

# THE MAICO GAAZETTE

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2020

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.

MAICO, in all of its activities, shall abide by the intent and spirit of the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts and where possible the suggested procedures and limitations suggested by the AA Service Manual and other conference approved literature.



## THEME: Surviving Through Hard Times

*From the Annual Prison Issue – June Grapevine Issue*

### 17 YEARS OF HOPE IN PRISON

I attended my first AA meeting in 1981 in Alhambra, California. It was a blessing. **I was 19.**

I'm writing to share my gratitude about being able to carry the AA message and my experience, strength and hope to another woman who's incarcerated. My friend in prison had a sentence of 15 to 30 years. She's a bit older and sober several years more than me and pretty darn amazing. The General Service Office in New York sent me her address during her first year in prison.

**That was more than 17 years ago.**

*Image credit of Grapevine*

So for these many years, our letters have traveled back and forth from an old farmhouse in rural Kansas to a mega state prison in Arizona. We've discussed Steps, resentments, solutions, Traditions, bills, goals, the Slogans and God. We've sometimes even discussed making desserts.

Sentiments of love are exchanged, as we pass letters about the lighter and harder parts of life in sobriety...things like the death of family members, running over the dog, making my first cheesecake, not getting to enough meetings, getting fatter, getting thinner, getting beaten up by a cell mate—and the valuable lesson of easy does it.

AA taught me that action helps me stay sober. For the two of us, action is picking up a pen, getting paper and a stamp and writing an address on an envelope. For her, pens, paper, stamps and envelopes are luxuries. They are not easy to get.

One day at a time, she and I have racked up a lot of postage miles in these **17 years**. Because she has more sobriety, she has often sponsored me toward a fresher perspective and greater serenity as we trudge this road. Yes, it's possible to walk, talk and write the path of sobriety from the "inside"-out through the mail. It's been the most endearing trips in sobriety I have ever taken.

*Tess M. – Kansas*

*Grapevine – June 2020*

# LEARNING TO LOVE

After 30 hard years of liquor, violence and incarceration, he found AA, made amends and turned his life around.

By: Elias L. -- Downey, CA  
June Grapevine 2020



(Photo credit of Grapevine)

Today, I can say, “I love AA.” But it wasn’t always this way.

I had my first beer at age 8 and acquired a taste for it at 10. A judge mandated me to go to AA meetings when I was 12, but he just didn’t understand. Who was he to tell me where I was going to end up if I didn’t change my ways?

Later, I had a probation officer. For five years, she encouraged me to attend AA. She was willing to sit beside me at AA meetings, but

But I did not attend as fear of not knowing what AA would do. Would it change me? Would I still be able to hang out with my homeboys? I was more concerned about what other people thought.

Despite the blackouts I had in my teens, I defended my drinking tooth and nail. My life took a turn for the worse. I began to drink and use drugs with overdosing landing me in the hospital a few times. Soon I began breaking into cars. At times I turned to burglary to quench my need for alcohol, which increased my interactions with police. I was too far gone to understand the seriousness of my actions. I was even shot and stabbed, yet I didn’t see my drinking as a problem. I didn’t sleep on the curb or a park bench. I had a home. ***I could not be an alcoholic.***

My drinking began to affect my relationships with family, friends and my colleagues at work. Yet I felt indestructible. Unlike Superman, who was weakened by Kryptonite, alcohol made me stronger, or so I believed. But in reality, the more I drank, the more problems I created. I blamed the police for my arrest, the district attorney for pushing for my conviction and the judge for believing them and not me. I also blamed society for not giving me a second chance. In reality, it was I who had failed opportunities to change my self-destructive ways.

Soon all the chaos my drinking created turned violent and ***I ended up killing two people.*** I spent the next four years in county jail fighting the *death penalty*.

While I sat in a cell awaiting my destiny, I learned how to smuggle oranges and sugar in from the chow hall to make “pruno,” inmate-manufactured alcohol. Pruno became a power greater than myself, allowing me to disregard taking two human lives. It drowned my guilt and shame. I still couldn’t admit I was an alcoholic.

Soon the parole board made me attend AA meetings. I came in AA judging everyone who shared, rolling my eyes when I believed people were lying. Yet in the back of my mind, I’d recall stories and phrases from the meetings. Damned if it didn’t seem like they were talking about me. Then one day, I came to recognize my life was identical to theirs. *Maybe I was an alcoholic after all.*

**As my curiosity grew and out about Hospitals & Institutions panels. These caught my attention, because I noticed the people bringing them in weren’t wearing prison uniforms.**

**Soon something began to happen. I no longer felt forced to attend meetings. I found myself picking up or helping to set up. I started doing service without even knowing it.**

As I began to grasp, I set out “work the program.” I began memorizing and reciting the Steps. I thought that was all to working the Steps. *This is easy, I told myself.* Who needs a sponsor for this? I taped a copy of the Twelve Steps under the top bunk and kept a pocket-sized copy. I recited the Steps everywhere I went. As far as I knew, I was working the program! I was so cocky about my understanding of the Steps, I couldn’t wait for the Parole Commissioner to ask me about them during my hearing.

When that time came, the commissioner asked, “Do you know the Steps?” I quickly answered that I did, and he asked, “How many are there?” I told him there were 12. “Do you know Step Four?”

*I looked at him and gave him a smile as big as the Joker in Batman.* Then I recited Step Four. He asked, “Do you apply it to your daily life?” I didn’t hesitate to answer loudly, “Yes.”

Later, I bragged about this on the yard. I wondered, *what is Step Four and how do you apply it in your life?* I realized the commissioner knew I was full of it. ***That’s why he gave me a five-year parole denial.***

*After that, I got the courage to write to the General Service Office.* I asked for a sponsor and they sent me information on how to get one. Eventually, ***I got a letter from a recovering alcoholic agreeing to sponsor me through the mail.*** His patient guidance and understanding led me to slowly gain a much better understanding of the AA program.

As I continued to work with my sponsor, my understanding expanded, which led me to reestablish a relationship with a Higher Power. My eyes and mind opened up. I came to recognize where and when I had closed the door on my Higher Power as a teenager. Today, the relationship that I have with my Higher Power allows me to see how he works in my life, strengthening my faith and hope that this cell won’t become my casket.

Over time, as I continued to grow in the program, my life changed. I learned to smile and greet strangers. I began to feel love and care for other people. It took a reckless lifestyle and 30 years of incarceration to bring me to my senses.

My Higher Power finally released me from jail and put me back home to be with my 88-year-old mother, my brothers and sister and the daughter I left behind when she was 5. He also gave me the opportunity to establish a relationship with people I had not known would be part of my life, my beautiful granddaughters, nieces and nephews.

Most importantly, AA has given me the opportunity to make amends to my victims, my victims’ families and to the community I have taken so much from.

**Today, I have a sobriety date of January 14, 1992. I am grateful to be 28 years sober.** Without AA, I ran my life ragged, into darkness. With AA, I finally found myself surrounded with people who love me, encourage me and support my recovery. They help bring me into the light.

# INCOME STATEMENT



<b>REVENUES</b>	<b><u>Jan - May 2020</u></b>	<b><u>Jan-May 2019</u></b>
Donations – Groups	17,054.24	16,078.59
Donations – Events	309.74	331.00
Individual Donations	12,181.08	137.39
Donations – Answering Service	0.00	125.00
Donations - Gratitude Month	1,035.61	620.51
Conference Literature	8,164.05	13,031.14
Non-Conference Literature	2,030.22	3,928.69
Non-Conference Merchandise	4,748.94	8,096.22
Grapevine Literature	472.71	759.44
Faithful Fivers	122.36	107.00
Directories	128.00	429.25
Savings Account Income	1.65	6.55
Other Income	70.41	298.14
Sales Tax Discount	<u>40.00</u>	<u>43.14</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b><u>46,359.01</u></b>	<b><u>43,992.06</u></b>
<b>COST OF SALES</b>		
Inventory Exp.-Conference Lit.	5,452.50	7,250.06
Inventory Exp.-NonConfer Lit.	901.32	2,683.26
Inventory Exp.-NonConfer Mer.	1,728.48	4,693.28
Inventory Exp.- Grapevine Lit.	244.84	335.77
Inventory Exp – Directories	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Cost of Sales</b>	<b><u>8,327.14</u></b>	<b><u>14,962.37</u></b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b><u>38,031.87</u></b>	<b><u>29,029.69</u></b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Wages Expense	17,755.80	18,927.40
Employee Medical Reimbursement	800.00	800.00
Payroll Tax Expense	1,358.32	1,447.95
Credit Card Processing Costs	336.51	403.84
License and Fees Expense	115.22	10.00
Office Supplies/Expense	1,079.04	696.87
Computer Maintenance Expense	1,250.00	1,250.00
Computer-Software/Hardware	1,475.09	1,198.91
Telephone/Internet Expense	867.01	645.46
Answering Service Expense	2,730.49	2,548.21
Advertising in Phone Book	178.00	440.00
Reconciliation Discrepancies	-0.20	-0.16
Postage and Shipping Expense	98.49	114.48
Occupancy Expense	4,175.00	4,075.00
Insurance Expense	669.00	646.00
Printing Expense	180.00	640.00
Directory Printing Expense	0.00	1,202.00
Travel Expense	156.81	261.97
MAICO Reps Events Expense	240.07	231.54
Other Expense	0.00	23.16
Over Under Cash on Hand	<u>0.00</u>	<u>24.00</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>33,464.65</u></b>	<b><u>35,652.23</u></b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b><u>\$4,567.22</u></b>	<b><u>\$-6,622.54</u></b>



# UPCOMING EVENTS 2020



Some event flyers are on [www.aamadisonwi.org](http://www.aamadisonwi.org) or [www.area75.org](http://www.area75.org).

Any district or group AA event can be posted on the **Area 75 calendar** at [www.area75.org](http://www.area75.org)

*Be mindful of anonymity with names, flyers and information on the internet.*

**\*\*Flyers available on the MAICO website with more details for all events.**

## RECURRING - All Gatherings on Hold until further notice

**1st Sunday of Month** – Ripon's Royal Ridge Open Speaker AA Breakfast, Royal Ridges, State Hwy 23 (W. Fond du Lac St.) Ripon. Breakfast 10am, Speaker 11:00 am \$10.00 adults, (Holiday meets 2nd Sunday).

**2nd Sunday of Month** – Open AA Speaker, Adams, Adams-Friendship Club, 1093 County M, Adams, Noon.

**3rd Sunday of Month** – Pocket Full of Sunshine Breakfast, Howard Johnson, 3841 E. Washington Ave., Madison, 10:00 am breakfast buffet, \$10.00 all you can eat, 11am Speaker.

**Last Wednesday of Month** – Sunlight of the Spirit Group, (SOTS) Open speaker meeting, Plymouth United Church of Christ, 2401 Atwood Ave., 5:30 pm Potluck, bring dish to share, 6:30pm Speaker.

**Last Saturday of Month** – Hosted by Portage Area Recovery Groups, Open Speaker Meeting, 8:00 pm, Historic Apts., 207 W. Cook St., Portage, basement, handicap accessible, Potluck to follow meeting.

**Last Saturday of Month** – Hosted by Dodgeville Downtown Group, Dodgeville Serenity Club, 401 N. Union St., Dodgeville. 7:00 pm Speaker, Please bring a snack or dessert if you would like.

**1st & 3rd Saturday of Month** – Monroe Sister Blandine Group, Open Speaker Meeting, 6:30 pm, St. Victor's Church, 1760 14th St., Monroe, entrance off 20th Ave (parish library door) Everyone welcome.

**Every Saturday** – New Voices Open Speaker Meeting, 7:00 pm, 402 W. Delavan Dr., Janesville, Hosted (Chair & Speaker) each month by groups in Area 75 & nearby Illinois groups.

**Every Saturday** – Turning Point Group, Saturday Night Live AA Speaker Meeting, as of Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> 7pm (was 8pm), East Side Alano Club, 1017 Northport Drive, Madison, WI. Last Saturday of the Month is an AA and an AI-Anon Speaker

## UPCOMING IN 2020 – More will be revealed

**November 6-8, 2020 – Area 75 Conference**, Holiday Inn, Manitowoc, WI.

Planning is moving forward at this time as if the Conference will be held. Another meeting will be held in August to determine if the Conference Committee is going forward or cancelling the Conference.

**November 14, 2020 – MAICO Reps 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Youngtimers/Oldtimers Workshop**, Chili Cookoff,

Trinity Lutheran Church, 1904 Winnebago St., Madison, WI. 9am to Noon

Trinity Church is closed at this time so the MAICO Reps having the Youngtimers/Oldtimers Workshop will be determined if and when Trinity opens and if we can have a large gathering of people.



# THANK YOU'S – DONATIONS

## General Fund

A Few Simple Rules  
A Way of Life Grp  
Baraboo Sat. Morning Eye Opener  
Beloit Happy Hour Grp  
Blackhawk Good Fellowship  
Brodhead Sister Blandine Tuesday  
Clear Cut Directions  
District 11  
District 30  
Early Risers  
Easy Breathers  
Evansville Journey to Recovery  
Fitchburg We Agnostics  
Foxhall Recovery Grp  
Good Fellowship Grp  
Grace Lunch Grp  
Into Action Grp  
It's a God Thing  
Living Sober Grp  
Monroe New Beginnings  
Monroe Sat. Morning Grapevine  
Mt. Horeb Saturday Grp  
Portage 731 Grp  
Prairie Dock Grp  
Princeton Good Morning Promise  
Richland Center Grp  
Rio Into Action Grp  
Sauk City Early Risers  
Sauk Prairie AA  
Serenity Seekers  
Sober Today Grp  
Spring Green Read n Lead  
St. Andy's Morning Grp  
Sunlight of the Spirit Grp  
Sun Prairie Phoenix Grp  
Sunrisers Grp  
Sunrise Serenity Grp  
Traditions Grp  
Tuesday Night Workshop  
Turning Point Grp  
Waunakee Thursday  
Wautoma Thursday Big Book Grp  
We are not a Glum Lot Women's  
White River Study Grp  
Wild Rose Hwy 21 Open Discussion  
Working Step Grp

## Gratitude

Beaver Dam Sat. Night Grp  
Sunlight of the Spirit Grp  
Traditions Grp  
Watertown Sunday Night Grp  
Waupun H.O.W. Grp

## Individual Donations

Anonymous Donations  
Adam H.  
Alice G.  
Amelia L.  
Anne H.  
Anthonette G.  
Barb C.  
Betsy D.  
Bill R.  
Bonnie C.  
Chad P.  
Charles B.  
Dawn-Marie Z.  
Deanna F.  
Eileen P.  
Elle L.  
Ellen M.  
Georgia G.  
Greg F.  
Helen S.  
Herbert H.  
J. Isaac G.  
James P.  
Janine F.  
Jim L.  
Karen K.  
Kerry O.  
Kris W.  
Larry K.  
Larry L.  
Leah B.  
Mary S.  
Melaina J.  
Melodie C.  
Merrilee P.  
Nancy S.  
Patricia N.  
Patrick S.  
Paul J.  
Paula A.  
Rebecca S.  
Red C.  
Rhonda & Chris  
Richard A.  
Richard P.  
Robert M.  
Robert W.  
Ron M.  
Shelly H.  
Steve H.  
Steve K.  
Susan D.  
Susan N.

Susan R.  
Terry L.  
Tisa K.  
Tom B.  
Tom S.

## Corrections/Treatment Fund

Any Lengths Grp  
Early Risers Grp  
Sunlight of the Spirit Grp

## Faithful Fivers

Larry L.  
Mary S.



Because correctional facilities often have rules prohibiting direct contact among local AA volunteers and inmates, the

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

## A call for male members to commit to Corrections Correspondence service

The General Service Office (GSO) has a need for AA men to write inmates in English or in Spanish through the Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS).

We are especially looking for **AA men** who will commit to consistently writing a prisoner for a **length of time**.

*Thanks to volunteers, we have plenty of women writing to women prisoners.*

CCS is not a traditional pen pal service. This service offers the opportunity for AA members on the inside and the outside to share experience, strength and hope with each other via postal correspondence. GSO only makes the initial connection, which is a random match between inmates with a drinking problem and outside AA members of the **same gender** living in another region from that correctional facility.

Once an initial contact is made through a letter, it might be possible to continue the CCS electronically (messaging, email), if available through the facility. **The CCS does not assign sponsors, but an outside AA member is willing to sponsor after contact is made.**

Because correctional facilities often have rules prohibiting direct contact among local AA volunteers and inmates, the letters exchanged through CCS from another region might provide an alcoholic behind the walls with his or her only personal connection to another AA member. Outside AAs can share their experience to guide an incarcerated alcoholic through the Twelve Steps of AA, or can just answer basic questions about AA's program of recovery.

**GSO says that participants on both sides of the CCS rave about the value of this kind of letter writing with other alcoholics.** The inmates find freedom while behind walls, and the outside members deepen their own connection to AA the Twelve Steps.

**No prison experience is needed.** Those with clearance issues are welcomed. CCS means everything for those incarcerated. One-on-one sharing helps both insiders and outsiders who participate in this very valuable program.



For more information, please email; [corrections@aa.org](mailto:corrections@aa.org). Or you can write to; Corrections Desk, General Service Office, Box 459. Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163.

## DAILY Reflections in Hard Times

### From "Gawd" to God

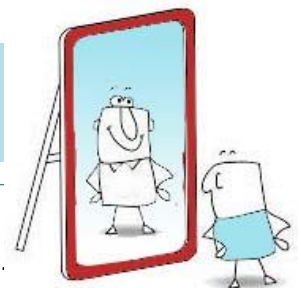
"My sponsor died and I changed groups. Then slowly but surely, I found a door in my mind with a handle only on the outside. The door opened slowly but surely, and there was God."

*Michael W. – Taunton, MA  
PO Box 1980, Grapevine – December 2001*

### Pay day

Ernest C. has been a member of AA for thirty years. He's eighty-six years old, and he **still comes into the prison system to share his message**. He has changed my life and given me the support I've always needed.

*Greg B. – Buford, Georgia  
PO Box 1980, Grapevine – November 2001*



### Facing the Music

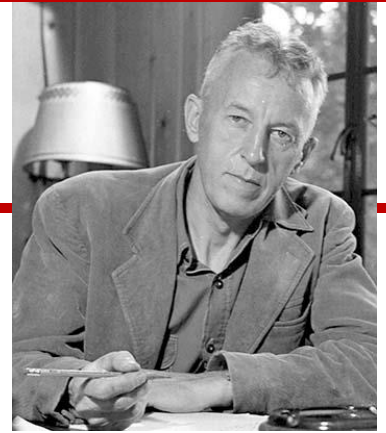
I began a sober career in music one day at a time Emotional stamina is a sober gift I am grateful for--the willingness to stay in uncomfortable situations and see them through. My drinking behavior had always been to blame others, cut my losses, and run. This time I stayed and took the heat, knowing it was mostly of my own making.

*Ernest S. – York Harbor, Maine*

# THE ANTIDOTE FOR FEAR:

## Prudence Trust Faith

by Bill W. —Grapevine, —November 1959



This Conference opened on the keynotes of prudence, trust and faith, and its proceedings have been characterized by these attitudes and practices throughout. Confidence has therefore abounded among us and in this year's session we have gone nearly scot-free of any worry or fear. Indeed we have gone along so quietly that we have missed the usual excitements of hot debate and "viewing with alarm for the good of the movement."

But there has been a healthier excitement nevertheless; quite another quality and kind. I found a satisfying excitement watching real eagerness, discipline and dedication with which this assembly has waded for days. It made me happy when I heard delegates pay repeated and grateful tributes to folks, committee members and thousands of General Service Representatives and hundreds combined labor back home. The combined labor must be the final foundation of our whole world service structure. AA service leadership, you said, was not for delegates and trustees alone; it had to be out there in the grass roots--and it already was there.

Then, too, we have all been gladdened by quarterly reports of our fellowship with confidence and trust in that our services have been on the increase. These are some of the newer and healthier excitements in this notable conference of 1959.

Fresh in my memory is that great big laugh we had when one of you delegates, addressing me, rose and said, "Bill, we all heard you give that convincing pitch on trust and faith the night we got here. Now what would you say if I told you that out in our country we have a member who was supposed to be acting as our treasurer for a pretty large and important meeting; that the minute the tickets were sold and the money was banked, he developed a terrific thirst, drew out all that dough, and took off on a traveling wingding that blazed a cross-country trail a thousand miles long?" We all remember how our fellow delegates grinned as he spoke and we roared with mirth.

Now there was a time, years back, when such a thirsty and absconding treasurer could have shattered our confidence wholesale. How well I remember the first one! I can remember, too, my own shock and chagrin when one of my best friends attacked me unmercifully because he didn't like the way I was acting. I remember those first breaks of anonymity at the top public level and the fear and violent controversy that followed in their wake. Such were the alarms of AA's early time. We feared we couldn't stay sober, and our group couldn't survive, we really feared that AA might collapse completely.

But how times have changed! What was once a big fear is today a big laugh--take that one about the erring treasurer. In it I think we can find some wonderful things. Let it be recalled that laugh had not a trace of contempt or anger. No thought of punishment from one soul or to call him a thief. Underneath that laugh there was sympathetic understanding.

Of course, we were laughing at the startled penniless convention hearing the bad news. But our laugh had a far deeper meaning than this.

In reality I'm sure we were laughing at ourselves, our old and far-fetched fears. Gone was the awful fear of individual's failure or behavior might do to us all, gone was the fear and pressures and conflicts of the world around us might one day infiltrate and crush AA. We had ceased to doubt our safety and security.

This brings me to another reason for reassurance. Of most nations and societies their collective behavior has often been far worse than individual behavior of their memberships.

While it's not for us to take a moral inventory of the world in any sense of pride or superiority, I do think it fair to point out we AAs have demonstrated a behavior much superior to our individual conduct. The whole is better than the sum of its individual parts.

We like money for ourselves but we keep our fellowship treasuries poor. We like prestige, yet we somehow remain anonymous. As individuals we are apt to be aggressive, yet our society as a whole is quite non-aggressive, minding its own business.

In short, we are in a strange contrast to the world about us, and we devoutly hope we shall stay that way. In these perilous times this will be the sort of collective prudence that we shall constantly need. It will guarantee our effectiveness, safety and survival as nothing else can.

Our collective prudence respecting money, fame and controversy--derived of course from our Twelve Traditions--has continued to make AA new hosts of friends, and, just as importantly, no enemies. May this benign process never stop, within and without our fellowship.

As this wonderful Conference has shown, the absence of fear has made way for wisdom and prudence; prudence led us to confidence, trust and faith--faith in our fellow man, faith in ourselves, and faith in God's love.

**Each year during the season of giving thanks we try to bring you a few new and meaningful words on an old but ever deepening subject: the Twelve Traditions of AA. We heard none better in the past year than Bill W.'s closing words to the General Service Co**



**Madison Area Intergroup Central Office, Inc.  
2000 Engel St., Suite 104  
Madison, WI. 53713**

**Electronic Service Requested**

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Madison, WI  
Permit No. 1562

**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 update our information. Call MAICO at 608-222-8989, email to [info@aamadisonwi.org](mailto:info@aamadisonwi.org) or fill out the form and mail to MAICO, 2000 Engel St., Suite 104, Madison, WI. 53713**

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

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

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

Handicap 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)**