

## A LETTER TO ACADIANA AREA A.A. GROUPS AND MEMBERS

FROM: Your Central Office Steering Committee  
 SUBJECT: Central Office Finances - Food for Thought

### WHAT IS A CENTRAL OFFICE AND WHAT DOES IT DO ?

**Alcoholics Anonymous** answers this question in detail in a publication titled “A.A. Guidelines: Central or Intergroup Offices” available on the Literature section of their website [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) .

A central office (or intergroup) is an A.A. service office that involves partnership among groups in a community—just as A.A. groups themselves are partnerships of individuals. A central office is established to carry out certain functions which are best handled by a central office—and it is usually maintained, supervised, and supported by these groups in their general interest. It exists to aid the groups in their common purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Copyright AAWS, Inc. “AA Guidelines”

Specifically, the Acadiana Central Office was created many years ago by the groups in the 8 Parish Acadiana area which pledged their continuing support to maintain the Office.

In solemn affirmation of the letter and the spirit of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and placing all our activities under the guidance of a Higher Power, the various and several groups of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Acadiana Area have met to form a Central Office. These By-Laws and Constitution serve to fulfill our legal obligation as an incorporated association, but more importantly to serve as a guide for our successors.

Acadiana Central Office By-Laws “Preamble”

**In exchange for this support, the Central Office provides the following services to the Groups and the AA community. Some services have been added or expanded since the office was first opened:**

A physical office open 40 hours/week.	Now open 49 hours including Saturday morning.
A part time Office Manager and volunteers.	Now with a full time Office Manager and volunteers.
An answering service available 24/7 whenever needed.	Accepts meeting info and 12 <sup>th</sup> Step calls.
Maintains an active meeting list.	Updated monthly, copied & available free.
Maintains an active 12 <sup>th</sup> Step call list.	Updated continually; provided to the answering service.
Maintains an inventory of AA literature for sale.	AAWS & Grapevine books & pamphlets; Big Books at “cost”.
Publishes and mails a monthly newsletter.	The Plug-In-Jug 8 page newsletter sent with area event flyers, free to group CORs and many others.
Serves as a “clearing house” for group, district and Area information.	Including an annual calendar of scheduled area-wide events and a public website at <a href="http://www.aa-acadiana.org">www.aa-acadiana.org</a> .
Stages three fellowship and fund raising events each year, and a holiday service function.	A Chili Cook-Off, a Barbecue and a Christmas party, as also a Christmas Alcathon (26 hours of meetings at even hours).
Provides these & other services to members of approx. 45 area groups...	without regard for whether a group provides active support to the Central Office.

## WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A.A. IN GENERAL AND THE CENTRAL OFFICE ?

The following information is available on the [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) website:

*Central Offices or Intergroups: Matters regarding local A.A. offices. [AA Guidelines on Central Offices or Intergroups](#)*

### CENTRAL OFFICES AND G.S.O.

The common experience has shown that A.A.'s worldwide unity is best served if A.A. groups maintain their own separate contacts with G.S.O. **Direct group contact with G.S.O. doesn't take the place of services provided by a local service office**, but helps G.S.O. to keep in closer touch with all groups. There are, however, some important areas of interest in which **close contact between the central offices and G.S.O. is not only desirable but necessary**. Some central offices, for example, like to be provided with New Group Information Forms so that newly formed groups can be immediately listed with G.S.O.... For its own part, **G.S.O. also seeks to keep central offices well informed**. As a regular policy, the G.S.O. newsletter, *Box 4-5-9*, as well as A.A. Directories, are sent to each central office. G.S.O. also keeps a record of all central offices and is interested in assisting them wherever possible. **The staff member on the Group Services assignment is the liaison with central offices** and intergroups.

Copyright AAWS, Inc. ([www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)) Information by Service Activity

### Intergroup Services

"Groups in densely populated areas saw they would have to form associations, open small offices, pay a few full-time Secretaries. Terrific outcries went up. To many, this really meant destructive organization, politics, professionalism, big expense, a ruling officialdom and government....

"Of course these exaggerated fears never materialized. We have lots of good intergroup associations now, voluntarily supported. The new man is getting a better break, the hospitals are pleased... Local meeting directories are issued, public relations attended to, regional gatherings and dinners set up. We found these last couldn't be carelessly left to anybody who happened to feel like giving interviews or printing up a bundle of tickets and handbills. In short, **intergroups do those area chores that no single individual or group could. They unify regions; they make AA tick.**"

The Grapevine Nov 1951 "Make AA Tick" Bill W.

**It is little wonder that Bill W. wrote that Central Offices make A.A. tick! THESE OFFICES HAVE LONG BEEN CONSIDERED ONE OF AA'S "ESSENTIAL SERVICES." Central Offices may not fall in line with Districts and Area Assemblies in the General Service structure. They do, however, fulfill a vital function in the everyday life of Alcoholics Anonymous. Bill W. had more to say on the subject in the October 1967 issue of The Grapevine. (© The AA Grapevine, Inc.) and in AA Guidelines: Finance. (©AAWS, Inc.)**

"A.A.'s far-flung Twelfth Step activities, carrying the message to the next sufferer, are the very lifeblood of our A.A. adventure. Without this vital activity, we would soon become anemic; we would literally wither and die. Now where do A.A.'s services—worldwide, area, local—fit into our scheme of things? Why should we provide these functions with money? The answer is simple enough. Every single A.A. service is designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible, whether it be a group meeting place, a **central or intergroup office** to arrange hospitalization and sponsorship, or the world service Headquarters [now the General Service Office] to maintain unity and effectiveness all over the globe. Though not costly, **these service agencies are absolutely essential to our continued expansion—to our survival as a Fellowship**. Their costs are a collective obligation that rests squarely upon all of us. Our support of services actually amounts to recognition on our part that A.A. must everywhere function in full strength—and that, under our Tradition of self-support, we are all going to foot the bill."

Bill W., October 1967 Grapevine

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AND IF OUR PRUDENT RESERVE BECOMES EXHAUSTED ?**

For the year, through October, Central Office expenses have exceeded income by \$3,750. **Something will have to change!** The Central Office receives financial support in only 3 ways:

1. Fund-raising events such as the Christmas party, Chili Cook-Off and Barbecue.
2. The sale of books and literature.
3. Donations from AA Groups and members.

**As funds continue to dwindle during these tough economic times, the Steering Committee is hoping that all our Central Office member groups will consider disbursement of collected funds by a method similar to the one recommended by A.A. World Services in this chart:**

<b>Examples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities</b>	<b>10%</b> to district
Distribution of funds from groups that support four service entities	<b>10%</b> to area committee
	<b>30%</b> to G.S.O.
	<b>50%</b> to intergroup or central office

Reprinted with permission from "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" © AAWS, Inc.

**The Acadiana Central Office is grateful to each area group that has contributed to its financial support during this past year. To all those who have given, we thank you! And we ask that you consider increasing your contribution. If your group has not made regular donations, we ask that you begin doing so *if at all possible*. A small contribution is better than none at all!**

**If the five active districts with their 45 Home Groups, plus additional unregistered groups, are unable to finance the Central Office in a way that allows it to continue its level of service to members in our 8 Parish service area, the alternative will be in finding ways to cut our expenses and services back.**

**The following chart lists some of the choices our Officers and CORs may have to consider early in 2010.**

CATEGORIES	POSSIBLE ACTION
AA Literature Prices	Increase prices across the board
Big Book Prices (now sold at cost)	Increase B.B. prices to help cover overhead expenses
1-800 Phone Number	Cancel the 800 number; reduce Yellow Pages advertising
Book/Literature Inventory	Reduce inventory size; pay for orders in advance; wait for delivery
Newsletter & Flyers Mailed	B & W only; groups or districts to pay postage for their flyers
Plug-In-Jug News	Go to a 4- or 6-page newsletter; fold to mail w/out envelope; encourage email over hard copy mailout; increase subscription price
Meeting List	Reduce update frequency; charge for copies; limit to website
Office Manager	Revert to part time; reduce salary; rely more on volunteers
Office Hours of Operation	Close the doors several days each week
Answering Service	Cancel the service; use groups and volunteers
Website	Give up the website
Other	

## Acadiana Area Group Donations to Central Office January - October, 2009

Group Donations	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	YTD
Abbeville Area											\$0.00
Acadian Gr.	\$100.30							\$70.38			\$170.68
Any Lengths	\$120.00				\$120.00			\$383.18			\$623.18
Big Book Experience			\$45.00				\$50.00				\$95.00
Boulevard Gr. (Opelousas)	\$37.50		\$23.00	\$23.00		\$61.67			\$39.05		\$184.22
Brown Baggers (Morgan City)										\$50.00	\$50.00
Courage To Change (N.I.)							\$144.02	\$16.99			\$161.01
Design For Living	\$50.19	\$90.28									\$140.47
Downtown Gr. (Opelousas)		\$146.30		\$107.00		\$130.75	\$114.50			\$89.77	\$588.32
Dry Dock				\$200.00							\$200.00
Eunice Solutions Gr.											\$0.00
Faith			\$370.00				\$279.30		\$345.00		\$994.30
Freedoms Choice											\$0.00
Hang In There (Scott)											\$0.00
Hub City	\$874.90										\$874.90
Kitchen Table	\$290.00	\$229.00	\$275.00		\$164.00	\$157.05	\$54.50	\$133.50	\$107.50	\$88.00	\$1,498.55
Last Chance Acceptance				\$10.00							\$10.00
Live & Let Live Krotz Springs											\$0.00
Living Sober	\$25.00			\$50.00		\$50.00		\$40.00			\$165.00
Newcomers Group								\$25.00			\$25.00
New Way (Breau Bridge)	\$14.00		\$278.00				\$763.00	\$247.15	\$210.43	\$245.96	\$1,758.54
Northside Gratitude									\$23.00		\$23.00
Opelousas Group	\$50.00										\$50.00
Primary Purpose	\$119.81		\$97.22	\$111.59			\$295.85	\$35.26	\$201.40	\$86.46	\$947.59
Queen City/ Gratitude (N.I.)											\$0.00
Reflections		\$100.00			\$100.00		\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00		\$500.00
Scott Group		\$172.40	\$88.40	\$60.00		\$135.60	\$61.60	\$99.60	\$50.00	\$78.40	\$746.00
Serenity N.I.				\$100.00			\$100.00			\$100.00	\$300.00
Simply Sober											\$0.00
Sisters In Sobriety		\$150.00									\$150.00
Sobriety & Beyond											\$0.00
Solutions Gr. Ville Platte		\$228.00		\$75.00					\$75.00		\$378.00
Spring Gr. Port Barre											\$0.00
Step Into Recovery											\$0.00
Step By Step	\$57.40				\$119.34		\$74.18	\$100.00		\$75.00	\$425.92
S.M.F. Gr.		\$140.00							\$200.00		\$340.00
Sun Up	\$82.90	\$103.90	\$228.26	\$152.16	\$250.24	\$244.87	\$189.60	\$218.67	\$248.97	\$272.81	\$1,992.38
Surrender			\$185.00								\$185.00
3rd Street Park		\$78.00						\$132.86			\$210.86
Triangle Gr.											\$0.00
Truman Gr.	\$20.00					\$20.00					\$40.00
12 @ 12 Group		\$64.43			\$103.72						\$168.15
We Agnostics											\$0.00
Willing To Believe (Duson)						\$20.00					\$20.00
<b>Total Group Donations</b>	<b>\$1,842.00</b>	<b>\$1,502.31</b>	<b>\$1,589.88</b>	<b>\$888.75</b>	<b>\$857.30</b>	<b>\$819.94</b>	<b>\$2,226.55</b>	<b>\$1,602.59</b>	<b>\$1,600.35</b>	<b>\$1,086.40</b>	<b>\$14,016.07</b>