

**The MAICO**

**March/April 2008**

# **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.*

### **THE SEVENTH TRADITION – WHY MUST WE BE SELF-SUPPORTING?**

Tradition Seven states that our groups are to be fully self-supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members, declining outside contributions. Our presentation topic asks why this principle of self-support is a “must” for Alcoholics Anonymous. I believe it is simply because our survival, as individuals and as groups, and more broadly the survival of Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, depends on the spiritual principles embodied in this Tradition.

We know that the early history of our Fellowship provides the foundation for this principle of self-support, as well as for our other Traditions. With countless struggles over money, property and prestige, hard lessons were learned through the trial and error of A.A.’s pioneering groups and leadership. Bill Wilson knew the importance of learning from the past and provided us the framework in which the Fellowship could continue to permanently operate through the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts. No Tradition or Concept stands alone; each contributes to

the whole. And it is through these combined principles we are called to a purpose outside of and greater than ourselves.

This truly is **our** Fellowship, and if we believe that our personal and collective futures depend on the survival of Alcoholics Anonymous, we must do what we can to maintain the integrity of the program and of the organization itself. This is in great measure accomplished through acceptance of our spiritual responsibility of self-support, both through financial contributions and personal contributions of service to our fellow alcoholics. While money is essential in carrying our message, it is useless if A.A. members are not willing to give of themselves to put that money to effective use.

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

6033 Monona Drive, Suite 204, Madison, WI 53716 (608) 222-8989

Hours: Monday-Friday (11:00 am to 6:00 pm)/Monday & Tuesday (6:00 pm to 8:00 pm)  
Saturday (Noon to 2:00 p.m.)

It is also important to note the effect that outside contributions could have on the integrity of our message and our singleness of purpose. As Tradition Seven further states, acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. We cannot afford to be in the debt of an outside entity that might then expect to be “repaid” in some way adverse to the welfare – or wishes – of A.A. as a whole. Just as the autonomy of each group is respected in Tradition Four, Tradition Seven protects the autonomy of Alcoholics Anonymous from outside interference. We cannot allow our message or our purpose to be diluted by negative influences from outside our organization. As Bill Wilson said, “We had best pay our own bills”.

Another essential element of this discussion is the idea of corporate poverty – the built-in protection from the enemy within – the alcoholic ego. One sure way to welcome that enemy is to accumulate funds beyond a prudent reserve, at any level within the Fellowship. A 1970 Grapevine article related a classic example of the combination of these destructive influences from within and without:

“A church told a big group which met there that AA's money was not needed, so the group collections just piled up for several years. Free use of the space was, of course, really the acceptance of an outside contribution. Subsidized by the church, the group was not autonomous; the church treated it as if it were just another church activity, canceling its meetings during Christmas and other holidays, moving it from attic to basement, and so on. When the group treasury reached \$700, quarreling broke out, and the group died.” One might suggest that this is just one isolated group, but I have attended a group in Area 75 that was once very strong, with many members. A Treasury in excess of \$7,000 was accumulated and the group began using that money for purposes other than the support of Alcoholics Anonymous and its primary purpose; e.g. providing loans to its members. We have now

heard that that group, although still alive, is poorly attended and struggling. If a group, district or area treasury has ballooned to an imprudent amount for no stated AA purpose, we have a responsibility to question the appropriate members and/or trusted servants and strongly encourage maintenance of a prudent reserve. Just as the General Service Conference structure is designed to keep these important principles at work at the General Service Board, A.A. World Services and Grapevine Corporate Board levels, we must ensure they are at work in our groups, Districts and Areas. This is accomplished in the same way we carry the basic message of recovery – one alcoholic talking to another alcoholic. I believe we are obligated to carry the complete message contained in our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service – or we shortchange those who come to us for help. This means we teach the fullness of the Steps, Traditions and Concepts and the importance to our survival of all of these principles.

Concept One tells us that the AA groups today hold ultimate responsibility for our world services. There is no greater mandate than that for self-support. We – you and me – are responsible to safeguard that the unchanged message of recovery provided so generously to us will be shared with alcoholics worldwide, as well in our own communities. What an incredible responsibility we have to fulfill!

So what have you done in your home group over the last three months to encourage self-support? Have you had any discussions in your district meetings about the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition? Did you discuss the array of services provided by your General Service Office and share that information in your groups? Did you participate in the birthday plan or educate your sponsees about it? It is a spiritual privilege and responsibility to support our fellowship worldwide. Let's act on it.

Personally I find that my level of giving is commensurate with my level of gratitude. What am I willing to do to perpetuate the Fellowship

that saved my life? With all service to Alcoholics Anonymous, the more I give, the more I receive. The more I receive, the more I owe. The more I owe, the more I feel obligated to give. You all understand how this works. This is our service legacy. A.A. cannot survive without our help.

Bill Wilson wrote: "And these principles we understand: that AA wants no charity; that we support our own services. We understand – but we sometimes forget." Let us not forget.

Nancy G.

## *My Journey*

Since the early 1990's, the journey my life has taken has been amazing to me. When I first came to Alcoholics Anonymous, I was a terrified young woman. Fear was something that ruled my life. What I didn't know though was that the mask that I was wearing looked-like: rage.

I had absolutely no intention of staying sober. One of the boys that I dated thought that I might be an alcoholic. Frankly, I knew that he was (because he said he was), but I never imagined that I was, too. When I was nineteen years old, I meandered my way to my first Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. I was in a world of pain and fear ruled my every breath.

What I remember hearing at my first meeting were things like, "You didn't get here by mistake. You don't have to live under a bridge and drink alcohol from a brown paper sack to be alcoholic. And most importantly, try 'us' for 90 meetings in 90 days and we will gladly refund your misery." It was at that point that I knew that I was being tricked into staying.

Gratefully, I found my first higher power: my boyfriend. I did everything that he said that I should do. If only I had listened to my sponsor that well.... When I began working the steps with her she said, "We can try this on a temporary basis. Let's meet before the meeting on Friday to do your first step." My thoughts were "Oh great, she not going to want me either." After that meeting she then asked me if I wanted to continue working with her.

Due to life circumstances...and my own unwillingness...my first sponsor let me go. I have had numerous sponsors since. From all of them I have learned what to do and what not to do. What's important to me today is light years away from what used-to be important to me then. The most important difference is my idea about a loving higher power, which I choose to call "God."

My first ideas about God were that of agnostic belief. Just as the big book talks about, I had a laundry list of issues with the God of my childhood. After years of being sober, I see now that I put those ideas about God in my own head. The punishing ideas that kept me away from God were of my own besetting.

I look back to early times of my sobriety and see that I was always taken care of. Times were much simpler then. The only other thing that was my responsibility was my cat. I couldn't pay any handsome young man to marry me and help me to live, "Happily-ever-after," so I remained single (although ferociously dating)...rather resentfully.

The point at which I stopped needing someone to take care of me was when I was blessed with the man that I chose to marry. Even though we have been married a while now, I often times have to give him back to God, too. Many times, I have said, "Here ya go God I am throwing this one back." In His infinite wisdom and odd sense of humor, God rather gently tosses him back to me.

I see that if I would have given God the laundry list of "Things that I want when I am sober," I completely would have sold myself short. The feelings on the inside are entirely different than they were then. Peace without fear is some thing that I feel rather frequently now. Joy without grief is something else that I never would have imagined for myself. Excitement without anxiety is another freedom that I have found in sobriety. The list could go on forever.

Anonymous

# Upcoming Events

**March 1st Corrections/Grapevine Workshop/Sharing Session** -- 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Hess Memorial Hospital, 1050 Division St., Mauston, WI. 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Community Room, Contacts: Marty S. 414-975-8903 or Nancy G. 608-221-2891

**March 29th – 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Badger Intergroup** – Waukesha Expo Center, non-smoking facility, Speaker – Clancy I. Los Angeles, CA. Social Hour 5:30 p.m., Dinner 6:30 p.m., Speaker 8:00 p.m. Dance to follow, Tickets \$21.00 each, available only by mail. Request tickets from Marc Sale, 1203A Woodbury Commons, Waukesha, WI. 53189. email: [msale1953@hotmail.com](mailto:msale1953@hotmail.com)

**March 30th -- Area 75 Delegate's Workshop** – 9:00 a.m., Madison Senior Center, 330 W. Mifflin St., Madison, Who should go? Area Officers, Area Committee Chairs & Committee Members, DCM's, GSR's, all AA members are welcome. This workshop is the opportunity for the fellowship of AA in Area 75 to be heard at the General Service Conference. The whole process is designed to help the delegate get a sense of the Area on issues coming before the Conference.

**April 12th – 24<sup>th</sup> Annual District 9 Mini-Conference** – 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., St. Gabriel's School, 515 N. Beaumont Rd., Prairie Du Chien, WI. Flyer on MAICO web site. Speaker: Dennis T. from Anchorage, Alaska.

**April 12<sup>th</sup> – Dist. 19 Workshop**, Civic Center, 124 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Baraboo,

**April 20<sup>th</sup> – Area 75 Pre-Conference Assembly**, 9am, Madison Senior Center, 330 W. Mifflin St., Madison, Proposals on the Agenda will be voted on by DCM's & GSR's. All AA members welcome.

**May 16th – 18th – 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Area 75 Spring Conference** – Olympia Resort & Conference Center, Oconomowoc, WI. Registration forms at [www.area75.org](http://www.area75.org) or at Central Offices

**June 22<sup>nd</sup> – Area 75 Agenda Planning**, 9am, Madison Senior Center, 330 W. Mifflin St., Madison

**July 11th -- 13th – 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Keep It Simple Door County/Washington Island Weekend** – Island Campground & Recreation, Washington Island. For information call Gunter R. 920-856-6354 or email: [reiche@itol.com](mailto:reiche@itol.com).

*Thank You's*  
*December 21<sup>st</sup> to February 15<sup>th</sup>*  
*General*

511 Step Group  
7:00 a.m. St. Andrew's Group  
Adams Back to Basics Group  
Baraboo Saturday Morning Eye Opener Group  
Barneveld AA Group  
Barneys Group  
Daily Reflections/Back to Basics Group  
DeForest Progress Group  
Dells Delton Group  
District 02  
District 30  
Early Risers Group  
Easy Breathers Group  
E.D.I.B.D.I. Group  
Foxhall Recovery Group  
Good Fellowship Group  
Grace Lunch Group  
Happy Hour Group  
Horicon Group  
Individual Donations  
Keys to the Kingdom Group  
Larry L.  
LaValle New Beginnings Group  
Mauston Monday Night Group  
Mauston Wednesday Afternoon Group  
Midvale Group  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday Morning Group  
Monday/Saturday 511 Group  
Monday Night Rock River Group

Monona Serenity Group  
Monroe Groups  
Mt. Horeb Wednesday Group  
Mt. Horeb Saturday Morning Group  
Mt. Olive Group  
New Freedom Group  
New Glarus Sobrietyfest Group  
Not a Glum Lot Group  
Our Group  
Pinehurst Group  
Princeton Saturday Morning Promises Group  
Recovery with the Book Group  
Red Circle Group  
Reflections Group  
St. Dunstan's Group  
Suburban Sobriety Group  
Sunlight of the Spirit (SOTS) Group  
Sunshine Group  
The Phoenix Group  
Thursday Night BB Group  
Watertown Saturday Women's Group  
Wautoma Thursday Night Grapevine Group  
Wednesday Afternoon AA Group  
Wednesday Night BB Group  
Wednesday Night Schooners Group

**Answering Service:**  
Early Risers Group  
Easy Breathers Group

## *Changes to "Meeting Directory" (December to February)*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Change, Addition or Deletion</u>
Dec	Add	<b>Adams</b>	Wed	7:00 pm	C,NS	Trinity Lutheran Church., 116 S. Grant St. (basement) Back to Basic Group
1/9/08	Add	<b>Beaver Dam</b>	Wed	6:00 pm	C,NS,W	Beaver Dam Alano Club, 115 N. Lincoln St. Woman in Sobriety Group
2/13/08	Change	<b>Boscobel</b>	Tu,Th,Sun	7:00 pm		Boscobel Hospital., Mental Health Unit - <b>Changed to 7:30 PM</b>
1/8/08	Moving	<b>Cuba City</b>	Thurs	8:00 pm	C,NS	Lions Club Bldg., looking for new facility, call John at 608-744-2098 for information
2/13/2008	Change	<b>Madison</b>	Mon to Fri	Noon	O,NS	University United Meth.Ch., The Crossing, moved to St. Francis House, 1001 University Ave., Lounge
as of 12/5	Moving	<b>Mt. Horeb</b>	Wed	7:30 pm	O,NS	American Legion Meeting moving to 307 E. Main St. <b>as of Dec. 5th</b>
1/8/08	Add	<b>New Lisbon</b>	Tues	7:00 pm	C, NS	Ruffner Hall, 108 S. Washington
1/8/08	Delete	<b>Potosi</b>	Sat	7:30 pm	O,NS,H	Davies Memorial United Church of Christ, 134 N. Main
Dec	Change	<b>Prairie du Sac</b>	Fri	7:30 pm	C,NS,H	St. Vincent DePaul Resource Ctr., 1906 North St. <b>MEETS AT 7:00 PM NOW</b>
Dec	Change	<b>Sauk City/Prairie</b>	Fri	7:30 pm	C,NS,H	St. Vincent DePaul Resource Ctr., 1906 North St. <b>MEETS AT 7:00 PM NOW</b>
Dec	Add	<b>Sun Prairie</b>	Tues	5:30 pm	C,NS,Women	Colonial Club Senior Center, 301 Blankenheim Lane, AA Literature Meeting-Women's Meeting
Dec	Delete	<b>Wautoma</b>	Tues	7:30 pm	C,H	Wautoma Medical Complex, Hwy 22, Main St.
Dec	Add	<b>Wautoma</b>	Sun	2:00 pm	C	All-Area Counseling Bldg., 719 W. Main St. (Big Book)

**For This,  
We Are Responsible**

We need your help and cooperation if we are to keep up to date about meetings and groups in the area we serve. Please let us know of any changes to the meetings you attend or to your group so we can pass the information along to our readers. Call MAICO with any changes that you know of or fill out this form and send it to MAICO, 6033 Monona Drive, Suite 204, Madison, WI 53716-3963.

**Provide as much of the following information as is possible**

New\_\_\_ Change\_\_\_ Help\_\_\_ Discontinued\_\_\_

Group name (if any)\_\_\_\_\_ Open\_\_\_ Closed\_\_\_

Smoking\_\_\_ Non-smoking\_\_\_ Signed\_\_\_ Accessible\_\_\_

Day and time of meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Location\_\_\_\_\_

Type of meeting\_\_\_\_\_

Group contact person\_\_\_\_\_

Contact's phone number\_\_\_\_\_

**Also, let us know of any changes in your group's contact person(s):**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number\_\_\_\_\_

Group name (if any)\_\_\_\_\_

Day and time of meeting\_\_\_\_\_

Location\_\_\_\_\_

**MAICO**

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