.35	52.24
BANK SERVICE CHARGE	0.00	0.00	0.00	68.12	0.00	68.12
COMPUTER PROJECT	0.00	83.33	(83.33)	208.98	416.65	(207.67)
EMPLOYEE BENEFIT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTERGROUP EXPENSE	56.79	83.33	(26.54)	96.79	416.65	(319.86)
INSURANCE	0.00	175.00	(175.00)	1,216.00	875.00	341.00
SPECIAL EVENTS / FUNCTIO	0.00	166.67	(166.67)	100.00	833.35	(733.35)
REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	0.00	0.00	0.00	44.03	0.00	44.03
TRAVEL	0.00	274.13	(274.13)	238.78	1,370.65	(1,131.87)
DEPRECIATION	0.00	41.67	(41.67)	217.32	208.35	8.97
OVER/UNDER	(10.22)	0.00	(10.22)	(42.22)	0.00	(42.22)
TOTAL EXPENSES	8,002.07	9,180.71	(1,178.64)	46,809.86	47,927.15	(1,117.29)
NET INCOME	\$ (1,593.65)	0.00	(1,593.65)	\$ 282.86	(64.85)	347.71



BACK ROOM

Desiree P 07.17.07
Quoc L 07.04.10

BACK TO BASICS

Lourdes N 07.02.92

BY THE BOOK LEBANON

Debbie H 07.28.07
Jodi C 07.05.06
Norma H 07.18.10

DONELSON YET

Beth C 07.14.95
Jeff P 07.10.99
Jim F 07.11.85
Mark Z 07.21.07
Shelly W 07.10.09

EASY DOES IT

Becca 07.06.08
Jason 07.14.08
John 07.01.03
Nancy 07.03.88

FELLOWSHIP

Matthew C 07.04.89
Nick M 07.06.08
Ryan C 07.18.10
Danny B 07.18.95

GRATEFUL ALIVE

Lance W 07.14.94
Pat W 07.21.95

HERMITAGE WOMEN'S

Nancy B 07.03.88

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Bill M 07.15.02
Cal T 07.31.06
Chris C 07.01.00
Christopher F 07.18.10
John M 07.20.11
Matt W 07.11.11
Peter D 07.27.06
Roger B 07.14.02
Victor S 07.14.01

LIVING IN THE NOW MON

Cathy M 07.22.10
Justin F 07.23.07
Karen C 07.21.10
Ken W 07.07.09
Luke M 07.04.08
Michael C 07.01.06
Robert G 07.17.84

LOVE AND LAUGHTER

Kim M 07.21.96
Richard W 07.18.11
Steve M 07.13.94

MID-DAY BREAK

Debra S 07.14.11
Donna E 07.27.03
Dorothy M 07.26.06
Kim S 07.27.08
Stephen S 07.11.02

NEW FAITH

Daniel R 07.01.08

POP

Annie 07.26.10
Howard A 07.13.53
Ron E 07.18.92

PORTLAND UNITY

Chuck G 07.25.11
Greg G 07.26.10
Kevin H 07.13.10
Lynnie S 07.09.89

REBOS

Andy F 07.03.07
David C 07.01.03
Don L 07.29.92
Phillip L 07.07.07

RIDGETOP BASIC

Calvin H 07.15.07
Louann H 07.25.98
Murray G 07.29.07
Ray H 07.26.87
Rodney S 07.26.11

SEARCH FOR SERENITY

Mandy S 07.23.98

SEEKING SANITY

Barry E 07.19.04
Becca M 07.06.08
Cindy V 07.11.08
Keith D 07.01.09
Matt Y 07.21.10
Nancy B 07.03.88
Patricia W 07.29.07
Scott S 07.11.07
Terry J 07.07.07
Tim F 07.25.07

SERENITY MURFREESBORO

Aaron W 07.06.09
Austin 07.23.10

SERENITY MURFREESBORO**(CON'T)**

Bill B 07.14.05
Charles M 07.16.10
Chase L 07.17.09
Christopher G 07.12.09
Damian N 07.31.09
George S 07.08.01
Gerry H 07.18.94
Homer C 07.24.08
James W 07.19.11
Janet 07.01.06
Janet M 07.30.10
Jason B 07.24.10
Jim S 07.04.06
Jodi W 07.10.95
Ken P 07.19.06
Les P 07.06.09
Marty C 07.16.10
Mary E 07.19.09
Nick N 07.17.11
Paul G 07.05.95
Sheila W 07.27.10
Tom M 07.02.05
Tracy B 07.31.09
Will F 07.07.08
Yoli P 07.12.97

SHADE TREE

Albert T 07.06.08
Anthony C 07.06.06
Anthony S 07.07.05
Barry E 07.19.04
Beverly S 07.09.07
Bob O 07.19.09
Bonnie S 07.27.04
Carol C 07.01.08
Chris B 07.13.04
Chris B 07.21.06
Cindy F 07.13.08
Dan B 07.28.05
Dan O 07.14.10
Dave D 07.01.02
David M 07.01.09
Dee Dee 07.14.08
Dinah S 07.20.10
Dorothy M 07.26.06
Eddie A 07.27.01
Faye D 07.19.08
Gayle E 07.30.??
James W 07.03.85
Jeff P 07.10.99
Jeri D 07.13.05
Jim A 07.26.09
Jimmy S 07.08.05
John (Cliff) G 07.14.10
John M 07.01.03

SHADE TREE (CON'T)

John S 07.18.09
K C 07.27.09
Kathy R 07.02.09
Kelly 07.10.09
Ken B 07.25.05
Kevin G 07.13.10
Larry B 07.02.00
Margaret S 07.25.08
Mark L 07.17.06
Mark W 07.10.00
Marvin 07.07.07
Richard L 07.14.06
Russ A 07.07.09
Sara F 07.25.11
Scott S 07.11.07
Sharon C 07.16.04
Shelly W 07.15.09
Stephanie H 07.21.05
Steve C 07.26.10
Terry H 07.23.98
Tim F 07.25.07
Tina B 07.17.09
Todd G 07.18.01
Tom H 07.01.03
Trey S 07.14.09
Vicky W 07.23.09
Wirt P 07.24.06

SMYRNA GRATITUDE

Chuck 07.04.09
Greg S 07.10.09
Joanna S 07.30.09
Johnathan R 07.12.10
Lynn F 07.31.02
Tina W 07.19.10

WEEKENDERS

Bob M 07.15.87
Caroline L 07.19.11
David F 07.15.97
John K 07.15.05
Jose B 07.03.89
Kelly M 07.11.11
Kent A 07.20.10
Laura B 07.06.11

WOMEN IN THE SOLUTION

Jessica A 07.04.11

**Middle Tennessee
Central Intergroup
Association**

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