

Central Office  
910-678-8002  
310 Green St., Suite  
201, Box 14  
Fayetteville, NC 28301  
Office hours: 10 a.m.  
to 2 p.m. Tuesdays  
and Thursdays

## Upcoming Events

### Jan. 16-19

The 53rd Tar Heel Mid-Winter Conference will be at the Hilton Raleigh North Hills Hotel, 3425 Wake Forest Road (Exit 10 on I-440) in Raleigh. Links to register for the conference and for hotel reservations are at [www.tarheelmidwinter.org](http://www.tarheelmidwinter.org).

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### Jan. 19

District 51 board meeting at 3 p.m. at the Dream Center, 336 Ray Ave.

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### Feb. 1

Third annual Spring Into Action conference will be held at New Hope Baptist Church, 3007 Beechtree Drive in Sanford (take N.C. 87 bypass to northbound U.S. 1 exit) from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fellowship at 5 p.m. in

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# The Common Bond

The Newsletter of the Bladen, Cumberland and Robeson Central Office

January-February 2020



All art and pictures courtesy of Courtesy of Common Core/Bing

Donnie W., a longtime secretary and office manager for the Cape Fear Intergroup and the BCR-CO, liked to spend time at the Johnny Mercer Pier in Wrightsville Beach.

## Remembering our friend

A longtime friend of AA and the Bladen, Cumberland, Robeson Central Office passed

A longtime friend of AA and the Bladen, Cumberland, Robeson Central Office passed away this fall.

Donnie W., a 30-year member of the ALCO Club and the Central Group, died on Sept. 13.

Donnie was a longtime secretary and office manager of the old Cape Fear Intergroup and played a large role in the founding of the BCR-CO, where he served for the first 4 years as secretary-office manager. He served on the ad-hoc committee to form the BCR-CO, which had about a dozen members.

Rocky O., the first chairman of the BCR-CO noted the big role Donnie played in the Intergroup, where he became secretary in 2008, and Central Office, which formed in 2010.

“He kept it going. He worked (in Intergroup) for a longtime as a volunteer. After we reorganized we (the Central Office organizers) we decided to pay him,” Rocky said. However, Rocky added sometimes Donnie didn’t pay himself

when money was tight.

A lot of the work Donnie did behind the scenes went unnoticed. “He was quite a humble guy when it came down to it.”

Carl S. who worked on the subcommittee to write the by-laws for the new Central Office, praised Donnie as being instrumental in the writing and implementing the new rules.

“He provided stability in our change over from Intergroup to the Central Office,” Carl S. said.

Donnie also sought out and trained his successor, Linda, also a Central Group member, in 2015.

Donnie also organized the first TV raffle to help pay for Founders’ Day when money was tight. That first raffle raised enough money to provide a budget for the next year’s celebration. He also kept an eye on other areas and how they raised money for their intergroups for ideas that might work in this area.

After leaving the BCR-CO, Donnie spent a lot of time at the Johnny Mercer Pier where he loved to fish and would teach others how to fish from the pier.

## COUNCIL MEETING

## Saturday hours planned

**Central Office Board**

Chairman  
Kate S.  
Vice chairman  
Johnny V.  
Treasurer  
Jay O.  
At-Large members  
Bladen  
Vacant  
Cumberland  
Jerry T.  
Robeson  
Vacant  
Office manager/  
secretary  
Doreene B.

**Council**

Central Group  
Jackie M.  
Sandalwood  
Billy B.  
Back to Basics  
Dan. A.  
Bare Bones  
Richard A.  
ODAT  
Jon F.  
Fort Bragg  
Michael  
Freedom in Growth  
Cathy M.  
Keep It Simple  
Jackie W.  
New Freedom  
Adam  
101 Big Book

Principles Group  
Charles K.  
Pine Run

Sandalwood  
Billy  
Seekers of Sobriety

Spring Into Action

There is a Solution  
Bryan Z.  
Village Group  
Sylvia E.  
Walking the Same Path  
Alexis L.  
Women of Quality  
Candice B.

The BCR-CO Council unanimously agreed to test opening the office for business on Saturdays beginning next month.

Chairwoman Kate S., said an AA member made the request to her, noting that working people have a hard time getting to the Central Office during weekdays.

The office is currently open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. While there have long been suggestions of opening the office at different hours for those who work weekdays, but there was never agreement on how to do that.

The discussion on Jan. 5 centered not on whether that would be a good idea, but the lack of money needed to be open longer hours. Some thought expanded hours would mean more sales giving the office more money, but the BCR-CO does seek to make profits off literature to support itself. That is done to make books and other items more accessible for alcoholics who may not have a lot of money. The price of an individual big book is the same as on the AA website. The Central Office funds itself from the support of group donations.

Treasurer Jay O. said not enough money has come in to the BCR-CO to pay expenses. "The way we're going we're going to be out of money by the end of June," he said.

Currently, the office can only afford to staff the office for 8 hours a week. Many thought it would be bad policy to

expect the Doreene, the organization's secretary and office manager, to work without pay for an extra day. Most agreed trying to use unpaid volunteers would not be ideal, although it has been done sometimes when the office manager may not be able to work a day.

The council members then centered a proposal on closing the office either Tuesday or Thursday so it could be open on Saturdays.

After some discussion, the consensus was a plan to test Saturday usage by opening on the first Saturday of February and March and closing the office on one of the weekdays, since this would not affect the budget.

It was left to Doreene to decide which weekday the office would close. The idea being to close it on the day it gets the least usage. A final decision on which day it would close had not been decided by the Common Bond deadline.

**In other action:**

—Treasurer Jay O. says that the office is still struggling to pay its bills, and more donations by groups are needed to meet its budget.

—The Middle Cape Fear Group in Lillington has joined the BCR-CO and its council member, Bill R., attended.

—The term of Johnny V. as vice president is ending and candidates are being sought for the position.

—The Central Office is still looking for an accountant to help with taxes, Kate said she would talk with a business that might help.

## Make contact with the Central Office

**Hotline:** 910-302-7129, coordinator Leah W.

**Common Bond editor:** Dave C., commonbond2011@gmail.com

**Fayaa.org webmaster:** Amanda K. webmaster@fayaa.org

**Central Office:** Doreene B., bcrcentraloffice@gmail.com

also info@fayaa.org. Mail: 310 Green St., Suite 201, Mailbox 14, Fayetteville, NC 28301



# Why some events are not free

*Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from Box 459 newsletter 2019 Winter Edition. It discusses why they may have to pay to attend some Alcoholics Anonymous events.*

Why, some members have asked, do A.A.s have to pay a fee to attend an A.A. conference, convention or other special event? As one Californian wrote to the General Service Office, "Some of us have difficulty when it comes to having the A.A. name at-

tached to any gathering that requires payment to participate. What's more, some of the prices at many of these functions are not cheap." And, he adds, "What about the payment of travel expenses and lodgings for certain 'select' speakers?"

It's true that A.A. membership is free, and meetings and most A.A. events are self-supporting through voluntary contributions in the spirit of the Seventh Tradition. But what about A.A. get-togethers beyond the group-meeting level, ranging from special one- or two-hour meetings to banquets and weekend events — area, statewide, regional and international? These events require months of planning, preparation and money presented upfront to the hotel and other business facilities involved. Arrangements may also need to be made for A.A.s with accessibility concerns: providing wheelchair access, sign-language interpreters or, perhaps, programs in Braille.

Additional expenses include the printing of flyers, schedules, postage and supplies, not to mention renting meeting space, insurance coverage, and travel and accommodations for the invited speakers, many of whom live thousands of miles from the convention site. A.A. members are not paid to share their experience, but as invited guests of a convention or conference, their expenses are generally reimbursed.

How are the costs of a convention covered, and what can be done to ensure that the venture won't go deep in the red? Registration fees cover costs for spe-

cial events, and those who wish to participate in the convention pay their own way in the spirit of the Seventh Tradition. According to the A.A. Guidelines on Conferences, Conventions and Roundups, available from G.S.O., "there's no substitute for common sense

here; the committee must take a business-like approach to finances and keep expenditures somewhere within a conservative estimate of anticipated revenues.... Since the registration fees can be established at a level sufficient to cover the total costs, this should result in no actual out-of-pocket costs to groups."



Photo courtesy of Bing and Common Core.

A crowd gathers for the 2010 AA International Convention in San Antonio, Texas.

At the area level, two sound methods for underwriting special events seem to be in general use: (1) Underwriting of the event by area groups. Since the registration fees can be established at a level sufficient to cover the total costs, this should result in no actual out-of-pocket costs to the groups; and (2) Building a convention fund to which the area groups contribute year-round. This method obviates the need to charge a registration fee except for visitors from out of state.

The criterion for using the A.A. name generally specifies that the event be put on by A.A.s for A.A.s about A.A. Although a golf tournament or a dance is beyond the purview of A.A.'s primary purpose, such events are often scheduled as social adjuncts to the main meetings and workshops scheduled.

When Al-Anon participates in an A.A. convention, the relationship and financial arrangements usually follow one of two patterns: When an A.A. convention committee invites Al-Anon to participate with its own program, A.A. may pay all expenses (for meeting rooms, coffee, etc.) and keep all income from registrations and such in a single fund earmarked to cover the convention bills, after which any excess income reverts back to A.A. Alternatively, Al-Anon may have a separate registration and cover its own expenses directly, besides assuming its share of common expenses. In this case, Al-Anon receives its own share of the registration income and also shares in any losses incurred.

## A.A. BIRTHDAYS



Send your birthdays, with first name and last initial, date and first year of sobriety to the [bcrcentraloffice@gmail.com](mailto:bcrcentraloffice@gmail.com) or [commonbond2011@gmail.com](mailto:commonbond2011@gmail.com).

<b>Feb. 1</b>	Matt D. – 37
Kyna O. – 18	Tomie Ann – 14
<b>Feb. 2</b>	<b>Feb. 25</b>
Stacy W. – 18	Lupe G. – 19
<b>Feb. 6</b>	<b>Feb. 28</b>
Johnny H. – 14	Bill C. – 33
<b>Feb. 9</b>	<b>March 1</b>
Jay A. – 14	Patricia H. – 22
<b>Feb. 11</b>	Elsie – 11
Rocky O. – 46	<b>March 11</b>
<b>Feb. 14</b>	Joe G. – 16
Bennie R. – 21	<b>March 27</b>
Dick V. – 15	Bobbie E. – 28
<b>Feb. 15</b>	<b>March 28</b>
Jim M. – 11	Doug C. – 25

## Calendar Continued from page 1

downtown Sanford. Topics include: early AA history, practicing principles, carrying the message of helping others, and the home group as a spiritual entity. Food trucks (cash or credit card) will be available for lunch at 12:30 p.m. Child care will be available.

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### March 8

The BCR-CO Council meeting will be at 3 p.m. at the boardroom at the Central Office, 310 Green St., Fayetteville.

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### March 13-15

The 32nd annual Freedom from Bondage Conference will be held at the Hampton Inn & Suites, 200 Columbus Drive in Aberdeen. Pre-Conference registration is \$15 through Feb. 28. \$18 at the door. Hotel information is available at [aanorthcarolina.org](http://aanorthcarolina.org). A flyer is also available online.

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### March 29

The Central Pre-Conference will be hosted by District 32. No other information is available at this time.

## Sober thoughts

*(Helpful quotes for the AA way of life)*

Life is lived in the present, yesterday is gone, tomorrow is yet to be. **TODAY IS THE MIRACLE.**

— Unattributed

There is no try. There is either do or do not.

— Yoda, in “Star Wars.”

## Financial Report for December 2019

<b>Income</b>		<b>check &amp; debit subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,363.78</b>	101 Big Group	303.58
Contributions	\$229.00	<b>Ending balance</b>	<b>\$3,416.98</b>	ODAT	302.14
Sales	215.08			Pine Run Drive	0
Sales tax collected	15.05	<b>Contributions</b>	<b>Nov.-Dec.</b>	Principles Group	0
<b>Total deposit</b>	<b>\$459.13</b>	Bare Bones Group	\$800.00	Restoration Group	0
<b>Expenses checks</b>		Central Group	511.31	Road Not Taken	0
Payroll	\$354.10	Fairmont Group	0	Sandalwood Group	87.00
Rent	240.83	Freedom In Growth	671.50	Spring Into Action	0
AA World Services (literature)	20.26	Firing Line	167.20	SOS Group	0
Recovery Shop (supplies)	25.50	Fort Bragg	\$500.00	Staying Sober	0
<b>Expenses debit:</b>		I-95 Group	32.00	Tar Hill	0
Century Link (phone/internet)	131.75	Keep Coming Back	80.00	There Is A Solution	0
AA World Services (literature)	591.34	Keep It Simple	445.05	Village Group	0
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>1,363.78</b>	The Recovery Group	0	Women of Quality	191.10
<b>Beginning balance</b>	<b>4,321.63</b>	Middle Cape Fear	0	Walking The Same Path	0
<b>Deposit subtotal</b>	<b>459.13</b>	New Beginnings	0	Individuals	222.63
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4,780.76</b>	New Freedom	140.00	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,382.62</b>
			396.88		<b>7,570.68</b>