

Central Office Founders' Day Challenge

Give One Day's Worth of Drinking to Support the Central Office

Our Intergroup was formed almost 50 years ago by the groups in the Albuquerque area. It has evolved a bit over that time but the mission is still the same: To do what no one group can do alone.

What is that? Well, we have an office that maintains an inventory of almost all AA approved books and literature for sale. We also have medallions from promise to 60 years sobriety for sale. But more importantly we have "the" number to call in the Albuquerque area if you need assistance with finding a meeting, have a question about AA or are in need of immediate personal assistance. We man that phone on a 24/7/365 basis, one of the few Intergroups in the nation to do that. We maintain and produce a meeting booklet of all the meetings in the greater Albuquerque area. We also maintain a website, that I hope most of you have visited. On that web site you can find announcements from groups on special events or you can use the Meeting search to find a meeting in our area.

The Central Office is open 7 days a week. Run by a Coordinator weekdays and an Assistant Coordinator on weekends. The phones and sales are manned by volunteers from groups such as yours. You can volunteer for any of the 19 three hour shifts or as a wild card substitute. The phone calls after hours are answered by a volunteer from 6PM or 3PM to 9AM every night. Volunteers for night duty should have a lengthy time of sobriety because this is the most frequent time we receive calls from active alcoholics needing assistance.

The Central Office is supported by approximately 75% from donations of members and groups and 25% from book & literature sales. For the past several years the annual revenue from donations and sales allows us to do just a little better than break even. Consequently, we have aging equipment and the amount we pay the Coordinator and Alternate Coordinator is very low and not commensurate with the duties they perform and has changed only 10% in 10 years.

You might not know that over the years of its existence the Central Office has barely managed to stay afloat. There have been times when we didn't know if we could keep the office open because we didn't have the cash to pay our bills. Each of those times the word was spread and the AA members of the greater Albuquerque area stepped up and graciously contributed enough to keep us going. But we've always been right on the edge.

2021 happened to be a banner year and we ended the year with \$23,412 in the bank. The average monthly balance for the past 36 months has been \$14,100. A prudent reserve of 12 months expenses would be about \$64,000, so we're still a little short. We'd like to use some of that extra to increase the salaries and wages of the Coordinator and the Assistant Coordinator but those extra dollars came because of a couple of out of the ordinary events. The picnic and auction were a resounding success in 2021 and brought in \$5,500. And the month of October saw group contributions that were \$4,500 greater than the normal for the past 36 months. If you exclude those events, our average monthly net profit in 2021 was only \$65. As I said before, we barely manage to stay afloat. So, we could use some of the cash we have now replace aging equipment and to increase wages, but what would we do next year? We can't assume next year would be as good as the year past.

In an effort to increase the contributions to Central Office we are starting the Central Office Founders' Day Challenge each year during the week of June 10th, Founders Day, it's a "Give One Day's Worth of Drinking" event. During the week of Friday June 10th to Thursday June 16th, at the beginning of each meeting throughout the Intergroup, we're asking everyone to contribute the cost of just one day of their drinking.

Many of us drank on a daily basis and at the end probably were getting the cheapest alcohol we could find. Even so, we were spending a small fortune on alcohol over the 365 days in a year. What we're asking you to do is donate what your cost of alcohol was for only ONE day. So, here's some examples of current prices (rounded to nearest dollar per a lookup on Smith's): a cheap fifth of vodka \$7, nine cans of Budweiser \$8, two cheap bottles of wine \$7, 3 shots & a beer at pub and two tall boys on the way home \$31 or a fifth of Jack Daniels \$25. If you were a binge drinker, a weekend drunk or something other than daily, just put a meaningful amount in the basket. Remember, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Also, let everyone know if they can't afford to give, then don't.

You get the idea. You've been there and done that on a daily basis. You can surely afford to contribute one day's worth of drinking to the Intergroup. If we each did this just once a year it would go a very long way in supporting the Central Office. We could afford to replace aging equipment, maintain an emergency prudent reserve and pay respectable salaries. Of course, if your group does not want to participate in this event, you don't have to do so. Also, many of us go to more than just our home group meeting, we are only asking you to contribute at your home group for this event.