



Tri-County Central Office News

TRUDGING THE ROAD OF HAPPY DESTINY

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

December, 2008

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STEP 12

Step 12 gives us a guarantee—a promise that if we take the first eleven Steps, we will have a spiritual awakening. The result of working these Steps is just that: a spiritual awakening. We have tapped the “*unsuspected inner resource*” of strength by working these Steps, and our spirit is awakened. (Big Book, pp. 569-570 3rd Ed.) Now we carry this message to others: “I have tapped an inner resource with the first eleven Steps, and if you have a problem in your life and you would like to tap your inner resource, this is the way you can do it. It has worked for me.” This is all the message is. It is very simple: *here is a program that works*. Throughout the Big Book, Bill talks about a “*sudden spiritual experience*” which effected his recovery and influenced his writing and the focus of the book. Later on, when they were putting out the second edition, a lot of people asked him not to emphasize his sudden spiritual experience because they thought many people might feel they would have to have the same type of spiritual experience in order to recover. So he changed the term to “*spiritual awakening*.” The distinction is that a “spiritual experience” happens suddenly, and a “spiritual awakening” happens more gradually. It doesn’t matter which we have (far more people have the gradual kind of spiritual awakening), but we are promised that if we work these Steps, we will become spiritually awakened. I believe there are as many different experiences of spiritual awakening as there are people. It is a very personal thing. God knows that no two people are alike. Each person is going to have a unique spiritual experience or a unique spiritual awakening that will fit his or her particular life. Each one will be like no other, but they all will have something in common: *we will be able to think, believe, and feel things that we couldn’t before*. We will be able to do things we couldn’t do on our own strength. We can receive God’s directions in our lives; we have had a spiritual awakening. This is what we carry to other people. Remember that we said if we can believe in Step 2, and decide in Step 3 and act in Steps 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, we will get the Promises in Step 9 and results in Step 10, and the results of prayer and meditation in Step 11. Now we *know*. We are people who have faith. We have seen the program work for us, and those of us who know from our own experience that it works can go to the new person and help him or her come to believe.

Joe McQ

HOW MUCH DO WE WANT FROM AA?

Just sobriety—just enough to get by with. That is all I wanted for my first five months in AA, and that is just exactly all that I received—because that is all I was looking for. And I got drunk—good and drunk. But I came back, and now, after approximately four years of sobriety (not all of it necessarily happy) the picture is beginning to change; the best things come to those who are willing to wait. I came back with an honest desire to seek this new way of life, and the happiness beyond my fondest dreams that the Big Book told me I would receive. I came seeking and I am beginning to receive. You out there: do you too just want sobriety; or do you want peace of mind and happiness? Its all here for the asking, and the very fellow perhaps you think that has it in for you will be only too happy to give you the helping hand, and show you the way. How much of AA do you *honesty* want? Do you want to hold on to those resentments against your fellow man that are tearing the very heart from your body? Do you want to keep playing around with little petty things that are much better placed aside? Or do you want to accept this new way of life on a twenty-four hour basis? You cannot be perfect and things will go wrong, but ask for help from the Higher Power and also from the fellow who understands your problem. Do you want to criticize that fellow or gal for the way he works the program? Or give him a pat on the back and tell him what a good job he is doing? After all, this is an individual program. Just how much of AA do you truly want? Are you just looking for a way out—out from family strife, financial woes, “belly-sickness,” “jail-sickness,” — or are you looking for the happiness beyond your wildest dreams? There are ways of achieving this happiness. I’ll list just a few. Here are six: (1) Become enthusiastic about AA and it’s activities. Enthusiasm is one of the magic words. Action is another. (2) Make an honest effort to help someone less fortunate than yourself, in or out of AA. Try it. To hurt someone is one of the greatest sins, but to help someone is one of the guaranteed ways of achieving real happiness. (3) Come early to the meetings and mix with the boys and girls. They all have their problems. Allow them the courtesy to share them with you. Remember when you thought you were the only one with heartaches and a multitude of troubles. Don’t leave too soon after the meeting is over—stay for the fellowship. It will make you sleep better, keep you cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. (4) Be nice to that fellow you meet in everyday life—even though at the time you may consider him a stinker. Maybe all he needs is a lift....just a word of encouragement. (5) Ask and you shall receive—provided you have an open mind when the time comes for you to receive. (6) You may stay sober but not very happy unless you are willing to accept the spiritual way of life.

From the Central Office
SERVICE DESK
A total of 605 phone calls were
made to the
Central Office in
October
277 for info on AA,
6 for info on Al-Anon,
21 messages for other
inquiries,
5 requesting a Twelfth Step
call, 288 after Office Hours
calls. There were 233 walk-ins
visits as well.

Note to all Groups:

New Schedules are in. As usual I apologize for any mistakes I made, I’ll try to do better next time. Also, because the printer increased their price, we have had to increase ours. Schedules are now 25¢ each. All Grapevine items will also have a price increase effective in January 2009 due to the fact that they increased their prices.

Continued on page 3

**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. October means we are ¾ of the way through the year. In A.A. it means we have a Quarterly!_Tampa hosted the District 2 Quarterly and many of our members attended. Mark A. led a workshop on Singleness of Purpose in treatment centers. Tom F., our alternate Treasurer ,and soon to be TBAIC Alternate Chair invited a representative of The Dept. of Corrections who spoke on an improved system for obtaining clearances into state prison facilities Eric V. was also voted as the Area 15 Alternate Corrections Chair. If you would like to attend the next quarterly, it will be in Sarasota on January 9th, 10th & 11th.

In addition, each quarter, jail orientations are held for all new volunteers and those with temporary PV#'s, who would like to take meetings into our jails. We now have a total of 146 people with clearance into our correctional facilities! Welcome to all of our new volunteers!

At our October meeting, keeping in the spirit of rotation, we held elections for a couple of the positions on our committee. Most of the committee kept their current positions, but there were a couple changes made. These changes will become effective January 1st, 2009. Eric V. will be serving as the chair, with Tom F. as alternate. I have stepped in as the secretary and temporary coordinator for Women's Hills.County jails. Rob T. will be our new detox coordinator and Dick D. will be filling the juvenile coordinator position until further notice. As for the rest, Buddy H. and Paul D. reported that things are going well at the men's jails. Joe L. asked that volunteers give pre-release forms to inmates well in advance of their release date to allow the inmate to form a relationship with someone on the outside before they are released. Mike K. informed us that Acts Detox has requested a limit of 3 volunteers entering the treatment center at one time. Lindsay T. reported one bridge. Jill J. reported one meeting a week at the Women's Prison on Wednesday's at 6pm starting in November.
 Love & Service – Annie L.

Pink Can Donations YTD 2008	\$16,020.74
Less Prudent Reserve	- \$300.00
Less YTD Literature	- \$10,378.70
Less YTD Expenses	- \$1,137.47
Pink Can Current Balance	\$4204.57

Next Committee Meetings

December 20th and January 31st 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: Noon Big Book @ 3333, In The Middle, Kingsway Group, Midday Matinee, Red Door Group, Riverside Group, Ruskin Fellowship, Sisters in Sobriety, Sobrenity, There is a Solution, Yana 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	

A LETTER FROM SANTA CLAUS

Editors

AA Grapevine
468 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016



Sirs: I'm an easygoing fellow and can take a joke as well as the next guy. I am sensitive about a few things, however, and you hit on one of them in your December 1969 issue. Some nincompoop had the gall to accuse me of alcoholism! I am not now, nor have I ever been, an alcoholic. You'll never see *me* wallowing around in the gutter with those guys. Why, I don't even take a drink in the morning. Sure, I have a shot now and then with the elves, just a sociable glass—but a lush I'm not. I haven't been snockered now for, oh, two or three weeks. I wouldn't have gotten drunk then, either, but Mrs. Claus got on my nerves. She keeps pestering me about the booze, as if I was some kid who couldn't handle it. That's why I don't take her out often—I have one short one and she's in a dither. Who wants to put up with that when he's trying to have a good time? Never thought of that, did you? You guys are always quick to judge, never look at the other side of the coin. I can take it or leave it alone. Generally, I prefer to take it. Who doesn't? But when I want to quit, I'll quit. Up here at the Pole, I *have* to drink a little now and then. This is a desolate place. Aren't I entitled to a little cheer? I don't begrudge anybody else their entertainment. To be absolutely honest, I'll admit I have had a bit of trouble in the past. But now I've wised up and started to control my drinking. I've switched to beer and table wines—you fellows ought to know *they're* harmless enough. If the problem should come back, I'll just clamp down a mite harder. Self-control, that's what it takes, just like with smoking. I used to smoke a pipe, but I've quit. If I can quit smoking, I can quit drinking, right? I'll clue you in on what prevents a good, two-fisted drinker from turning into an alcoholic. A steady job. In spite of what that article said, I get out almost every day and work. Keeps my mind off the liquor. I go over to the elves workshop and give them pointers on speeding up production and improving their workmanship. I may have to quit going over there, though, because one or two of the elves act as if a little friendly advice is an insult or something. Maybe I'll get a hobby instead. Everyone knows I'm a great guy—not a coward hiding behind a bottle. Don't I stay up all night making deliveries to all the tots at Christmastime? Not many people would do that, now would they? No, I'm okay—I've got my thinking straight. I don't need any of you alkie telling me I need help with my drinking. Just to show you I don't hold grudges: If you'll print a public apology for slandering me, I'll tell my lawyers to go easier on you in court. What's more, if you loosen up long enough for one good fling, I'll let you come to the big New Year's party I'm holding. Bring your own booze, preferably sloe gin or whiskey. It'll be your last chance to see me drunk, because after New Year's I'm tapering off and may eventually quit altogether. Who Knows?

Soberly, *Santa Claus*

Permission/ AA Grapevine/ December 1970

NOTE THESE DATES THAT THE OFFICE WILL BE
CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Wednesday-December 24—Christmas Eve
Thursday-December 25—Christmas Day

Wednesday-December 31, 2008—New Year
Thursday-January 1, 2009—New Year

Saturday-January 10th, 2009 —Year-End
Physical Inventory Count—9:00 am-Until
Finished

HOW MUCH DO WE WANT FROM AA? continued from page One

Anything good in the sight of God is spiritual. How much AA do you want? Do you just want your physical sobriety or do you also want the happiness we are all looking for; the things that bring true happiness do not cost anything in money. You too can have sobriety and also happiness. I know because for the first five months I just had sobriety, and now after approximately four years I'm finding that happiness beyond my fondest dreams that I was promised.

C.C.E., Pompano Beach, FL/Permission AA Grapevine/ 1956



Tampa Bay Young Peoples Group's 7th
Anniversary

December 11th, 2008

Please come join us for food and fellowship!

Food will be served starting at 6:00

Meeting starts at 7:30

Speaker Noah F, Washington DC

Bring a covered dish to share!

Location: Hyde Park United Methodist Church
500 W Platt St, Tampa 33606 ****New Location****

Questions?

Please call Mike W: 727-459-7127 or Ryan A: 813-892-4735

NOTES FROM INSIDE THE CENTRAL OFFICE

November 11th 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
EXCUSED	BOARD MEMBER	NEW WAY GROUP
KEVIN G.	BOARD MEMBER	NORTH TAMPA YOUNG & RESTLESS GROUP
RICK D.	BOARD MEMBER	EARLY RISERS GROUP
UNEXCUSED	BOARD MEMBER	RIVERSIDE GROUP
JANIE M.	BOARD MEMBER	CAME TO BELIEVE GROUP
OPEN		


Al opened the meeting in the usual manner, with the Serenity Prayer and then asked everyone to turn down their cell-phones. Jim read the October Board minutes. Al asked for any questions. Joyce noticed that the word "bought" should have been "brought". Correction was noted. Minutes were seconded and approved. Joyce read the October Treasurer's Report. Nothing memorial to report. She then handed out a comparison sheet showing the differences in our budget between 2007 and 2008. Jim asked about the line item for All Groups meetings. Were we not having enough meetings? Jim then asked about the overages on Line Item 6500-Newsletter and Line Item 6550-Postage. Tim explained the reasons to their satisfaction. Paul responded on the question about All Groups meetings. Joyce explained about checks and balances and then went over some of the line items for the upcoming proposed budget for 2009. In Old Business (1) There was nothing new to discuss concerning the Anniversary Dinner. It would be expounded more at the Council Meeting. (2) It was announced that the Newsletter was now on the Web Site. (3) Joyce brought up discussion about the COR Orientation. After some discussion it was decided that Joyce would lead off with the Orientation in December. At the Council meeting 2009 COR Handbooks were handed out to everyone present. Mark read the October Secretary Report. Tim noted some corrections to be made. Acceptance was made for the Minutes, it was seconded and all were in favor. Joyce read the October Treasurer's Report. Ended the month by a few hundred dollars in the red. However, Profit & Loss for the year was still well into the black. A motion was made to accept the report, it was seconded and all were in favor. In Old Business: (1) Lots of discussion as Paul explained where we were currently at as far as the Anniversary Dinner was concerned and was positions were left that needed to be filled. (2) It was announced that the Newsletter was now on the Web Site. (3) Joyce explained a little about the COR Orientation and it would begin in December for anyone interested. In New Business: Tigger noted that her Group was having some attendance and financial problems and was wondering if other Groups were experiencing the same thing. Several people volunteered that their Groups were also experiencing attendance/finance problems also. Several people volunteered that their Groups were also experiencing attendance/finance problems.

November 11th 2008 the Central Office Representatives met:
COUNCIL MEMBERS REPRESENTING GROUP

JENNIFER G.	IN THE MIDDLE GROUP
KRISTIN R.	MONDAY NIGHT MADNESS GROUP
JUNE T.	SOBRIETY GROUP
JOHN F.	LIFE ENRICHMENT GROUP
DICK D.	TAMPA BAY AREA INSTITUTIONS
JIM O'B.	TAMPA YOUNG PEOPLES GROUP
CHRIS B.	TAMPA YOUNG PEOPLES GROUP
RYON S.	WELLSPRING RECOVERY GROUP
VIVIAN J.	FREEDOM IN SOBRIETY GROUP
TONY J.	MORNING MIRACLES GROUP
MARK H.	RIVERSIDE GROUP
RICK B.	?
TIGGER F.	SOLUTIONS GROUP
STEVE J.	ODESSA GROUP
EARLE W.	NOON BIG BOOK GROUP
DEBBI M.	DISTRICT 2 LIAISON
FRED L.	TEMPLE TERRACE MEN'S GROUP
MIKE D.	OLD SCHOOL GROUP
JOHN G.	TAMPA PALMS BIG BOOK GROUP
JOHN P.	AS BILL SEES IT MEN'S GROUP

This was due to the low attendance, some thought. Dick D. gave the report for TBAIC and mentioned the pre-paid material on the rack that was available for anyone taking meetings into the jails and/or treatment centers. Debbie was unable to attend the District Meeting but she did talk about the October Quarterly and the Hospitality House that she was the Chair for. Many Groups contributed Food and Money and made it a very successful event. Some announcements were made but no flyers were available. Women's Perspective Conference in November, Sobriety Group having something going on and a few of the Clubs and Groups were having Thanksgiving Alk-a-thons and Thanksgiving dinners. With the Central Office Physical Inventory to be held January 10th, 2009---same day as the Jail Orientation and the Quarterly in Sarasota, one member asked how they were supposed to make all of these events, being on the same day. I would pick out the one that I felt would be more important to my Group and attend that one.
The next Board & Council Meeting will be @ 7:00 pm, December 7th, 2008 at the Central Office.

From the Central Office wishing all of you—A Happy & Safe Holiday—Keep in touch with your Sponsor—Help another Drunk—Make plenty of Meetings and Trust your Higher Power.....



ANNIVERSARY TIME

GROUP	Honors To	Date	Years	A BIRTHDAY PLAN SUPPORTER TO CENTRAL OFFICE ONE DOLLAR FOR EACH YEAR OF SOBRIETY		
INTO ACTION GROUP	BRAD B.	12/17/01	7 YRS			
INTO ACTION GROUP	LYNN P.	12/26/93	15 YRS	Honors To	Date	Years
INTO ACTION GROUP	BETTIE W.	12/17/79	29 YRS	FREDDIE H.	11/05/98	10 YRS
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	ANGELA M.	12/28/07	1 YR	CORKY F.	12/19/90	18 YRS
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	JOHN K.	12/04/00	8 YRS	<p>Next District Meeting: December 7th, 2008 Bayshore Baptist Church 3111 W. Morrison Ave. (Morrison & MacDill) GSR Sharing 3:30 pm Business Meeting 4:30 pm</p>		
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	JANICE P.	12/09/90	18 YRS			
SOBER @ 7 GROUP	MARIELLA S.	12/02/85	23 YRS			
CAME TO BELIEVE GROUP	ANN L.	12/05/07	1 YR			
KEYSTONE GROUP	BILL B.	12/03/03	5 YRS			
KEYSTONE GROUP	BETSY	12/18/02	6 YRS			
RUSH HOUR SERENITY GROUP	KAREN H.	12/27/84	24 YRS	<p>DOES YOUR GROUP HAVE A CENTRAL OFFICE REPRESENTATIVE? The Central Office Representative is elected by their Group. They attend the monthly meeting, which keeps a two-way flow of information going on between the Central Office and the Groups. They then attend the business meeting (Group Conscience) of their Group and ask for suggestions, comments, and opinions to take to the next Central Office meeting. The Central Office Representative is the Groups link to those elected (Board of Directors) to maintain and operate the Central Office. The monthly Central Office meeting might be compared with a shareholder's meeting. It is here that your Group's wishes can be known through you, their elected representative. The Central Office Representative's meeting known as "The Council Meeting", has the authority and responsibility to review all actions of the Board of Directors and to amend and/or rescind such actions should they deem it necessary. Such changes may be effected by a simple majority vote of the Council members present at the meeting. Only members of A.A. may attend Council meetings and may be heard through their Group Representatives. Each Group shall have one vote in the proceedings. An individual can only duly represent one Group at a Council meeting. A Representative may be eligible for re-election to the Council at the discretion of his or her Group. Should a Representative duly elected cease to have continuous sobriety during his or her tenure of service, or resign for any reason, the Group shall be requested to provide a new Representative. All Groups that send a Central Office Representative to the Council meeting will receive a 20% discount on all items purchased for their Group on that night. Second Tuesday of each Month @ 7:00 pm.</p>		
EXPECT A MIRACLE GROUP	MELISSA C.	12/15/07	1 YR			
EXPECT A MIRACLE GROUP	JIM F.	12/25/06	2 YRS			
EXPECT A MIRACLE GROUP	FRED B.	12/15/92	16 YRS			

Newsletter Subscription
 The news source of AA in Hillsborough & East Pasco County. Send \$5.00 to: Central Office, 8019 N. Himes Ave. Ste. 104, Tampa, Florida 33614 and you will receive a one-year subscription to our Newsletter.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ St. _____ Zip _____

Home Group _____

"Tri-County Central Office News" is a monthly newsletter of AA in Hillsborough and East Pasco County and the Tri-County Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by and for members of the AA Fellowship. **Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply any endorsement by either AA or the Tri-County Central Office.** Quotations or excerpted material from AA books or pamphlets are reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc. Preamble, AA cartoons and excerpted matter reprinted with permission of AA Grapevine, Inc. We welcome articles of opinions or descriptions of personal experiences (NO poetry, please) which should be sent to:

Editor, Tri-County Central Office,
8019 N. Himes Avenue
Ste. 104
Tampa, Fl. 33614-2763

Tradition 5 states that "Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity **having but one primary purpose**—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is the Central Office's primary role: **"to carry the message."** *We are only as effective in our purpose as the Group's that support us.....*



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.