

Pass It On...

Albuquerque Intergroup Central Office Newsletter www.albuquerqueaa.org

“I’ll never forget the first time I met Bill Wilson. I was a couple months sober and so excited, so thrilled to actually meet the cofounder that I gushed all over him with what my sobriety meant to me and my undying gratitude for his starting A.A. When I ran down, he took my hand in his and said simply, ‘Pass it on.’” —FROM A LETTER TO THE A.A. GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE

Step 1: *“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.”*

No other kind of bankruptcy is like this one. Alcohol, now become the rapacious creditor, bleeds us of all self-sufficiency and all will to resist its demands. Once this stark fact is accepted, our bankruptcy as going human concerns is complete.

But upon entering A.A. we soon take quite another view of this absolute humiliation. We perceive that only through utter defeat are we able to take our first steps toward liberation and strength. Our admissions of personal powerlessness finally turn out to be the firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built.

We know that little good can come to any alcoholic who joins A.A. unless he has first accepted his devastating weakness and all its consequences. Until he so humbles himself, his sobriety—if any—will be precarious. Of real happiness he will find none at all. Proved beyond doubt by an immense experience, this is one of the facts of A.A. life.

-12 Steps & 12 Traditions p21

You may have heard it said around the rooms that “the First Step is the only one we need to work perfectly.” Well I, for one, have found that my understanding of this step continues to grow and evolve, just like the rest of the steps. Fortunately I didn’t have to drink again in order to grow beyond my primary understanding. In fact, the longer I am away from alcohol, that “rapacious creditor,” the more powerless I feel. However, having experienced the miracles of the other 11 Steps, it’s a very hopeful sort of powerlessness. I know that this thing works!

Tradition 1: *“Our common welfare should come first; personal recover depends upon A.A. unity.”*

The unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most cherished quality our Society has. Our lives, the lives of all to come, depend squarely upon it. We stay whole, or A.A. dies. Without unity, the heart of A.A. would cease to beat; our world arteries would no longer carry the life-giving grace of God; His gift to us would be spent aimlessly. Back again in their caves, alcoholics would reproach us and say, “What a great thing A.A. might have been!”

-12 Steps & 12 Traditions p129

I, like many members in our fellowship, used to have a great deal of concern or fear for A.A.’s future when I would witness individuals or groups ignoring our traditions. I would worry that those who carry on our traditions would become the minority, overrun by those with outside issues at the group conscience. Or maybe it would be the newer members who, with the best of intentions, would run A.A. straight into the ground! Certainly it was up to me to speak up, right? Well, perhaps, but I no longer feel that is the whole answer. Today I know that I, as according to the 2nd Tradition, am a leader (I am a trusted servant). And how does one lead in A.A.? Through example! I know that in carrying the A.A. message I need people to see it working in my life for them to want what I have, and so it is with the Traditions! I cannot sit and preach about unity, when my words and actions are actually divisive. I am learning that if I continue to do what I believe is right and lead by example, and share my experience when I am asked, I achieve more for unity than harping at those who are “wrong.” Then I am free to leave the future of A.A. in God’s capable hands. What a load off!

Concept 1: *“Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”*

Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside-down organization because the “ultimate responsibility and final authority for...world services” resides with the groups—rather than with the trustees of the General Service Board or the General Service Office in New York.

This Concept is rooted in Tradition Two, which states: “Four our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

The principles of Tradition Two are crystal-clear, Bill asserts: “The A.A. groups are to be the final authority; their leaders are to be entrusted with delegated responsibilities only.” The outside world cannot imagine an organization run this way, but Bill calls it “a spiritualized society characterized by enough enlightenment, enough responsibility, and enough love of man and of God to insure that our democracy of world service will work...” *-The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated*

When I started studying the Concepts with my service sponsor, he told me that it was his understanding that all the Concepts are, in a sense, an in-depth version of our second Tradition, carried out on a greater scale. I like that idea. I also like learning how this structure is doing the things for me/my home group that I/we cannot do ourselves. That this is happening for us implies ownership for me, makes me want to know more and participate. Makes me truly a part of A.A.



NEW MEETINGS AND CHANGES

THE STRAIGHT PEPPER DIET GROUP HAS MOVED FROM THE DESERT CLUB TO A NEW NON-SMOKING HOME AT TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AT 3715 SILVER AVE SE. THIS IS AT THE CORNER OF SILVER AVE & SOLANO, JUST 1 BLOCK SOUTH OF CENTRAL AND 2 BLOCKS EAST OF CARLISLE IN NOB HILL. SEE YOU THERE!

HERE'S A NEW MEETING: RARELY TO NEVER, FRIDAYS, 8PM, DESERT CLUB. AN OPEN DISCUSSION, BIG BOOK STUDY.

WHO YOU CALLIN' A ZOMBIE?

I don't get this recent interest in Zombies. I know that they are all the rage right now and that being a lover of all things Sci-fi, I should really support my genre of choice. I have even heard that the writing on one of the Zombie shows is brilliant (think about the inherent irony there) but for me, Zombie hits a little too close to home.

When I believed alcohol was working for me, I could look in the mirror and through my altered perception not hate the image looking back at me. She was stronger, braver, sexier, and more daring than I had ever been before I discovered the genie that lived in whatever bottle I happened to be drinking that night or day...I wasn't picky. Fast forward a few hours however, or when the inevitable (for me) hangover wore off and I was trying to make some semblance of a normal appearance and had to look in that mirror again. The image now looking back I didn't recognize as belonging to me. She was so damnably pathetic. Bloodshot, shaky, anything but the Viking woman of the night before. The reality was I was a lost, self-hating shell of a human. Zombie. It was as this person that I would have to try to face the world, at least until I could find that genie again.

I would go to work, and try to function, while my boss and co-workers would try to puzzle out why I was such a disappointment. I would try to work out more and more elaborate lies to justify my lateness, absences, or why they would periodically find me hiding in the conference room under a desk in the dark...but I digress...

After changing careers a couple of times, once precipitated by a ten-day stay at a three-day state ordered nut-house, I found myself jobless. I was grateful to sponge off family from whom I believed I was hiding my daily consumption of nearly a half-gallon of Vodka (sure, you can't smell it). I was encouraged to visit seemingly random medical professionals to find out what was "wrong" with me. Finally, I was having my teeth cleaned at UNM's Dental School, and there was a small business card tacked up on the cubicle wall. I had the opportunity to stare at it for three hours at a time, always in the same cubicle and always with not much else to look at. It read, "If you want to drink, that is your business, if you want to quit, it's ours... 266-1900". In the background, it had a symbol that, as a fuzzy-headed aficionado of symbols, I vaguely recognized as indicative of either the illuminati or AA and either one seemed secretive enough to know what they were doing. I filed it away as a last resort if I couldn't figure out this drinking

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Albuquerque Area Business Meetings

Intergroup Rep. Meeting
2 pm, 2nd Sunday, Brownbaggers

District 3
2 pm, 2nd Saturday
Call the DCM for location

District 11
9 am, 2nd Saturday
Harwood Methodist Church
420 San Lorenzo NW (at 4th)

District 12
10 am, 2nd Saturday, Heights Club

District 13
10 am, 2nd Saturday, St Thomas of Canterbury
425 University Blvd NE (1 blk N of MLK Blvd)

District 18
1:30 pm, 2nd Sunday
Rio West Church, 6751 Pasilla Rd, Rio Rancho

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thing on my own.

As insane as it sounds now, I still thought that all of this madness would just resolve on its own. I just hadn't found the right equation of alcohol to balance the needed erosion of paralyzing guilt and anxiety and still allow myself to function like a normal human being. You know, not drool or stumble when I tried to talk to my then four year old nephew or forget that I said something horrifyingly embarrassing to a family friend. It never occurred to me that the "learning to drink like a lady" ship had long since sailed and that I was a chemically altered person. Had I known that then, I wouldn't have waited a few more months, shuffling around in a mindless hell, waiting for...what? Death? Lottery? Alien abduction? I had no focus on anything beyond getting my bottle of Vodka. I might as well make it "brains" for as appetizing as it was to me at the end. Alcohol just kept me from shaking absolutely all the time and dulled the screaming soul pain I couldn't seem to escape. When I looked in the mirror, something I avoided as much as possible, I couldn't recognize the husk of a person who looked back but I hated her. Zombie.

On April fool's day, 2007, the discovery of my drawer of empties sealed the deal. I had amassed dozen of 1.75 liter empty Vodka bottles awaiting secretive disposal. A difficult task to complete considering my Dad meticulously sorts the trash for recycling and I had about two working brain cells to hatch a more cunning plan. Upon this discovery, my family had enough and I still can't thank them enough. They confronted me with an informal intervention and I called 266-1900 that evening. I haven't had a drink since. A very nice lady answered the phone and put me in touch with a woman who directed me to my first meeting. I heard the Promises at that meeting and, terrified as I was of you Illuminati folk, I heard that if I gave this one thing up that was killing me, I might have the kind of life I had always wanted. I was hooked. Also, I heard laughter, and for the first time, I felt a sense of hope.

I did what you told me. I got a sponsor that first week, I made coffee, I came early, helped set up and stayed late. I went to coffee after. I stuffed my pockets with hard candy which really did help with the withdrawal from all those alcohol calories. Most of all, I tried to be of service. It is not easy, especially for someone like me who has been so self absorbed for so long. I just have to remember that every day is a school day, it is progress, not perfection and that the only good Zombie is one that has been put out of her/his misery...preferably by a good old fashioned decapitation. Or in my case, an Old fashioned twelve-step call.

Let's face it; I had a lot of help to get in here. I had the loving support of a family who is still invested in my recovery and that is huge. I had the universe aligning to provide the needed information when I was ready, in the form of that little card tacked up on the dental hygienist-in-training's wall, but more importantly, there was a number on that card that when I was ready to call it, months later, was answered by a human being that had a list of volunteers for twelve-step calls. That is how, I am now sober, able to hold a job, be of service, and do something I never thought I might be able to do; look in the mirror and be at peace with the woman looking back.

-Kristen E. (for Ellipses)

A SPECIAL KIND OF A.A. SERVICE

The District 3 Corrections Committee is looking for AA members, men and women like you who are willing to help make it possible for the AA message to be carried to those on the "inside." Taking meetings into correctional facilities is not for everyone. Jim P. lived and breathed Step 12, but he couldn't go inside. Because of his own story of finding recovery inside the Kansas State Penitentiary, he wanted to but he couldn't stand the sound of the steel doors locking. But did you know you don't have to go inside to do corrections service work?

Now there's a rewarding and barely ever mentioned form of Twelve Step work that's "a special kind of AA service." In Corrections Correspondence AA members on the "outside" correspond with AA members in correctional facilities. Like sponsorship, it is suggested that men correspond with men and women with women. District 3 Corrections wants to support and facilitate Corrections Correspondence and is planning Pen & Paper Pot Lucks. The DCM and Corrections Chair are working on a date for the first one. Watch for more information in our AA service newsletters. You do not need to be in District 3 to participate. All you need is a desire to share your experience, strength and hope with A.A.s who are confined.

-Skitch F. (for Fantastic service opportunity)

➤ **Central Office encourages all groups to elect an Intergroup representative. Join us at the next Intergroup meeting the second Sunday of every month, at 2 pm, at the Brownbaggers.** ◀

Minutes for the Intergroup Representative meeting were not provided to me. In its place I present to you a member's report from the Intergroup Seminar in St. Louis, MO in Sept. 2010.

My husband and I attended the Central Office Seminar. There were 143 registered represented Central Offices and Intergroups across the U.S. and Canada. The weekend was set up with workshops during the day and presentations by various representatives from the General Service Office in New York each evening. Both evenings have an ask-it basket and open mic. Concerns that were repeatedly voiced were about how the General Structure and Central Offices support each other. Many were very concerned about our literature becoming available on electronic books like Kindle and how this will impact Central Offices. Much was said about the proposed changes to the "Money" pamphlet removing the suggested percentages for donations that shows 50% to Central Offices where one exists. Especially that something which would have such an impact on the ability to keep their doors open and the phones being answered was to be decided without the vote of the Central Offices themselves. There was repeated discussion about a "Central Office" pamphlet. Also the outdated information in the directories was discussed. It was suggested that Central Offices often have more current information than the DCMs and that GSO should verify information with Central Offices before printing again. GSO explained that since the boundaries of Central Offices and Areas do not correlate that it is not possible to do this. Bearing that in mind it is very important that the groups take on the responsibility of updating their information.

We attended workshops on "After Hours Phones" where many variations on staffing volunteers and types of phone services were discussed. Most considered having the phones answered by AA volunteers very important and where it wasn't being done it was a goal. A few had found very cooperative and affordable services that contacted A.A.s to talk to those asking for help but dispensed meeting information. "Concept XI" described the right of participation in the Conference structure. Central Office managers shared about their status with their boards. All but one had a voice on their board and most had a vote. Managers had been in their position for many years, up to 22. "Managing Volunteers" centered on ways to attract and keep phone and office volunteers. Food was a big one, from keeping snacks in the office to annual volunteer appreciation dinners. Good training, clear rules and friendly environment were important. Requirements varied from none to 1 year. When and how to terminate volunteers was discussed as a difficult task. And seemingly unrelated whether or not to sign community service slips

IT WORKS, IT REALLY DOES!

El Centro: Oscar-19 years! Art L.-24 years! Jimmy M.-40 years! In a row!!!

Seeking Serenity: Carol H. & Lauren B-1 year (each, not combined)!

Nancy A.-5 years! Terri R.-6 years! Please submit your sobriety birthdays to
passiton@albuquerqueaa.org

garnered much discussion falling heavily on not participating in community service. "Show me the Money" concerned fund-raising. Most Central Offices had fund-raisers. Chicago has a "fund drive," but no events. London, Canada has no fund-raisers. Events varied from the NY \$100 per plate Bill's Birthday Dinner, which predates the Service conference, to 3 day Coco Beach Convention and many banquets and dances. In general donations were down and offices are very concerned with finances. At the "Small Office" seminar Grant County Central Office was so small it brought up comparison to the very early days and the opportunity we have to learn from others mistakes.

From the workshops I am inspired to ask Grant County Central Office to consider having another Phone Answering Workshop, to investigate some of the phone systems that other CO's use, and to consider shipping literature to outlying groups. In general I am very interested Central Office work and hope to use the experience of those at the seminar to expand our reach and improve the unity here at home.

Next year the Seminar will be in Tucson and the following year in Washington D.C.

Thanks,

Paula from the Grant County Central Office



Central Office Urgently Needs Desk Workers

Requirements for this service opportunity are six months of sobriety, a sponsor and a home group. A desk shift at Central Office can enhance your sobriety. It can broaden your view of the service structure of your group, your district and your area. And it's fun!

**Call Central Office today
at 266-1900.**

September 2010 Treasurer's Report

Total Revenues	\$6,295.69
Cost of Sales	\$3,479.67
Gross Income	\$2,816.02
Expenses	\$5,188.91
NET INCOME	\$-2,372.89

For a copy of the full Central Office income/expense report, join us at the next Intergroup Meeting on the second Sunday of the month, 2 pm, at the Brownbaggers.

Archives alert!

I'm Manuel and I am an Alcoholic, I am the new archivist for District 3. That's all groups that fall along the line from Cosmopolitan Group to Soccoro. Albuquerque, Belen, Las Lunas, Magdalena, Peralta & Soccoro. If I missed your group and you know your in district 3 this message is for your group too. Please at your next Group Conscience if you can write out a Group History, when started, by whom, locations group has been, a picture of your meeting place, members past and present, group officers, meeting address, meeting days and times.. I'll start a file on all groups in District 3 for our district archives.

My address is: Manuel P.
P.O. Box 72583
Albuquerque, NM
87195

Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap helps alcoholics in an alcoholism treatment facility make a transition into A.A. by using Temporary Contacts. If you would like to help in this very important 12th Step work in Albuquerque and have at least one year of continuous sobriety in A.A., please contact me at d13bridgethegap@gmail.com for more information or to volunteer. The calls are coming in, alcoholics are reaching out, and it's a great way to get your 12th step on!

Thank you.
Jason K.

November 2010 Monthly Service Activities Report

PHONE CALLS	NOV 10	OCT 10	NOV 09
Information	749	852	977
12-Step	21	10	19
Al-Anon	12	10	13
Message	25	24	37
Other	104	94	101
TOTAL	911	1022	977

WALK INS	NOV 10	OCT 10	NOV 09
Information	10	15	14
12-Step	0	0	4
Al-Anon	0	0	6
Get Schedule	12	13	10
Purchase	146	175	135
Tapes	2	3	0
Message	1	5	4
Casual	24	25	19
Other	17	19	27
TOTAL	212	250	219

DESK WORKERS*	NOV 10	OCT 10	NOV 09
Regulars	53		
Substitutes	25		
TOTAL	78		

DESK SHIFTS*	NOV 10	OCT 10	NOV 09
Weekdays	132		
Weekends	40		
TOTAL	172		

WEEKDAY SHIFTS*	NOV 10	OCT 10	NOV 09
Worked by Regulars	106(86%)		
Worked by Substitutes	22(14%)		
TOTAL	132		

WEEKEND SHIFTS*	NOV 10	OCT 10	NOV 09
Worked by Regulars	30(74%)		
Worked by Substitutes	10(26%)		
TOTAL	40		

SHIFTS WORKED BY MICHAEL	NOV 10	OCT 10	NOV 09
3 hour shifts (5)	15 hours		
2 hour shifts (0)	0 hours		
Night phone (0)	0 hours		

SHIFTS WORKED BY KATHY	NOV 10	OCT 10	NOV 09
3 hour shifts (4)	12 hours		
2 hour shifts (0)	0 hours		
Night phone (0)	0 hours		
TOTAL	27 hours		

*INCLUDES NIGHT PHONE

AFTER THE HUSBANDS FIFTH TRIP TO THE HOST'S BAR FOR REFILLS, THE WIFE SAID, "AREN'T YOU EMBARRASSED TO GO BACK SO MANY TIMES?" HE REPLIED, "NOPE. I KEEP TELLING THEM IT'S FOR YOU."



WHERE IS MY FAITH?

A while back I attended a birthday meeting. A young man took a chip and my jaw dropped. I had known this man and worked with him. He had obviously had a very serious drinking problem. He missed work, and when on the job reeked with alcohol. His knowledge of the work being done was the only thing that saved his job. He knew more about what we were doing than the foreman. I wanted to try and help this man but, in my mind, he was beyond help. I never said a thing to him as I figured that he wouldn't be receptive. At that time that was probably the case.

After the meeting I was able to congratulate this man on his years of sobriety and we chatted briefly. Now to my dilemma and the things that ran through my head for a couple of weeks. Why was I so surprised that this man had found sobriety? Did I no longer believe in miracles? Did I only believe in the miracle of my own sobriety? Where was my faith? Had I become jaded to where everything was either black or white? Had I in fact, in my own mind, condemned this man to a terrible end?

Since this incident took place, I have tried to be more open to the miracles around me. I don't want to take for granted the fantastic power of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Many years ago I used to sit in the lounge of the Heights Club and judge a sober alcoholic. I thought that with just one more shot of whiskey he wouldn't have needed A.A., he would have been dead. The more I thought about it, it became clearer to me that maybe the same could have been said about me.

Did I think my miracle was greater than his? What was the mental process that finally made me believe that his miracle and mine were equal?

I hope that in the future I will be filled with gratitude whenever I see a newly sober person and not suffer the thought that I have lost the faith.

Roger L.-El Centro

AA 101 Study Group

LOCATION: University of New Mexico
Place: Mesa Vista Hall, Women's
Resource Center

Note: we will not be meeting during the UNM Winter Break. The last meeting will be on Wednesday, December 8th. We will resume meetings on Wednesday, January 19th. We also have a coffee/tea and a co-secretary position open for next semester. Please join us!

NEW MEETING

RARELY TO NEVER,
a new meeting held
on Friday nights at
8pm at the Desert
Club. This is an open
discussion big book
study.

Albuquerque Central Office

1921 Alvarado NE

Albuquerque, NM 87110

{505} 266-1900

www.AlbuquerqueAA.org

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**Albuquerque
Intergroup
Central Office**

Hours:

Monday through Friday

8 am to 10 pm

Saturday and Sunday

9 am to 9 pm



The Office is at
1921 Alvarado NE,
two blocks north
of Constitution and
four blocks east
of San Mateo.

www.AlbuquerqueAA.org