
Serenity News

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June 2026



Serenity News wants and needs your input! Send articles/notices/news/meeting info, jokes, etc. to Intergroup. So far in the last year or so we've received.... nothing. This is a great way to get your thoughts out there and be of service!

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Welcome to the January issue of Sobriety News, the newsletter for and about Lake/Sumter Counties' Central Office, LSCO. This month's theme is "service." Time to give back what was so freely given. Fix some coffee, lead a meeting, donate an extra buck or two.

Editor's Note: When newcomers arrive at their first AA meeting, they often come looking for relief. They want freedom from alcohol, peace of mind, and a way to put their lives back together. What many discover later is that one of the greatest gifts of recovery comes through service.

Service doesn't always mean chairing meetings or holding an office. Sometimes it means making coffee, setting up chairs, greeting a nervous newcomer, or simply listening when someone needs to talk.

The remarkable thing about service is that it works both ways. The person receiving help benefits, but so does the person giving it. Service pulls us out of self-centered thinking and reminds us that we belong to something larger than ourselves.

Many members can point to times when they didn't feel like attending a meeting but went because they had a commitment. They often leave feeling better than when they arrived. Service keeps us connected when our emotions tell us to withdraw.

In AA, service is not a burden. It is one of the tools that helps us stay sober, grateful, and useful. As we often say and hear, "To keep it, we have to give it away."

Step Six: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. (I realize my defects cause me pain)

Tradition Six: An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. (Keep it simple)

Concept VI: The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board. (The buck has to stop somewhere)

Central Office News

PARTICIPATION

Groups that need representation at the intergroup. We meet the second Wednesday of the month at Central Office!

6, 7 & 10 Steps
11th Step Meditation
12x12 Tavares
As Bill Sees It
Big Book by the River
Big Book Zoom
Brownwood Step 11
Came to Believe Women's
Came to Believe
Even Keel
Happy In The Hills
Happy Joyous and Free
Joe and Charlie Group
Just for Today Steps
Keep It Simple
Lady Lake Breakfast
Lady Lake Thursday Night
Leesburg Wednesday Night
Living Sober Morning
Living Sober Wildwood
Mascotte Happy Hour
Morning Eye Openers
Mustard Seed
New Attitudes
New Life Group TV
No Name
Noon Serenity Seekers
Okie Dokie
Oxford Group
Phoenix Big Book
Rebos in Leesburg
Rainbow Recovery
Robber's Roost
Saturday Night Alive Group
Saturday Night Life Group
Serenity Sisters
Sober Sisters
Sober Sunset Speakers
Sober with a Sandwich
Sobriety on Saturday (SOS)
South Lake Women's
Speak Easy Mt Dora
Squirrels Nest Meeting
Step Right Up 6 & 7
Stepping Stones
We Ain't There Yet
Weekend Sunrise
You're Eligible Too (YET)

DROP THE ROCK

A Wonderful Day of Fellowship and Service

Our AA group was recently treated to an inspiring and memorable seminar featuring Fred H., author of the beloved recovery resource Drop The Rock. With 100 members in attendance, the energy in the room reflected just how meaningful this gathering was for our community.

Fred H. graciously shared his experience, strength, and hope with the group, offering insights drawn from the principles behind his book. Copies were available for purchase, and Fred took time to personally sign each one – a cherished keepsake for many who attended.

Leading the workshop was Christopher, joining us all the way from Jacksonville, who guided participants through a thoughtful and engaging session that brought the book's message to life.

After the workshop, members gathered over a wonderful lunch of sandwiches, chips, and cookies – good food shared among good people in recovery.

None of this would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our committee. A heartfelt **thank you** to every single person who helped make this day so special. Your service is deeply appreciated

May Donations

Just for Today	\$	207.00
Came to Believe		150.00
Daybreak		123.75
Anonymous		185.00
Back to Basics II		159.50
Triangle Breakfast		20.00
Y.E.T.		87.50
Big Book By the River		126.30
Sober Sunset Speakers		750.00
Serenity Seekers		330.00
Keep It Simple		19.10
Pig on the Counter		34.00

TOTAL

\$ 2192.15

As Bill (Saw) It

"Thankfully, we have accepted the devoted services of many non-alcoholics. We owe our very lives to the men and women of medicine and religion. And, speaking for Dr. Bob and myself, I gratefully declare that had it not been for our wives, Anne and Lois, neither of us could have lived to see A.A.'s beginning."
Letter 1966

On its great floor we have inscribed our Twelve Steps of recovery. On the side walls, the buttresses of the A.A. Traditions have been set in place to contain us in unity for as long as God may will it so. Eager hearts and hands have lifted the spire of our cathedral into its place. That spire bears the name of Service. May it ever point straight upward toward God.
A.A. Comes Of Age p 234

No society can function well without able leadership at all its levels, and A.A. can be no exception. But we A.A.'s sometimes cherish the thought that we can do without much personal leadership at all. We are apt to warp the traditional idea of "principles before personalities" around to such a point that there would be no "personality" in leadership whatever. This would imply rather faceless robots trying to please everybody. A leader in A.A. service is a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us naturally want to back him up and help him with his job. When a leader power drives us badly, we rebel; but when he too meekly becomes an order-taker and he exercises no judgment of his own—well, he really isn't a leader at all.
Twelve Concepts pp 41-42

How wonderful is the feeling that we do not have to be specially distinguished among our fellows in order to be useful and profoundly happy. Not many of us can be leaders of prominence, nor do we wish to be. Service gladly rendered, obligations squarely met, troubles well accepted or solved with God's help, the knowledge that at home or in the world outside we are partners in a common effort, the fact that in God's sight all human beings are important, the proof that love freely

given brings a full return, the certainty that we are no longer isolated and alone in selfconstructed prisons, the surety that we can fit and belong in God's scheme of things—these are the satisfactions of right living for which no pomp and circumstance, no heap of material possession, could possibly be substitutes.
Twelve and Twelve p 124

In A.A., we found that it did not matter too much what our material condition was, but it mattered greatly what our spiritual condition was. As we improved our spiritual outlook, money gradually became our servant and not our master. It became a means of exchanging love and service with those about us.
Twelve and Twelve p 122

Above us, at the International Convention at St. Louis in 1955, floated a banner on which was inscribed the then new symbol for A.A., a circle enclosing a triangle. The circle stands for the whole world of A.A., and the triangle stands for A.A.'s Three Legacies: Recovery, Unity, and Service.
A.A. Comes Of Age p139

Some of us still ask, "Just what is this Third Legacy business anyhow? And just how much territory does 'service' take in?" Let's begin with my own sponsor, Ebby. When Ebby heard how serious my drinking was, he resolved to visit me. He was in New York; I was in Brooklyn. His resolve was not enough; he had to take action and he had to spend money. He called me on the phone and then got into the subway; total cost, ten cents. At the level of the telephone booth and subway turnstile, spirituality and money began to mix. One without the other would have amounted to nothing at all. Right then and there, Ebby established the principle that A.A. in action calls for the sacrifice of much time and a little money.
A.A. Comes Of Age p140-141

Service is gratitude in action.

The Coffee Pot Miracle

An old-timer once told a newcomer, "Your first service commitment is the coffee pot." The newcomer was disappointed. He had imagined speaking at conventions, sponsoring dozens of people, and becoming a pillar of recovery. Instead, he was handed a key and shown where the coffee filters were kept.

For six months he made coffee every week. He arrived early, cleaned up afterward, and rarely missed a meeting. One day he realized something surprising. While making coffee, he had learned everyone's names.

While cleaning up, he had listened to members share their experience. While showing up every week, he had developed reliability. While serving others, he had stayed sober.

Years later, when he became a respected sponsor, he often laughed and said, "My sobriety started with a coffee pot and a mop." The lesson was simple: there are no small jobs in AA. The smallest acts of service often produce the biggest miracles.

The Empty Chair

A group once kept an empty chair near the front of the meeting room. Members asked why it was there. "It's for the alcoholic who hasn't arrived yet," someone explained.

That empty chair became a powerful reminder. Every decision the group made was measured against one question: "Will this help the person who is still suffering?"

Service in AA is really about that empty chair. It's about making sure the doors stay open, the lights stay on, the coffee is ready, and the newcomer feels welcome. Most members never know the lives they've touched. The person they greeted at the door may celebrate twenty years sober one day. The newcomer they called after a meeting may avoid taking that first drink.

Service often works quietly. There are no headlines and no applause. Yet countless recoveries begin because someone was willing to perform a simple act of kindness. The empty chair reminds us that our service today may become someone else's miracle tomorrow.

The Unexpected Gift of Service

Most of us came to AA because our lives had become unmanageable. We arrived carrying problems, fears, regrets, and questions. Few of us walked through the door thinking, "I can't wait to help other people." Yet somewhere along the way, something changes.

A member asks us to help stack chairs. We volunteer to make coffee. We agree to chair a meeting. We offer a ride to someone without transportation. Little by little, we begin thinking about others instead of ourselves.

The surprising thing is that service doesn't take something from us—it gives something back. It gives us purpose when we feel lost. It gives us connection when we feel isolated. It gives us gratitude when we become focused on what we lack.

Many members can remember difficult periods in sobriety when they didn't feel spiritual, inspired, or particularly happy. But they continued showing up for their service commitments. In doing so, they remained connected to the fellowship until the difficult period passed.

Service teaches one of AA's most important lessons: feelings come and go, but actions matter. We may not always feel grateful, but we can act gratefully. We may not always feel useful, but we can be useful. We may not always feel connected, but we can connect with others. Perhaps that is why service remains such an important part of recovery. It reminds us that sobriety is not just about avoiding a drink. It is about building a life worth living—and helping others do the same.

The gift of service is that while we are busy helping AA survive and thrive, our own recovery quietly grows stronger.

"My sponsor said service work would restore my sanity. I'm not sure it's working — I just spent 45 minutes arguing with myself about the best way to stack folding chairs."

"Service work humbled me — turns out I'm not too good to clean a toilet after all."