

GAAZETTE

Our area meeting in print.

About MAICO

The mission of MAICO (Madison Area Intergroup Central Office) is to help A.A. groups within its service area (South Central Wisconsin) carry the A.A. message. MAICO helps coordinate and facilitate communication and cooperation among individual A.A. groups, area 12-step and other committees, and components of the A.A. service structure. MAICO provides needed services that are beyond the scope and ability of any individual A.A. group, and is at all times responsible to the groups it serves.

Grace

Sometime in the early 1990's, I was treating a woman in an intensive outpatient chemical dependency group. Let's call her 'Grace.' Grace was a flight attendant and had been suspended from her job with a major airline due to her untreated alcoholism. She had been stealing the little miniature liquor bottles and drinking in airport bars in uniform, etc. Her employer, realizing she needed treatment sent her to us.

After the eight week program, I suggested to her it might be a good idea to solidify her foundation in recovery before returning to work as she would be working in a high-risk environment (serving alcohol, being out-of-town alone, etc.). Grace did, however, return to work shortly after completing outpatient treatment. One day while she was departing from a plane at the end of a long day, a major craving for alcohol overpowered her. There she was, in the Los Angeles International Airport, pulling her roller-bag behind her when this massive craving to drink came over her. She tried to just 'think through it,' or 'just forget about it,' but it was way too powerful. It was so powerful, in fact, that she had resigned to herself that she would just go drink. Grace thought, "oh, heck with it,

I'll get another job"; or "maybe no one will find out anyway." But deep down inside Grace did not want to drink. She truly had wanted to stay sober, but she was in trouble.

On her way to the bar in the airport, Grace had a moment of sanity. She stopped, picked-up the airport paging phone and said, "Will you please page friends of Bill W.", she paused, quickly looking around for an empty gate, "please come to Gate 12." Most people in recovery know that asking if you are a friend of Bill W. is an anonymous way to identify yourself as a member of AA.

In less than five minutes there were about fifteen people at that gate from all over the world. That brought tears of amazement, relief and joy to Grace. They had a little meeting there in that empty gate, total strangers prior to that moment. Grace discovered that two of those people had gotten out of their boarding lines and missed their flights to answer that call for help. They had remembered that they had seen on many walls of meeting rooms: When anyone, anywhere reaches out their hand for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there and for that I am responsible. Grace did not

drink that day. I would venture to guess that none of the people who came to Gate 12 drank that day either. Instead, Grace had a moment of sanity, realized she could not do it on her own, took the action of asking for help and received it immediately. This help is available to all of us if we want it and sincerely ask for it. It never fails.

Anonymous

Archie

Archie was a fleeting figure of my teenage years. I knew him as a name and a face during my time at Madison Central High during the years before it closed. Archie sang in a quartet that had its picture in the 1968 yearbook. He was the tenor who looked directly into the camera as the flash went off.

A decade later, Archie appeared along State 81, as one with many thoughts, but few words. He was one of our occasional customers at a submarine sandwich shop in the 500 block where I worked. Other than our over the counter relationship, my only encounter with him came late one night on Gilman Street.

After an unsuccessful date, I was carrying a partial six-pack of beer through a freshly fallen snow. He approached me for one of them. As he stared into the world that only he knew, I obliged and asked him to "keep it light."

I took this past Christmas Day to drive a twelve-hour shift for Badger Cab. Between taking students to the airport, well-wishers with casserole dishes to family gatherings and the usual nonentities to the apartment buildings that parallel the beltline, I was given a call to pick up Archie at his sister's house.

As I pulled into the driveway, Archie's brother-in-law came out with three parcels. He put them into the back seat while explaining

that Archie had incurred severe memory loss. The parcels were to leave with him when we arrived at his duplex. Although he repeated the address of Archie's destination a few times, I assured him that I was familiar with where we were going.

Archie's sister brought him from the house. She helped him from the porch to the front walkway and into the front seat of my cab. She filled me in on his life and what had happened to him. (I mentioned how I had known him as a singer during high school.) After more well wishes and assurances of future get-togethers, brother and sister parted for another week.

While in the cab, Archie and I chatted about his sister and what her life was like. As the spirit moved our conversation, we reminisced about names from the past. The subject of my memory loss came up before we talked about where he had lived on the Eastside. After some "guy talk", he told me about life in his duplex. Archie later helped me with another passenger's parcels.

As I pulled into his driveway, he got out and helped me unload the backseat. As I joked about how two cases of "half-heimers" might equal one case of Alzheimer's we both laughed. I added that if I keep on with what I'm doing, I might not have to worry about becoming a wet brain. We parted as old friends with my assurance to watch for his call.

Archie's sister told me about his accident. After a high-school graduation party, he was drunk and sick in the back seat of a car. As Archie leaned out to check for a flat tire and to vomit, the driver swerved. Archie's head hit four car door handles as he upchucked. He was taken to the old Methodist Hospital where he spent three months in a coma. A year of rehabilitation was required for him to regain his motor skills.

I am writing this because Archie is an alternative to the three predictable results of alcoholism. I, too, have drunk enough to vomit and have passed out behind the wheel of my

parked car. Gratefully, however, I have also been growing away from my disease for over twenty-five years: I sobered up. Twelfth step work brings me to jails and prisons where I meet people who have killed others while driving drunk: They are locked up. We all know those who have expired while driving drunk: They are covered up. Archie, however, goes through life as a very gentle person who is taken care of by those who love him. In some ways, this is all that I can hope for; yet, in others I would feel quite cheated.

Archie goes through life as one who doesn't make a lot of choices for himself and (because of his brain injury) maybe doesn't have much of a chance in life. The inmates and I struggle against the choices we have made in life because we believe in a chance for ourselves, however remote it might seem. Those who have died have expired because of their choices.

BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD.

Greg F.

MAICO is a 501(3)c nonprofit corporation.
Your donations are tax deductible up to
\$2,000 per AA member per year.

Attention AA Groups

Please submit all changes to the South Central Wisconsin "Meeting Directory" to the MAICO Office no later than July 15, 2008. An updated directory will be printed later this summer and we would like to include the most current information. If you have any questions, please contact Diane B. at 608-222-8989.

Upcoming Events

July 9th – Good Fellowship Group, Open Speaker Meeting, Wesley Avenue Alano Club, 1833 Wesley Avenue, Janesville, 7:00 pm.

July 11th – 13th – 12th Annual Keep It Simple Door County/Washington Island Weekend – Island Campground & Recreation, Washington Island. Registration: \$20.00 (forms available at MAICO), contact Guner R. 920-856-6364 or email: reiche@itol.com

July 20th – Foxhall Recovery Group, Wild West Foxhall Picnic, Token Creek Park, 6200 US Highway 51, DeForest, Shelter #5. All are welcome. Bring a newcomer and a dish to pass. 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Contacts: Laura: 255-2777 or Jasmine: 446-0686.

July 25th – 27th – 11th Annual Chippewa Valley Roundup, Plaza Hotel & Suites, Eau Claire, WI. Registration: \$15.00, www.chippewavalleyroundup.com.

August 2nd – 3rd Annual MAICO Reps Picnic, Webb Park, 425 N. Webb Ave., Reedsburg, WI. Noon, Food served 1:00 pm, Bring Salad or Dessert, lawn chairs, sporting equipment. 2:00 pm Alateen and Al-anon speakers, 3:30 pm AA speaker. Shelter is available to us from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm.

August 14th – 17th – Cornhusker Roundup XXXI, Omaha, Nebraska. Registration forms at MAICO, website is: www.AA-Cornhusker.org.

August 15th – 17th – 28th Annual Green Lake Roundup, Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake, WI. Registration: \$10.00 – forms available at MAICO.

September 5th – 7th – 18th Annual Bridging the Gap Temporary Contact Workshop Weekend, Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel, 7301 NW Tiffany Springs Road, Kansas City, MO. Registration forms available at MAICO.

September 20th – Greater Milwaukee Central Office 38th Annual City Wide Jamboree, Milwaukee County Zoo—Peck Welcome Center, 10001 W. Bluemound Road. Hospitality 5:00 pm, Dinner at 6:00 pm, Speaker: Bob B. at 7:00 pm. Dance to follow. Cost: \$23.00.

October 3rd – 5th – 57th Annual Area 75 Fall Conference, Holiday Inn, Fond du Lac, WI

Thank You's
April 26th to June 20th -- 2008

General Fund

207 Group
511 Step Group
Deerfield Downtown Group
DeForest Groups
Early Risers Group
East Side Groups
Freedom Group
Friday 12 & 12 Group
Go After Your Sobriety Group
High Noon Group
Keep it Simple Group
Lake Mills Our Group
Mauston Monday Night Group
Mauston Wednesday Afternoon Group
Mid Morning Group
Monday, Wednesday, Friday Morning Group
Monday Night Rock River Group
Monona Serenity Group
Mt. Horeb Saturday Morning Group
New Freedom Group
Primitive Group
Q Sober Group
Richland Center Group
Sauk Prairie Group
Serenity at Six Group
St. Andy's Group
Sunlight of the Spirit (SOTS) Group

Westfield 12 & 12 Group
Whitewater Tuesday 11 am Group
Working Step Group

Prudent Reserve

Larry L.

Answering Service

Warren B.
Deerfield Downtown Group

Faithful Fivers

Larry L.

Gratitude Month

Windsor Group

Individual Donations

Anonymous
Donna & Mack P.
Lonny S.
Vicki H.

Changes to “Meeting Directory” (As of June 20th)

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Action</u> | <u>City</u> | <u>Day</u> | <u>Time</u> | <u>Type</u> | <u>Change, Addition or Deletion</u> |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 5/1/08 | Add | Adams | Saturday | 8:00 pm | C,NS | 1093 Cty. Hwy M East – Big Book Study |
| 4/1/08 | Change | Madison | All Meetings | Now | Non-Smoking | Fitchburg Serenity, 6048 McKee Road (all meetings are now nonsmoking) |
| 5/28/08 | Add | Madison | Monday (Spanish) | 8:00 pm | C,NS | Fitchburg Serenity, 6048 McKee Road, Spanish Speaking Meeting |
| 5/16/08 | Delete | Madison | Monday & Thursday | 5:30 pm | O,NS,H | Fitchburg Serenity, 6048 McKee Road, Steps & Traditions & BB Groups |
| 6/3/08 | Add | Madison | Tuesday | 6:30 pm | C,NS | Community Center, Highland Manor Mobile Park, 10 Malibu Drive, Back to Basics |
| 5/27/08 | Add | Madison | Tuesday | 6:00 pm | O,NS | Lake Wingra Canoe & Kayak Meeting, Lake Wingra, Rentals Available; 6:30 Mtg. |
| 5/20/08 | Change | Madison | Thursday | Noon | | Midvale Lutheran Church, 4329 Tokay Blvd., Now meeting in Room 121 |
| 5/20/08 | Delete | Madison | Friday | 6:00 pm | O,NS, YP | Lake View Moravian Church, 3565 Tulane Avenue (By Olbrich) Young Peoples Group |
| 6/20/08 | Add | Madison | Friday | 6:00 pm | O,NS, H | Plymouth United Church of Christ, 2401 Atwood Ave. -- Beginners Meeting at 6:00 pm |
| 6/20/08 | Add | Madison | Friday | 7:00 pm | O,NS,H | Plymouth United Church of Christ, 2401 Atwood Ave.—Speaker Meeting until 8:15 pm |
| 5/8/08 | Delete | Madison | Sunday | 3:00 pm | | Fitchburg Serenity. 6048 McKee Road |
| 4/5/08 | New Group | Madison | 1 st Saturday of Month | 7:30 am | C,NS | Back to Basics, Starts 1 st Saturday of each month, Fitchburg Serenity, 6048 McKee Road |
| 4/1/08 | Change | Madison | Now Saturday | 11:00 am to 10:00 am | C,NS,W | Warner Park Center, 1625 Northport Drive, Craft Room, Women's from Sunday 11:00 am. to Saturday 10:00 am |
| 5/30/08 | Add | Mineral Point | Friday | 7:00 pm | C,NS | Trinity Church, 409 W. High Street (back entrance) Grapevine Meeting |
| 5/1/08 | Add | Watertown | Wednesday | 7:00 pm | C, Women | Tri-County Unity, 104 N. First Street (2 nd Floor) Women's Meeting |
| 5/27/08 | Add Canoe/Kayak | Madison | Tuesday | 6:00 pm | O,NS | Meets on Lake Wingra, rentals available or bring your own, meeting starts at 6:30 pm. Contact Lila at 692-8142 or kindred@chorus.net |