The Cost of the Co

Míddle Tennessee Central Office Intergroup

OCT 2023 MESSENGER

Step Ten

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Tradition Ten

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

Concept Ten

Every service
responsibility should be
matched by an equal
service authority, with
the scope of such
authority well defined.



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MESSENGER
DESIGNATED
DONATIONS
APPRECIATED at
aanashville.org

Suggested donations are \$1.00 an issue—which hasn't gone up in years (or any amount you would like to specify).

TRADITION 10—Bill W

AA HAS NO OPINION ON OUTSIDE ISSUES; HENCE THE AA NAME OUGHT NEVER BE DRAWN INTO PUBLIC CONTROVERSY.

NEVER since it began has Alcoholics divided Anonymous been bу major controversial issue. Nor has our fellowship ever publicly taken sides on any question in an embattled world. This, however, has been no earned virtue. It could almost be said that we were born with it, for as one old-timer recently declared, "Practically never have I heard a heated religious, political or reform argument among AA members. So long as we don't argue these matters privately, it's a cinch we never shall publicly."

As by some deep instinct, we AAs have known from the very beginning that we must never, no matter what the provocation, publicly take sides in any fight, even a worthy one. All history affords us the spectacle of striving nations and groups finally torn because they were designed for, or tempted into, controversy. Others fell apart because of self-righteousness while trying enforce upon the rest of mankind some millennium of their own specification. In our own times we have seen millions die in political and economic wars often spurred by religious and racial difference. We live in the imminent possibility of a fresh holocaust to determine how men shall be governed, and how the products of nature and toil shall be divided among them. That is the spiritual climate in which AA was born, and by God's grace has nevertheless flourished.

Let us re-emphasize that this reluctance to fight each other or anybody else is not counted

(Continued on page 3)

Middle Tennessee Central Office-

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TRADITION 10-Bill W

(Continued from page 2)

as some special virtue in which we feel superior to other people. Nor does it mean that the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, now restored as citizens of the world, are going to back away from their individual responsibilities to act as they see the right upon issues of our time. But when it comes to AA as a whole, that's quite a different matter. In this respect we do not enter into public controversy, because we know that our society will perish if it does. We conceive the survival and spread of Alcoholics Anonymous to be something of far greater importance than weight we could collectively throw back of any other cause. Since recovery from



alcoholism is life itself to us, it is imperative that we preserve in full strength our means of survival.

Maybe this sounds as though the alcoholics in AA had suddenly gone peaceable, and become one great big happy family. Of course this isn't so at all. Human beings that we are, we squabble. Before we leveled off a bit, AA looked more like one prodigious squabble than anything else, at least on the surface. A corporation director who had just voted a company expenditure of a hundred thousand dollars would appear at an AA business meeting and blow his top over an outlay of twentyfive dollars' worth of needed postage stamps. Disliking the attempt of some to manage a group, half its membership might angrily rush off to form another group more to their liking. Elders, temporarily turned Pharisee. hurled rocks. Bitter attacks have been directed against people suspected of mixed motives. Despite their din, our puny rows never did AA a particle of harm. They were just part and parcel of

learning to work and live together. Let it be noted, too, that they were almost always concerned with how to make AA more effective, how to do the most good for the most alcoholics.

The Washingtonian Society, a movement among alcoholics of a century ago, discovered almost the answer alcoholism. At first the society was composed entirely of alcoholics trying to help each other. The early members foresaw that they should dedicate themselves to this sole aim. In many respects, the Washingtonians were akin to AA of today. Their membership passed the hundred-thousand mark. Had they been left to themselves, and had they stuck to their one goal, they might have found the rest of the answer. But didn't happen. Instead. politicians Washingtonians permitted and reformers, both alcoholic and nonalcoholic, to use the society for their own purposes. Abolition of slavery, for example, was a stormy political issue Soon Washingtonian speakers violently and publicly took sides on this question. Maybe the society could have survived the Abolition controversy, but it didn't have a chance from the moment it determined to America's drinking habits. When the Washingtonians became crusaders. within a very few years they had completely lost their effectiveness in helping alcoholics.

The lesson to be learned from the Washingtonians was not overlooked by Alcoholics Anonymous. As we surveyed the wreck of that movement, early AA members resolved to keep our society out of public controversy. Thus was laid the cornerstone for Tradition Ten: "Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

1953—Bill W.

WHERE'S THE NEWCOMER?

Feeling ugly and broken, he warmed up to his first meeting, even though it seemed really weird.

When I first walked into the rooms of AA, I was too broken to be nervous. I felt like a ghost of myself as I just floated through the door. I didn't know what to expect and had forgotten how to care. My life was a mess and always had been so, but I was oblivious to that fact then.

I remember looking at the floor, confused, then looking up, seeing all these happy, smiling faces. The chatter of happiness echoed through my empty being. Then an open hand appeared before me. I'll always remember that hand. That image is imprinted in my mind forever. That hand led up to an open, smiling face. That face, so full of joy, smiling, welcoming, comforting.

The man introduced himself to me and asked me what my name was. He made a fuss about me. This man that I had never seen before seemed excited to meet me. Me? Why? I was broken, ugly, weird. Nobody cared about me. I didn't

even care about me. Actually, I hated myself. Why would a complete stranger be so happy to see me? He didn't even know me. But I knew me, and I was sad, embarrassed, guilty and confused.

Before long, I was sitting on a chair with a cup of tea in my hand. Random strangers came up to me, happily introducing themselves and shaking my hand. I look back now and could almost say that they were sympathizing with me for the wreckage of what I'd become, which I felt I'd left just outside the door.

All of a sudden, there was a loud knocking noise. A plastic bowl banging on a wooden table. To me it sounded scary, almost aggressive. But no, people quietly stopped talking and looked up, ready to be called to attention. It was a Step meeting, whatever that meant. Something called the Preamble was read out and a newcomer was mentioned. I looked around the room for the newcomer, which brought a strange thought to me. This was an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting,

(Continued on page 8)

CENTRAL OFFICE POSITIONS	OFFICER NAME	PHONE NUMBER
Chairperson	Garrett D	615.957.7674
Central Office Manager	Charles C	615.973.9898
Central Office Bookkeeper	Bill M	615.512.5710
Vice Chairperson	Jason S	
Secretary	Lindsey T	615.260.6295
Treasurer	Karla H	619.804.5786
Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community	Al C	615.587.1616
Accessibility Committee		
Corrections	Charlie B	615.554.9085
Treatment Facilities		
Events Chair	Brian	615.406.6361
Archives		
Sobriety Dinner	Brian	615.406.6361
Newsletter Editor	Pat P	228.254.7053

FIRST MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH:

District 30 Meeting When: 6:30pm – 7:30pm Zoom ID: 283 536 1220

SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH:

Intergroup Meeting When: 5:45pm – 6:45pm Where: Central Office 417 Welshwood

STEERING COMMITTEE

When: Monday Oct 23rd 5:45pm – 6:45pm Where: Central Office 417 Welshwood

FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH:

District 32 Meeting When: 6:30pm Where: Last Stop Club 2122 Utopia

SECOND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

District 34 Meeting When: 10am Where: 200 E. Cedar St Goodlettsville

DEVELOPING AN AWARENESS

meetings. Pretty soon my halo was killing me. little humility. Not much, just a little. Not the My ermine (white fur) cloak was smothering me. humility of sackcloth and ashes, but the humility I used to look down and wonder what the other of a man who's glad he's alive and can serve. You little people did for a living. I didn't walk in, I swept in. All that I'd accomplished in six months was sobriety. I was as dry as dust, and just about as useless.

One night we went into the Club and Jack said, "Bill, we're short a speaker, will you say a few words tonight?" "Of course!" The meeting spoke to Father McNulty about it. "Don't worry, started, and I didn't see Jack any more.

They called on the first speaker - and it wasn't third speaker - and the meeting was over! I had brought my harp to the party, but I didn't get to play!



What a lesson about pride & ego.

ever learned in my entire life. That is that A.A. doesn't need me, but I need A.A. Very desperately, very sincerely, very humbly.

Not all at once, because you can't get it all at once, just a little bit at a time. They told me, "You've got to get out and work a little; you've got to give." They told me that giving was living, and that living was loving, and loving was God. And you don't have to worry about God, because He's sitting right in front of your eyes.

At six months I had begun to speak at different You get just a little sobriety, and you get just a get just a little tolerance, not too much, but just enough to sit and listen to the other guy.

> Somewhere along the line, if you've forgotten how to pray, you learn a little about that too. I divorced myself from the Church when I was twenty-one. I got to thinking about that, and I Bill," he said, "you'll develop an awareness of God."

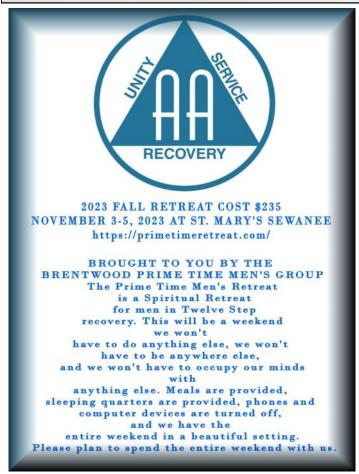
me, and they called the second speaker, and the We had a basement apartment, and it faced right on the sidewalk, and outside our bedroom window there was a little bush about so high. One morning I awoke, and there was a little sparrow taking a bath on this little bush. The weight of this tiny creature's body caused the branch to rise and fall. Isn't that a wonderful thing to see? An awareness of God, yes! You're aware of the sunset, you're aware of the blades of grass, you're aware of food cooking on the stove.

You delight in walking down the street, and you see someone you know, and the first thing that enters your mind is, "What is there good about that guy that I know?" You find that big people That taught me the most important lesson I have discuss ideas, average people discuss things, and little people – they just talk about other people. And you realize that if you put this all together, you get a little humility, a little tolerance, a little honesty, a little sincerity, a little prayer - and a lot of A.A.

> -From the Second Edition Big Book story "There's Nothing the Matter with Me!" page 507 & 508

be gentle

you are meeting parts of yourself you have been at war with



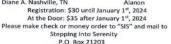
STEPPING INTO SERENITY WOMEN'S CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024 CHATTANOOGA, TN



Hotel Info: Doubletree by Hilton 407 Chestnut Street Chattanooga, TN 37402 423-756-5150 Room Rates: \$121.00 Reservation Code: SIS Reserve by: 01/23/2024



SPEAKERS



Chattanooga, TN 37424

Or

www.steppingintoserenity.org







DISTRICT 9 FALL PICNIC

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2023

10:00am – 4:00pm CUMBERLAND MOUNTAIN STATE PARK 24 OFFICE DR.

CROSSVILLE, TN 38555 *SHELTER 1* CARPOOL IF POSSIBLE



11:00 AM AUCTION BASKETS, BOXES, TUBS *HAVE AUCTION BASKETS ON SITE BY 10:30*

Auctioneer: World renown Rod M.

Cornhole and other outside games throughout the day 12:00 PM EAT / PICNIC BURGERS, HOTDOGS AND DRINKS PROVIDED

BRING SIDE DISHES & DESSERTS TO SHARE 1:30 PM OPEN AA SPEAKER MEETING SHANNON C., AREA 64 DELEGATE

Audio provided by Don. R.

Known across TN for recording AA events

CONTACT: KERRI B. 931-239-4635 or NORA M. 931-510-5726

BRING LAWN CHAIRS AND \$ FOR AUCTION

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PLEASE STAY AND HELP CLEAN UP





33rd Annual Gratitude Roundup

-An Experience You Must Not Miss

November 24, 25, and 26, 2023

Hilton Garden Inn

2703 Denny Ave • Pascagoula, MS 39567

Phone: 228-762-7182 • Reservations: 800-445-8667

(Identify as a part of Gratitude Round Up for Special \$99 rate + applicable fees & taxes)

For further information and online registration, please visit

Speaker Panel, Raffles, 50/50 Drawing, Marathon Meetings, Big Raffle, Hospitality Room,
T-Shirts Available for \$20 (Limited Availability) and More...

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

3 LEGACIES		
Issa S	10.01.98	
Tommie Lee	10.12.20	
ANY L	ENGTHS	
Hayden P	10.28.19	
Jennifer P	10.09.22	
Tommie Lee	10.12.20	
KEEP I'I	SIMPLE	
Brenda S	10.29.83	
Margaret W 10.07.0		

I'm one of those alcoholics who has a hard As you probably guessed, a remarkable thing time admitting that they were wr--. I even occurred. Not only did I not have to make have trouble saying or typing the word. I know I'm not alone. Anyway, I hate this Step.

I had a particularly bad relationship with my older daughter. We screamed at each other a lot. I kept doing things or saying things-hateful, mean things. Or screaming. Then I'd talk to my sponsor and snivel and whine about making amends. I hated to make amends to that kid. I'd rather scrub toilets with a toothbrush than make amends with her. She would look at me with that look (you know, the one that says, "If I cared at all, I'd hate you") and say, "It's about time." She was nasty and hateful and mean and spiteful.

I'd tell all this to my sponsor. I'd try to justify and rationalize my behavior so I wouldn't have to make amends. One day my sponsor suggested that, if I hated making doing the things I had to make amends for (i.e., change my behavior). What an idea! She suggested that I practice restraint of tongue and pen.

I took my sponsor's suggestion. I worked really hard at changing my behavior. I knew it wouldn't change anything because my daughter was still mean, hateful, spiteful, but at least I wouldn't have to make amends with her.

amends, but she became less mean, less spiteful, less hateful. In fact, she started being nice. We started talking. We formed a relationship. It even occurred to me that maybe it wasn't all her fault that we didn't get along.

Today we have a wonderful relationship. She talks to me about her life, her loves, her problems. I owe this relationship to the Tenth Step. If I hadn't hated making amends so much, I might not have been willing to change my behavior.



amends so much, maybe I ought to try not I have found similar results in all of my relationships. Over the years, I have tried to keep my behavior "below amends level" because I hate making amends. As a result, I act differently. And as a result of that, people respond differently. It's amazing.

> Nancy H.—Lake Forest, California-Oct 2005 Reprinted with permission: AAGrapevine.org

WHERE'S THE NEWCOMER?

(Continued from page 4)

wasn't it? Where were all the alcoholics? These were all fresh-looking, normal people. To me, it looked like a town hall committee meeting. Where were all the alcoholics?

I looked around and still didn't see the newcomer, but everyone else did. Because a newcomer was there, they said, the group decided to talk about Step One: "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had unmanageable."

I wasn't sure if that made sense to me. Had I

made a mistake coming here? I didn't drink a bottle of liquor every day. That's what an alcoholic does. I didn't hang around the town, clad in dirty rags, drinking from a paper bag. That's what an alcoholic does. I didn't go from work to the pub every day. That's what an alcoholic does. Or so I thought. So why did I come then? What was I doing there? I thought about it and I decided to stay.

become But then I looked around again. I still didn't see that newcomer.

> Reprinted with permission: AAGrapevine.org Aaron F, Cork Ireland March. 2020

The Myth of "Don't make any major decisions for the first year in recovery"

I hear this advice being given to the newcomer all the time. In most cases, if they be real alcoholics or addicts, they die with this kind of counsel.

"Easy does it" is a variation of this theme. If you want to kill newcomers, if that is your intention, then by all means, go on using it, but if you're here to be helpful, STOP USING IT, it's not what our program is about.

Our program is comprised of 12 Steps, ALL OF WHICH ARE MAJOR DECISIONS!

Step 1: Admit I'm powerless and my life is unmanageable? This was a MAJOR point of awareness and realization to me and one of the most important decisions I made in my life.

Step 2: Coming to the realization that only a spiritual power can restore me to sanity seems to me like another MAJOR realization. No middle of the road solution, either I go on to the bitter end or I accept spiritual help.

Step 3: Turn my will and life over to God, as I understand it! Sounds like a MAJOR decision to me.

Step 4 and 5: Made a fearless moral inventory, looked at my part and confessed my defects to another person! That was a MAJOR move in my life!

Step 8 and 9: Made amends, restitution, and set right the wrongs I had made in my life where ever possible — This was a huge decision and

undertaking in my life and IT SAVED MY LIFE!

Step 10 and 11: Every day for the rest of my life, continue to take inventory, confess defects, set right wrongs and pray and meditate — Another MAJOR decision!

Step 12: Practice the principles of the program in all my affairs and to carry the message to the seemingly hopeless. To give unselfishly of myself to alcoholics and addicts and show them the way out – WOW, this was the BIGGEST decision I ever made and it continues to work in my life everyday.

If I follow the advice of "no major decisions in the first year of recovery", then working the 12 Steps of the program are out and for me NOT to work the 12 Steps everyday in my life is to die.

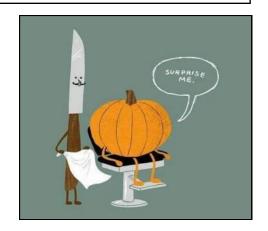


"Meeting Makers Make It", "Keep coming back", "Wait for the Miracle to happen", "No major decisions in the first year", these mottos or slogans, in my experience, are not only, NOT part of our program, they actually harm others, deluding the newcomer into easier softer ways.

Anonymous







Middle Tennessee Intergroup Association

Statement of Activities - Actual and Budgeted - Schedule 1 For the Eight Months and Year Ended August 31, 2023

	August 2023		YTD 2023			
		Budget	Budget Variance	Actual	Budget	Budget Variance
Income	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·					
Net Literature Sales	2,279.82	2,700.00	(420.18)	21,518.26	21,600.00	(81.74)
Group Donations	5,246.86	6,598.00	(1,351.14)	55,775.39	52,784.00	2,991.39
Individual Donations	3,406.41	1,480.00	1,926.41	11,954.49	11,840.00	114.49
Messenger Donations		5.00	(5.00)	135.00	40.00	95.00
Website Donations						
Special Events	-	416.00	(416.00)		3,328.00	(3,328.00)
Interest	5.15	10.00	(4.85)	2,439.34	80.00	2,359.34
Total Income	10,938.24	11,209.00	(270.76)	91,822.48	89,672.00	2,150.48
Expenses	· ·					
Bad debt	-			199.28	-	199.28
Casual Labor	275.00	275.00	-	2,200.00	2,200.00	-
Payroll	6,530.00	6,530.00		52,240.00	52,240.00	
Legal & Professional	350.00	350.00	-	2,100.00	2,800.00	(700.00)
Rent	946.00	1,100.00	(154.00)	7,934.50	8,800.00	(865.50)
Printing	-	33.00	(33.00)		264.00	(264.00)
Payroll Taxes	500.00	500.00	-	3,980.00	4,000.00	(20.00)
Repairs & Maintenance	50.00	35.00	15.00	470.89	280.00	190.89
Equipment Rental	114.44	100.00	14.44	949.00	800.00	149.00
Telephone & Fax	622.05	630.00	(7.95)	4,954.06	5,040.00	(85.94)
Answering Service	205.06	250.00	(44.94)	1,673.39	2,000.00	(326.61)
Postage	58.06	125.00	(66.94)	1,117.06	1,000.00	117.06
Office Supplies	39.03	208.00	(168.97)	636.32	1,664.00	(1,027.68)
Bank Service Charges	40.00	65.00	(25.00)	464.00	520.00	(56.00)
Computer & Technology	278.33	140.00	138.33	2,277.34	1,120.00	1,157.34
Credit Card Service Fees	81.78	200.00	(118.22)	997.71	1,600.00	(602.29)
Intergroup Expense	•	150.00	(150.00)	216.51	1,200.00	(983.49)
Insurance	12	175.00	(175.00)	1,525.00	1,400.00	125.00
Special Events	•	166.00	(166.00)		1,328.00	(1,328.00)
Travel		177.00	(177.00)	150.00	1,416.00	(1,266.00)
Miscellaneous		-	*		-	-
Depreciation		-			-	
Over/Under	-	-	<u> </u>	18	<u> </u>	-
Total Expenses	10,089.75	11,209.00	(1,119.25)	84,085.06	89,672.00	(5,786.22)
Net Income	848.49	-	848.49	7,737.42		7,936.70

GROUP / MEETING	AUG 2023	YTD
86'ers		825
AWOL	78	226
BACK TO THE BIG BOOK		120
BACKROOM	526	2,756
BELLEVUE		1,500
BERRY'S HILLS		124
BRENTWOOD FULL MOON		875
BROWN BAG		240
BY THE BOOK, DICKSON		102
BYRDSTOWN		40
CELEBRATE SERENITY		105
CENTERVILLE	239	734
CHAPEL HILL		120
CHICKEN PLUCKERS	363	1,539
CLARK STREET		200
COLUMBIA		270
COMFORT ZONE	·	1,500

GROUP / MEETING	AUG 2023	YTD
	AUG 2023	
COOKEVILLE		270
CROSSVILLE		89
CROSSVILLE NOONERS		350
DAVIDSON RD		4,500
DESIGN FOR LIVING		335
DICKSON		140
DISTRICT 13		100
DOWNTOWN LUNCH		190
EAST SIDE MEN'S STAG		800
EAST SIDE SATURDAY		1,047
EASTSIDE SUNLIGHTERS	172	608
EVERY WOMAN HAS A STORY	72	219
FAIRFIELD GLADE	100	200
FAYETTEVILLE		75
FIRST THINGS FIRST		659
FIVE AND FIVE		900

GROUP / MEETING	AUG 2023	YTD
FRANKLIN		764
FRANKLIN ROAD WOMEN'S		72
FREE TO BE		303
FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE	1	25
FRIENDS IN RECOVERY	600	1,075
FRIENDS OF BILL, LAKE		
TANSI		253
G.A.A. GALLATIN		75
G.O.D. (GROUP OF		
DRUNKS)	244	366
HAPPY HOUR		182
HARDING		61
HARDING RD		65
HERMITAGE S.S.S.		306
HERMITAGE WOMEN'S		555
HIGH NOON	275	275
HOW IT WORKS, MENS		300
KEEP IT SIMPLE		199
KEY TO SOBRIETY		240
KICK OFF NOT UNTIL		
NOON		150
LADIES NIGHT OUT		189
LAFAYETTE NEW HOPE		50
LAMBDA		294
LATE LUNCH BUNCH		2,125
LAWRENCEBURG		60
LIFE SAVERS		150
LIVING THE PRINCIPLES		388
LIVING BY THE PRINT		600
LIVINGSTON AA		175
LIVINGSTON 12x12		75
MEN'S LOG CABIN		573
MIDDLE TENNESSEE		20
MURFREESBORO	28	197
MUSIC ROW		150
MUSTARD SEED		600
NEW HOPE	30	30
NORTHSIDE		12
N.O.W.		109
ON AWAKENING		800
ONE PURPOSE	25	200
ONE STEP CLOSER	20	313
OUT OF FOG/OUT OF BOG		1,500
OUT TO BREAKFAST		477
PAGE 112	425	573
PAY DAY	420	
PEACE IN THE PARK		300 440
PORTLAND UNITY		
		60
PRIMARY PURPOSE ROLLING HILLS		370
иопппи Опппи		310

GROUP / MEETING	AUG 2023	YTD
PULASKI	530	740
RECOVERY HILL		629
RECOVERY ON THE ROW		778
ROBERTSON COUNTY	10	70
RUSHH HOUR	<u></u>	1,000
SAFE HARBOR		200
SAFE PLACE		145
ST. A'S		130
SANGO SOLUTIONS		150
SATURDAY NIGHT ALIVE	20	160
SEEKERS		500
SERENITY, MURF		100
SERENITY IN THE PARK		252
SHADE TREE	672	4,687
SHELBYVILLE		25
SISTERS IN SOBRIETY		
CROSSVILLE	39	72
SOBRIETY FIRST		97
SPRING HILL		55
SSS, HERMITAGE	_	364
STRAGGLERS		1,050
STRUCK GOLD	306	306
SUNDAY 10AM, CROSSVILLE	- -	50
THANKFUL		<u> </u>
CONTEMPLATION		775
THERE IS A SOLUTION		256
THREE LEGACIES	275	275
TURNING POINT		1,926
UNCOMMON WOMEN		43
UNITED, GALLATIN		600
UNITY AT 6		250
WAKE UP	22	76
WAVERLY	•	120
WAY OF LIFE		53
WEEKENDERS		300
WEST NASHVILLE	79	235
WINNERS & BEGINNERS		532
WOMAN'S WAY		115
WOMEN IN THE SOLUTION	100	250
WOMEN'S FREEDOM	100	202
WOMEN'S OPEN DOOR		163
WOODBINE		128
		140
GROUP MONTHLY TOTALS	E 947	55 766
	5,247	55,755
INDIVIDUALS	3,406	11,954
MESSENGER	-	135
COMBINED TOTALS TO		
DATE	8,653	67,845

Middle Tennessee Central Intergroup Association

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