



Tri-County Central Office News

Our Common Welfare Should Come First; Personal Recovery Depends Upon AA Unity

A Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-County Central Office, Inc.
8019 North Himes Avenue Ste. 104, Tampa, Florida 33614-2763

January, 2009

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BILL WILSON'S 1947 GUIDEPOST ARTICLE

Few would argue that A.A. cofounder Bill Wilson was ahead of his time. In this reprint from the September 1947 issue of "Guideposts", Bill's first nationally published magazine article, he poses a question that resonates today.

IS A.A. FOR ALCOHOLICS ONLY?

Our most enthusiastic friends think Alcoholics Anonymous is a modern miracle. So they ask, "Why can't A.A. principles be applied to any personal problem?" The world today is a problem world because it is full of problem people. We are now on the greatest emotional bender of all time; practically no one of us is free from the tightening coils of insecurity, fear, resentment and avarice. If A.A. can revive an alcoholic by removing these paralyzing liabilities from him, it must be strong medicine. Perhaps the rest of us could use the same prescription. Not being reformers, nor representing any particular sectarian or medical point of view, we A.A.'s can only tell the story of what has happened to us and suggest the simple (but not easy) principles upon which, as ex-drinkers, our very lives now depend. Fifty thousand alcoholics (today A.A. has nearly two million members and 100,000 groups worldwide) - the men and women members of A.A. - have found release from their fatal compulsion to drink. Each month two thousand more set foot on the A.A. high road to freedom from obsession so subtly powerful that once engulfed, few alcoholics over the centuries have ever survived. We alcoholics have always been the despair of society and, as our lives became totally unmanageable, we despair of ourselves. Obsession is the word for it. But now, largely through A.A., this impossible soul sickness is being banished. Each recovering alcoholic carries his tale to the next. In a brief dozen years the A.A. message has spread, chain letter fashion, over the United States, Canada and a dozen foreign lands. Obsession is being exorcised wholesale. What then, is this message whose power can restore the alcoholic his sanity and thenceforth enable him to live soberly, happily and usefully in a very confused world? The A.A. Recovery Program relates it as follows:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

From the Central Office
SERVICE DESK
A total of 595 phone calls
were made to the
Central Office in
NOVEMBER
282 for info on AA,
0 for info on Al-Anon,
8 messages for other
inquiries,
3 requesting a Twelfth Step
call, 302 after Office Hours
calls. There were 248 walk-ins
visits as well.

Continued on page 3

WHERE'S THE MEETING?

It's early evening. I'm staying in a motel by myself in a vaguely familiar city. It has long been my custom to go to an AA meeting any night that's not otherwise spoken for. The local answering service provides me with the address of the meeting place, I check my map, allow myself a little extra time to get lost, and I'm off. After a few minutes, I find the building — there's no identification on it but I can tell from the number next door that I'm in the right place. I park my car and get out. Which door is the right one? Do I knock or just walk in? For a while, I wander around, hoping someone will arrive at the meeting, see me standing there looking pathetic, and help me out. Eventually, my courage returns and my inclination to run away ebbs. I boldly try the door and walk in, hoping to see some evidence of Alcoholics Anonymous. At first I'm not sure, but I ask if there's a meeting tonight. The answer is affirmative; they point out the coffeepot and go back to their conversations. By the time the meeting starts, I feel much better, the familiar sounds of the meeting remind me that AA is basically the same everywhere, and my anxieties disappear. I participate in the meeting and go back to the motel feeling fabulous about Alcoholics Anonymous and my continuing sobriety, but faintly uncomfortable about what I experienced in finding the meeting. I've been sober for awhile, thus, I begin by taking my own inventory. There's no doubt that my own self-centered fear of being in unfamiliar surroundings is at the root of my discomfort. But what about the situation? Suppose I had been a newcomer? Would I have stayed around long enough for the meeting to start? Or would I have wandered around in the parking lot for a few minutes and then run for the nearest barroom or the safety of my own living room? I'm going back to my home town this week to see it's meetings through the eyes of the newcomer. Does the address in the meeting directory tell me exactly in which building or room the meeting is held? Are there signs to follow to the basement, back room, or other obscure location? If this were my first meeting would I find the door and feel welcome when I entered? Our service workers put a lot of effort into public information, carrying the message into various institutions where alcoholics are confined, and providing twenty-four-hour answering services. None of this means much if the newcomer we attract stands in the parking lot and wonders, "Where's the meeting?"

Barbara W., Eureka, California
Permission to Reprint/ AA Grapevine / January, 2009

Editor's Note: How is your Group listed in the Directory? How many newcomers never made it to your meeting because they couldn't find it? It doesn't take much effort to contact the Central Office and supply us with better directions or a room number to your meeting or put out a few signs with directions to the meeting room — does it???

**TBAIC - District 2 - Hillsborough & East Pasco Counties
 (877) AATAMPA or (877) 228-2672!**

Hello everybody! I am an alcoholic and my name is Annie L.

At our November meeting, we had quite a few volunteers attend. This is a great way to get feedback about what is going on at our meetings in various institutions and to find out if there is anything we can do to help out. Anyone is welcome at our committee meetings. It's a great way to get involved if you are not already, and to discover new opportunities for service in our current facilities where meetings are brought. If you are unable to take a meeting into our facilities, there are opportunities to write letters to inmates. Currently, we have a man that is on death row who could really use some pen pals. To get his information and write him, please contact Mike K. at 813-785-8027.

Cathleen C., East Pasco Women's Jail Coordinator, put together some informational packets for us to take to meetings that we attend. This packet gives the information necessary on what steps to take to get involved in taking meetings to jail. If anyone is interested, they could use help on Thursday's and Saturday's in East Pasco Women's Jails. Please contact Cathleen C. to get involved. As for Hillsborough Women's jails, all meetings are covered, but the women always like to see new faces, so please call if you would like to come out to Orient or Falkenburg. Jill J. is taking a meeting to our women's prison every Wednesday and it's going very well, and she will also be cleared to take meetings into one of our juvenile treatment centers next week. Buddy H. reported that Falkenburg men's meetings are doing well, but that they could use some help on Thursdays. Contact Dick if you can help out that night. Paul D. needs volunteers for Monday night at Orient. If you can help, please give him a call. Rob T. has stepped in as our new Detox coordinator. Detox is a great way to carry the message to the sick and suffering alcoholic, especially if you are new in sobriety, as there are no sobriety requirements for taking meetings in to our detox facilities. Contact Rob T for more info. Dick has all juvenile facilities covered.

As a reminder, to get clearance to take meetings into Hillsborough County jails, you must attend orientation. The next orientation is on January 10th at Orient Road Jail at 8:30 a.m. If you have a temporary PV # it will expire unless you attend the orientation. If you would like to attend contact Buddy to make reservations.

Thanks again to all of our volunteers!

Love & Service – Annie L.

Treasurers Report - November 29th 2008

Pink Can Donations YTD 2008	\$17,054.37
Less Prudent Reserve	- \$300.00
Less YTD Literature	- \$10,696.03
Less YTD Expenses	- \$1,212.28
Pink Can Current Balance	\$4846.06

Next Committee Meetings

January 31st and February 28th at 9:30 AM at the Tri-County Central Office (near Himes & Waters). If you need more specific directions please call Tim @ 813-933-9123. The meeting usually lasts about an hour and it is the best way to get involved with service work in Detox/Treatment/Jail/Prison facilities.

Pink Can Drive

Our committee is 100% self supporting and receives no funds from the traditional pie charts or District 2 in accordance with our group conscious. If your home group has not made a pink can donation recently or if you are able to send an additional donation this year ... We will put it to great use!

TBAIC, PO Box 26242, Tampa FL 33623

Thank you to those groups who have sent in a donation this Month: Back to Basics, Noon Big Book @ 3333, Expect a Miracle, Midday Matinee, Mustard Seed, Noontime Celebration, Old School Group, Riverside Group, Ruskin Fellowship (Sunday), Sisters in Sobriety, Sober @ 7- Apollo Beach, Sober on Saturday, Sunshine Group, Thursday Night There is a Solution Group 3333, Wellspring Recovery Group, Yana 5:45 Happy Hour.

Current Service Opportunities

Men's Pasco (LOL) Jail Coordinator...*Call Jack M.*
 Juvenile Coordinator.....*Call Dick D.*

TBAIC Committee Members	
Jack M. - Chair	813-417-9945
Eric V. - Alt Chair	813-277-4833
Mark L. – Treasurer Tom F. – Alternate	813-477-6855
Annie L. – Secretary	305-766-3297
Dick D. - Hills Jails - Emeritus	813-254-4423
Paul D – Mens Orient Rd	727-385-5529
Buddy H – Mens Falkenburg	813-871-2514
Annie L. – Hills Womens Jails	305-766-3297
Michael K. - Detox	813-785-8027
Jill J. – HCI Women's Prison	813-349-7048
Open - E Pasco Jail - Mens	
Cathleen C - E Pasco Jail - Women's	813-727-1415
Jim H. - E Pasco Prison	813-862-3539
Mark A - Treatment	813-407-2705
Lindsay T - Bridge The Gap	813-326-5408
Joe L - Pre-Release	813-918-3489
Open - Juvenile	

BILL WILSON'S 1947 GUIDEPOST ARTICLE from page one

RED CHIP DAY

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

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understand Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

Simple, these principles, yet a large order indeed. When one tries to apply them he is bound to collide with a most heavy obstacle. That obstacle is one's own pride. Who, for example, cares to admit complete defeat? Who wishes to admit to himself and others his serious defects of character? Who relishes forgiving his enemies and making amends to people he has harmed? Who would like to give freely of himself without ever demanding reward? How many can really bow before "the God of their own understanding" in real faith that a Higher Power will do for them what they cannot do for themselves? Yet A.A.'s find that if we go "all out" in daily practice of our 12 Steps we soon commence to live in a new, unbelievable world. Our pride yields to humility and our cynicism to faith. We begin to know serenity. We learn enough patience, tolerance, honesty and service to subdue our former masters - insecurity, resentment and unsatisfied dreams of power. We find that God can be relied upon; that our strength can come out of weakness; that perhaps only those who have tasted the fruits of dependence on a Higher Power can understand the true meaning of personal liberty, freedom of the human spirit. For us of A.A. these are not theories; they are the prime facts of our very existence. The average A.A. member feels that he deserves little personal credit for his new way of life. He knows he might never have achieved enough humility to find God unless he had been beaten to his knees by alcohol. He was once that egocentric, but in the end it had to be God. Yet we of A.A. cannot but feel that great things certainly await those who earnestly try our 12 Steps substituting their own distressing problem for that of alcohol. Nor do we think everyone needs to be so completely beaten as we were. To us, grace is an infinite abundance which surely can be shared by all who will renounce their former selves enough to truly seek it out. We often feel like shouting this ancient charter of men's liberty from the rooftops of thousands of our homes - A.A. homes that would never have been, but for the grace of God.

WHO IS HE?

Bill is a Vermonter, tall, lanky and homespun. He learned to drink in the First World War when he was in France. On his return home, it took him tormented years to realize what was obvious to others - that he had not learned how to drink and could not trust himself not to drink. Being a canny, shrewd New Englander, Bill achieved a fairly immediate success on Wall Street, but all the adroitness and luck in the world could never hold up against his alcoholic obsession. Nothing and nobody could hold up against it - except Lois, the childhood sweetheart and wife who had sent an idealistic lad to war and had got herself back a two-headed problem. Often hospitalized, Bill had been pronounced incurable by Dr. William D. Silkworth, a well-known authority on alcoholism, who in recent years has become a sort of patron saint of A.A. On his last visit to the hospital, Bill was seen by a friend who had himself recovered from alcoholism by spiritual means. This friend urged Bill to confess his faults, make restitution to those he had injured, turn to God for relief from alcoholism and help others. Bill rebelled for he was an agnostic.

On November 9th, 2008, Red Chip Day took place in Brandon, Florida. This was a wonderful and well attended event put on to celebrate Sobriety and all proceeds went to benefit the Central Office. A lot of people and Groups put great amounts of energy, time and money into this event in order to help Central Office continue to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. We here at the Central Office would like to thank the following Groups for their well deserved praise: These Groups are:

The Kingsway Group
The Beginners Step Group
The Expect a Miracle Group
The Sisters in Sobriety Group
The Speaker Sisters in Sobriety Group
The Spiritual Growth Group
The Brandon Big Book Group
The Brandon Saturday Night Group
The Step Sisters in Sobriety Group
The North Brandon Open Forum Group
and the

The Valrico/Brandon Wednesday Night Group

THANK YOU!!!

SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE:

Our meetings are at 3333 West Columbus Drive, the first Saturday of each month. Come join us. We help each other. Service work, keeps us sober
O.D.A.A.T. Love to all, Jackie

These Groups/Meetings are are in need of your Support:

High Nooners Group

Living Sober Meeting—Sundays @ 1:30 pm

5601 N. 20th Street. Zephyrhills

The Meeting Place Group

Woman's Big Book Study Meeting — Friday @ 5:30 pm

The Candlelight Meeting — Friday @ 8:30 pm

Dr. Bob & the Oldtimers Meeting Saturday @ 10:00 pm

Coffee & Doughnuts Meeting — Sunday @ 10:30 am

2736 Land-O-Lakes Blvd

SPACE AVAILABLE TO START NEW MEETING:

The Wesley Chapel Church of Nazarene on HWY 54 has space available for anyone interested in starting an AA meeting there. Please contact John N. @ 813-715-0444, if you are interested and willing to commit to a new meeting.

But, fully realizing his hopeless condition, alone and despairing in his hospital room, he said to himself, "At last I'm ready to try anything" and then with little hope and no faith at all, he cried out, "If there is a God, will he show himself?" This was the beginning of A.A.—For God did answer.

Editor-in-Chief, Guideposts, 1947

NOTES FROM INSIDE THE CENTRAL OFFICE

December 9th, 2008 the Board of Directors for Central Office met:
BOARD MEMBERS REPRESENTING GROUP

AL B.	CHAIRPERSON	DRUID HILLS GROUP
PAUL G.	VICE-CHAIR	SOBER @ 7 GROUP
JOYCE Q.	TREASURER	KEYSTONE GROUP
JIM VK	BOARD MEMBER	CARROLLWOOD NS GROUP
MARILYN	BOARD MEMBER	NEW WAY GROUP
KEVIN G.	BOARD MEMBER	NORTH TAMPA YOUNG & RESTLESS GROUP
RICK D.	BOARD MEMBER	EARLY RISERS GROUP
STACY W.	BOARD MEMBER	RIVERSIDE GROUP
JANIE M.	BOARD MEMBER	CAME TO BELIEVE GROUP
OPEN		

December 9th, 2008 the Central Office Representatives met:
COUNCIL MEMBERS REPRESENTING GROUP

SUE Z.	SAFE HAVEN GROUP
KRISTIN R.	MONDAY NIGHT MADNESS GROUP
JOHN F.	LIFE ENRICHMENT GROUP
AL F.	SOBER @ 7 GROUP
JIM O'B.	TAMPA YOUNG PEOPLES GROUP
RYON S.	WELLSPRING RECOVERY GROUP
VIVIAN J.	FREEDOM IN SOBRIETY GROUP
MARK H.	RIVERSIDE GROUP
TIGGER F.	SOLUTIONS GROUP
STEVE J.	ODESSA GROUP
EARLE W.	NOON BIG BOOK GROUP
CINDY H.	WEDNESDAY WOMEN'S GROUP
DEBBI M.	DISTRICT 2 LIAISON
FRED L.	TEMPLE TERRACE MEN'S GROUP
MIKE D.	OLD SCHOOL GROUP
JOE B.	IT'S IN THE BOOK GROUP
JOHN G.	TAMPA PALMS BIG BOOK GROUP
CARLOS M.	5:45 NEW BEGINNINGS GROUP
SANDY S.	CAME TO BELIEVE GROUP

Being the last meeting of the year, the Board treated everyone to Pizza, coffee and water. It's makes it easier to do business on a full stomach. ☺👏 Al opened the meeting in the usual manner with the Serenity Prayer. After asking everyone to turn down their cell phones and announcing that Paul G. the Vice-Chair would be Chairing the Council meeting he asked if anyone would read the Secretary report. Jim V.K. read the November report. There were no questions, a motion to accept the report was made, it was seconded and all were in favor. Joyce Q. presented the November Treasurers report. There appeared to be nothing memorable as far as the budget went. Still doing very well as far as the year-to-date budget shows. Joyce then when over the proposed budget for 2009. After some discussion a motion was made to accept the budget. It was seconded and all were in favor. Jim V.K. then brought up a concern he had about the way the monthly and yearly budgets didn't seem to coincide with each other. After a lengthily discussion Jim reminded everyone that it was their responsibly and duty as Board members to look over these reports and make sure everything is okay. The Office Managers yearly review came up and Tim was asked to step outside while they discussed his review. After some time Tim was asked back in to continue recording the meeting. The review was tabled at this time to allow the Board to go over some information they wanted to gather before making a final decision. Tim gave his District 2 Report, some announcements were made and the Board meeting adjourned. The Council meeting, Chaired by Paul G. was a little more lively with the main topics focused around the upcoming Anniversary Dinner in February. Tigger F. announced that she had a bunch of old Grapevines to donate to the TBAIC that her group had voted on to give. Fred L. raised a concern about the non-response their group was getting from the District and the Area concerning receipts for the contributions that they had send in. Both Debbi M. and Tim promised to take this concern back to the District. Joe B. gave a brief talk about the PI/CPC.

Cindy H. brought up the subject of getting ready to start coordinating ideas-etc. for the Second Annual Softball Tournament for sometime in 2009. Tigger F. had the question on what a Group had to do in order to host an All Groups meeting. There was no TBAIC report this evening. Debbi M. gave a brief rundown on some of the news around District 2. The District Dispatch (District 2's newsletter) is back in operation Chaired by Jim F. Most, if not all of the Committee chair positions have been filled and a large number of D.C.M. and A.C.M. positions have been filled. Cindy H. announced that several groups in Plant City are being displaced by the City and she would get back with updated info on meeting locations and times. Several announcements were made concerning different events taking place over the holidays. Everyone was reminded that the Office would be conducting their annual physical inventory January 10th, 2009 and everyone was invited to come help. Be here at 9:00 am. Al F. announced that his group, the Sober @ 7 Group had raised over \$600.00 for Central Office when they had hosted their All Groups meeting in October. The meeting ended on a favorable note and some members hung around afterwards to polish off the Pizza and put away the chairs.



ANNIVERSARY TIME

GROUP	Honors To	Date	Years	A BIRTHDAY PLAN SUPPORTER TO CENTRAL OFFICE ONE DOLLAR FOR EACH YEAR OF SOBRIETY		
EXPECT A MIRACLE GROUP	TICA G.	01/02/07	2 YRS			
EXPECT A MIRACLE GROUP	MIKE Q.	01/25/06	3 YRS	Honors To	Date	Years
EXPECT A MIRACLE GROUP	SHELLY M.	01/19/04	5 YRS	SUSAN S.	12/20/88	20 YEARS
CAME TO BELIEVE GROUP	BURKE H.	01/23/99	10 YRS	TOM D.	11/28/83	25 YEARS
CAME TO BELIEVE GROUP	CHERYL T.	01/01/92	17 YRS	Next District Meeting: January 04th, 2009 Bayshore Baptist Church 3111 W. Morrison Ave. (Morrison & MacDill) GSR Sharing 3:30 pm Business Meeting 4:30 pm		
CAME TO BELIEVE GROUP	TOM G.	01/31/84	25 YRS			
RUSH HOUR SERENITY	ED S.	01/15/86	23 YRS			
RUSH HOUR SERENITY	ED P.	01/17/77	32 YRS			
KEYSTONE GROUP	BILL B.	01/01/04	5 YRS			
KEYSTONE GROUP	DAVID G.	01/24/95	14 YRS			
KEYSTONE GROUP	MARK M.	01/03/91	18 YRS			
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	MICHELLE V.	01/04/07	2 YRS			
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	AL F.	01/02/06	3 YRS			
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	MARTY H.	01/02/99	10 YRS			
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	JOYCE S.	01/07/98	11 YRS			
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	BRIAN K.	01/29/83	26 YRS			
INTO ACTION GROUP	DANIEL R.	01/06/06	3 YRS			



CELEBRATE IT SOBER
 at
 THE 301 HOUSE

MEETING MARATHON

MEETINGS EVERY 3 HOURS
 FIRST MEETING IS WEDNESDAY 12/31/08 AT NOON
 LAST MEETING IS THURSDAY 1/1/09 AT 9:00PM

**NEW YEARS EVE
 KARAOKE & DANCE**

COME AND JOIN US FOR
 KARAOKE @ 7:30
 DANCE @ 9:30
 50/50 RAFFLE
 SNACKS
 \$3.00 Donation

THE 301 HOUSE - 8601 BOWLES RD
 988-7783 FOR DIRECTIONS

**SOUTH FLORIDA AREA 15
 GENERAL SERVICE QUARTERLY
 ASSEMBLY**

HOSTED BY DISTRICT 4
 JANUARY 9, 10, & 11, 2009

For complete Details: www.area15aa.org
 or see your GSR



**Spiritual Retreat
 for A.A. & Al-Anon**



**LAKE YALE BAPTIST
 CONFERENCE CENTER, FL
 MARCH 6-8, 2009**

Contact: Tom B. 813-254-7094

**BYOB
 Bring Your Own
 Blanket!**

Where: The Club- 3333 W. Columbus Ave.

When: January 10th, 2009 at 6:00 PM

What: Coffee, Live Acoustic Music, Baked Goods, 50/50 Raffle, Fellowship and Fire!! (Bonfire!)

Suggested Donation: \$5*



No Alcoholic turned away, this is a fundraiser for the Steps to Freedom Committee. Which puts on a one day seminar which donates the funds to the Jails & Institutions Committee.

MORE NEWS AROUND TOWN

CENTRAL OFFICE 34TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Saturday, February 28th, 2009

Christ the King Church
(In the Parrish Center)
821 Dale Mabry Hwy S. Tampa

Italian Night – Lasagna Dinner Provided
&
Covered Dishes Greatly Appreciated!!!

Tickets: \$5.00
Doors Open: 5 P.M.
Dinner Served: 6 P.M.
Speakers: 7 P. M.

2 Speakers:

Lindsay T.

Tampa, Florida

Kevin W.

Brandon, Florida

Enjoy a fabulous evening and support Central Office at the same time. Tickets on sale at Central Office or at the door.

Dinner * Fellowship * Speaker * Sobriety Countdown * Raffle

***Tickets are now available at Central Office and
thru Board & Council Members***

Central Office provides a number of services acting as a clearing house for the convenience of members and groups, provides phone service for twelfth step calls and other inquires, helps with the coordination of group activities and keeps track of meeting times and changes and the printing of the schedules. We also edit and print our monthly newsletter. In addition we sell all Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference Approved Literature and some other materials requested by our AA members.

