



CAMEL COURIER

VOLUME 30 Δ ISSUE 5 Δ MAY 2016

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Area 34 - District 11
coverage area includes:
Antrim, Benzie,
Grand Traverse,
Kalkaska, & Leelanau
counties.

**Traverse City AA
Central Office**
3291 Racquet Club Drive
Suite B
Traverse City, MI 49684



Hot Line
(231) 946-8823
24/7 Service

Office Hours
Mon – Fri 10AM – 5PM
Saturday – 10AM - 2PM

Email
district11centraloffice@yahoo.com

Website
www.district11-aa.org

EMPTYING MY 'CLOSET OF HURTS'

For eight years, I had been living a life of emotional hoarding because of alcoholism. I lived in seclusion, consumed by depression, constant worry, and panic. Unlike a hoarder who collects things, I had been collecting "hurts."

My son's disease was kept a secret because admitting it to others was much too painful. I was in denial for thinking that no one outside of our family knew of the alcoholic's weekly episodes. My denial was no different from the alcoholic's denial that blinded him from seeing the devastation that his untreated disease was causing in his life.

Sharing what had become my chaotic life with family and friends only made them feel just as helpless about my pain as I was with the alcoholic's pain. I had made it my mission in life to always be there for my children. Now, I was faced with the reality that I wasn't able to find the solutions that would cure the disease that had sucked the life out of my family.

Along with each new hurt and disappointment, came my ability to stuff the pain in my little "closet of hurts." My sadness could be stored in a make-believe place, where no one could see it. I had such a strong desire to protect the alcoholic. The pain and the memories associated with alcoholism had become mine alone. I had reached a point that sharing my thoughts only led to more feelings of inadequacy for not being able to fix my loved one's life.

The stories of our lives seem incredulous to people who knew our family. Keeping my reality locked away somehow acted as a shield from admitting our less-than-perfect life to others. Each new drinking binge, and the disastrous events that followed, brought about the repetitive pain of watching someone you love suffer and not being able to help them. The consequences of his behavior had led to job losses, school dismissal, hospitalizations, and yes, jail!

It took all these years for those hurts to accumulate to the point that my closet door would no longer close and they all came tumbling out of the closet. They had morphed themselves into a hurt that I no longer recognized as the alcoholic's pain, but rather as my own.

My life had become insanely chaotic. I was no longer able to keep one step ahead of him, and the fear was overwhelming. I felt defeated by the lies, broken dreams, panic, and unpredictability of the alcoholic's life. One very somber day, I bravely walked into my first Al-Anon meeting, then another. For several weeks, I attended a meeting every day in order to try to regain some of my own sanity.

(Continued on Page 2)

In the Al-Anon meetings, I saw only survivors. They may have been just as wounded when they came to this fellowship, but now they were composed, and ready to help me too. Most of my first meetings, I did not share because I could not trust myself to even begin to resign myself to accepting that the alcoholic may never recover. To make that admission felt as though I was betraying my role of a loving, supportive mother.

The more meetings I attended, the more survival tools I gathered. The Serenity Prayer soon became a prayer said each time I felt panic at the unpredictability of what the evening would bring when my son was hanging out with friends. These meetings offered me hope. They helped me to start replacing hurts with acceptance, compassion, and soon with forgiveness.

There was healing with each meeting. I soon felt some of the resentments begin to dissipate, as I was no longer a victim of the hurts I had subconsciously tucked away. I am still not where I need to be in the process of understanding, acceptance, and relinquishment to my Higher Power, but I do know that I now have a burning desire to clean out my useless little “closet of hurts”—“One Day at a Time.”

BY: Josephine B-V SOURCE: *Al-Anon Family Groups* – March 2014

Calendar of Events - MAY 2016

May 1 Northern Michigan Inter-Area, 321 N. Bridge Street in Bellaire, MI. 10:30am – 2:30pm.

MAY 7, 14, 21, 28 Open Talk Speaker Meeting at Munson Hospital basement, 1105 Sixth Street, Traverse City, 8:00pm. If you would like to be a Speaker in the upcoming months, please contact Shannon H. at (231) 649-3294, or email: tho2936992@hotmail.com .

MAY 11 Central AA Office Board Meeting, 3291 Racquet Club Drive – Suite B, Traverse City at 5:30pm. All AA and Al-Anon/Alateen members are welcome. For More Information: Call (231) 946-8823, email district11centraloffice@yahoo.com or view their website: <http://www.district11-aa.org/>

MAY 13 - 15 Michigan Al-Anon & Alateen Family Groups 44th Annual Convention in Bay City, MI. For More Information: <http://www.miafg.org/2016MIAFGregistration.pdf>

MAY 14 District 11 Meeting, Munson Hospital at the Cafeteria Dining Room #2, 1105 Sixth Street, Traverse City at 9:30am. For More Information: Email area34.district11@gmail.com .

MAY 15 Western Michigan Area 34 Assembly. Hosted by District 9, at the Lake Township Hall, (8105 West Kelly Road) in Lake City, MI 49651 at 10:30am. For More Information: Email area34.district11@gmail.com or check out <http://wmaa34.com/>

MAY 27 - 29 Northern Michigan Inter Area Annual Spring RoundUp. Ramada Inn Conference Center in Grayling. For More Information: <http://www.cmia32.org/fliers/grayling2016.pdf>

★ FOUNDERS' DAY 2016 ★

81st Anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous

June 10, 11, 12, 2016

in Akron, Ohio – THE Birthplace of A.A.

For More Information:

<http://foundersdayregistration.akronaa.org/>

MCYPAA Advisory Annual Campout

July 22 - 24, 2016

At the Paddlebrave Camp & Canoe in Roscommon, MI

For More Information:

http://mcpaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/MCYPAAAC_Campout_2016.jpg

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

District 11 – Area 34

Central Office

3291 Racquet Club Drive #B

Traverse City, MI 49684

(231) 946-8823

Board Members

Jodie S., Chair

Amanda S., Secretary

Steve G., Treasurer

Joe S., Asst. Treasurer

Rebecca S., Literature Buyer

Jodie S., Webmaster

Phil S.

Sue V.

Ted K.

Volunteer Coordinator

Susan N.

★RECOVERY★

★UNITY★

★SERVICE★

⇒ **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY** ⇐

SEEKING PT OFFICE MANAGER

AT CENTRAL OFFICE

The Central Office board has voted to hire a part-time office manager. We are looking for someone with customer service/office experience, tech-savvy, sober at least 2 years, and active in sobriety. Duties will include managing volunteer staff, working with the Volunteer Coordinator for phone coverage, some light bookkeeping, as well as management of the retail system. If interested, please send a resume and cover letter to: d11centraloffice@gmail.com, and title the email "Office Manager." All resumes will be kept confidential. Thank you for your interest in supporting District 11 Central Office!

CENTRAL OFFICE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

Are you looking for a way to get involved in the New Year? Central Office needs you! The District 11 Central Office is a vital communication link between the newcomer and Alcoholics Anonymous in our area, as well as the main literature supplier for groups in our district and beyond.

We need volunteers - shifts are Monday thru Friday, 10AM-2PM and 2PM-5PM, as well as phone coverage after retail hours.

PLEASE CONTACT

Susan N. (our Volunteer Coordinator)

at (231) 645-1267

or email her at sjnoakes@sbcglobal.net

CENTRAL OFFICE RETAIL STORE

Our Literature Buyer, Rebecca S., has been placing quite a few orders lately to make sure the gift and merchandise inventory at Central Office are plentiful and available for all of our customers. Along with the wonderful conference-approved literature (Big Books, 12 & 12's, etc.) we have many new 'Daily Meditation' books.

We have received new items like hats as well as beautiful jewelry, greeting cards, coffee mugs and wallet cards. We carry book covers, posters of the Steps and Traditions, a wide variety of anniversary coins, and World Service Manuals to help with service positions.

We also have a large supply of items for AI-Anon and ACA.

If we don't have it in stock, Rebecca S. would be happy to track it down for you or your individual group.

If anyone would like to assist Rebecca S. with any of the duties or inventory work – please contact Central Office and let her know. It's a great way to get involved with service work.

The CAMEL COURIER Needs A New Editor

Are you looking for an opportunity to serve? Our Camel Courier, in print since 1989, needs you! This is Central Office's monthly newsletter in print, notifying the entire area about events, along with articles and minutes of important meetings. If you have at least 1 year of sobriety, computer savvy and willing to put together a great read for the community, please let us know immediately at Central Office and come help be of service to our AA community! Call (231) 946-8823 or Email: district11centraloffice@yahoo.com if interested.

OPEN SPEAKER MEETINGS

at Munson Hospital
Conference Room in Basement
Every Saturday (8:00pm)



*No list of speakers was made available
prior to the publishing deadline.*

*Please refer to the
Central Office website*

<http://www.district11-aa.org>

for any updates.



If you're interested in being the
main speaker, please contact:

Shannon H. at (231) 649-3294,

or email: tho2936992@hotmail.com

★RECOVERY★

★UNITY★

★SERVICE★

Central Office

Always Needs Volunteers

Whether you can help — in the OFFICE, handle
AFTER HOURS CALLS,
be on the 12 STEP CALL or RIDES LIST ...

PLEASE WE NEED YOU!!!

For More Information,
call Central Office's Volunteer Coordinator,
Susan N. at (231) 645-1267.

T H A N K Y O U

APRIL 2016 Central Office Volunteers:

Adam	Edwina	Marilyn
Amber	Frank	Nancy K.
Bill	Jennifer	Peter V.
Brian S.	Konnie	RuthAnn
Butch	Kristen	Shellie
Connie	Linda	Susan N.
Daniel	Lisa	Susan V.
Diane	Liz	Tamara

Northern Michigan Corrections Committee (NMCC)

*Carrying the AA Message into
Jails and Corrections Facilities*



For information on volunteering to help with meetings or for donations towards
purchasing literature,

please contact: Dan S. @ 231-633-0860, or email nmcc2011nmia@gmail.com,

or mail donations to:

Northern Michigan Corrections Committee, PO Box 5712, Traverse City, MI 49696

Traverse City Central Office's Website

www.district11-aa.org

Our site has the most up-to-date area AA Meetings List (printable); Al-Anon and Alateen Meetings; District 11 information; AA Links; as well as current and archived issues of our monthly newsletter - the *Camel Courier*; . . . and much more.

Central Office Board Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2016

(Minutes to be approved at the May 11, 2016 Board Meeting)

Board Members Present: Jodie, Rebecca, Amanda, Joe

Others present: Susan, Bill, Roger

Secretary's Report: Amanda read minutes from February 2016 meeting; Joe motioned to accept with one amendment (Kristen is the new volunteer; "Crystal" was a mistake); passed unanimously

Treasurer's Report: Joe read treasurer's report in Steve's absence; this report is only for March; 6-month CD that matured rolled into a new 6-month CD

Webmaster's Report: Jodie is continuing to manage the website; Central Office still needs a webmaster (very easy to do using WordPress) - board members will announce at meetings

Camel Courier Report: Mike is looking for someone to replace him as the editor of the newsletter

Literature Report: Rebecca thanks the volunteers for doing a great job keeping track of inventory; her in-progress orders are filed on the office door in case anyone is wondering what the status of an order is. Al-Anon literature can take up to three weeks to arrive, so please be patient for those orders.

Volunteer Coordinator's Report: Susan still needs volunteers for both shifts on Thursday, every other Wednesday afternoon, every Tuesday afternoon, and the second and fifth Saturdays of the month

Old Business:

New Business:

Do we need a prudent reserve? - this item needs to be tabled until the treasurer is at the meeting and/or until an office manager is hired

Amanda will make proposed changes to the by-laws and send them by email for the board members review before the next meeting, including (but not limited to) updating address, technology, and other issues

Roger from Antrim County: 15 groups in Antrim County are seeking recognition as a new district by Area 34 and need support from a central office. Although the name is District 11 Central Office, there is nothing in our by-laws that says we support District 11 exclusively, so there is no conflict of interest to support a different district. Joe made the motion for Central Office to support this new district if and when it is formed. Motion passed unanimously.

Mike is looking for a replacement for the Camel Courier; this person would be a member of the Central Office board and would need to attend the monthly board meetings

Jodie and other board members will continue to solicit applications for the office manager position, because putting it on the website has not brought a large enough pool yet; we as a board will review the applications during the next board meeting

Income taxes are due in May (non-profit deadline); Jodie will work with the accountant

For any meetings that want to use the District Office space, Jodie will approve the applications (as opposed to the entire board). If there are confusing or conflicting issues, she will bring those to the board if she is unsure of whether to allow the meeting to rent this space. The board discussed whether to allow non-AA groups to rent the District Office space for meetings, and the issue was tabled.

Joe made the motion to allow the Fall Roundup planning committee to meet at Central Office. The motion passed with one nay and one abstention.

Rebecca will take literature to the Spring Roundup in Grayling. Central Office will reimburse Rebecca for travel expenses.

Joe moved to close. Passed unanimously.



DISTRICT 11 MEETING MINUTES

April 9, 2016

The meeting was opened by Mel H. at 9:30 with the Serenity Prayer

15 members present.

(FYI, I ended up in the Emergency Room at this hospital not long after the meeting. As a result of the symptoms I was experiencing, I wasn't paying much attention, so please email me at my home email with clarifications, information that I should have included but didn't, errors, or anything else about which you feel I haven't been accurate.)

District 11 Statement of Purpose: Shannon D. Tradition of the Month: Deb R. Concept of the Month: Marv S. Declaration of Unity: Mel H. Role Call:

Officer Reports

Secretary: Minutes approved.

Treasurer: Report attached. Report approved. New IRS rules are 23 cents a mile.

Chair: Hi Everyone, I think our last meeting was encouraging, so I don't want to take up much time with this. I heard some positive things starting to happen.

Moving on to the Area 34, The March meeting was in Kalamazoo and most of it was dedicated to the agenda items for the Mock Conference. The Committees discussed the items in the morning session on presented their opinions in the afternoon. After discussion, a motion was passed to send our delegate to the conference informed, but uninstructed. The next meeting, of course, we are hosting in Kingsley.

I also attended the Mock Conference in Mt. Pleasant as did 4 other members of our district. All 3 Michigan Areas and their delegates also attended. I'll mention a couple of items that will be on the Conference Agenda. There is a proposal to publish changes to the Service Manual biannually instead of annually. There would be a cost savings of about \$55,000 in the off years. There is also a proposal to rewrite the first 164 pages of Alcoholics Anonymous into "plain English". I don't think that idea was well received. If any of our other attendees would like to comment, please do.

That's enough from me, time to move on to business. Thankful to be serving --Mel H.

There was also a discussion of a proposal made at a larger meeting to rewrite the first 164 pages of the Big Book into "plain English." The discussion centered on how groups could make their feeling known before this is discussed. Mel pointed out that groups can contact the Area 34 delegate directly to express opinions and concerns.

Committee Reports

PI/CPC: Open Corrections: Jerry H. is interim chair.

Grapevine: Open

Treatment: Open

Special Needs: Kip reports that he is just getting into what his position requires.

Central Office Liaison: No report

DCM Reports

Antrim: Open

Grand Traverse: Amber is getting organized. Amber and Phil S. from Fife Lake are working to hold a workshop on May 21 at 12:30 at the Methodist Church in Williamsburg on Sponsorship: Getting, Being, and Using. Amber asked if District were willing to lend its name to the workshop, and to offer some financial support. Motion by Deb R. that we support the Sponsorship Workshop both financially and with District name. Marv S seconds Discussion followed Question called. Vote was not unanimous. In minority opinion, Jerry H. suggested that we need to set a limit of \$250, and offered that as a friendly amendment. Deb R. accepted the friendly amendment. Motion carried in a revote.

Kalkaska: Marv has been in contact with most of the groups in his area. He will go to Central Office to fill in informational gaps. Groups in his area seem to be doing well, with GSRs, and an average of 20 members. He attended Mock Conference, and will attend the Area Conference. He said that the Northern Michigan InterArea Spring Roundup will be in Grayling at the Ramada Inn, the first Sunday in May.

Leelanau:

Benzie: Scott has gotten together with GSRs, treasurers, etc. but hasn't had a great deal of participation. He reports a new meeting in Benzie on Sundays at 4:00 at the church next to Cherrybowl Drive In. on 31. He also reports that there is a new "reality" TV series on AA called "Anonymous" on Sundays on one of the cable channels.

Area 34 See Chair report.

(Continued on Page 7)

Group Information, Announcements, and Concerns

Art H. brought up a question from his group about how the \$40 provided DCMs was actually to be handled. He pointed out that if we are simply supplying \$40 every month, no accounting is necessary. If it is reimbursement, then some supporting data should be required. He suggested that we change the wording of the original motion to clarify the issue. He proposed the following; Motion: That District monthly reimburse DCMs a sum, not to exceed \$40 per month, for gasoline used to perform their duties. It is understood that DCMs will provide a mileage log, and that they will be reimbursed at the current rate of 23 cents a mile for mileage documented in that log. Motion seconded. Motion passed

Liz P. from Lake Leelanau Nooners group asked about the Fall Roundup. Shannon provided information about the progress of the current committee planning the Roundup.

Old Business

Elections Jerry H. is willing to stand in for Corrections until someone else steps up. Liz P. expressed an interest in accepting the Corrections Chair. Motion by Deb. R. to accept Jerry as interim Corrections Chair. Seconded by Tim K. Motion passed. Motion by Deb R. to accept Liz P. as alternate Corrections Chair Amber J. seconds. Motion passed. Shannon asks about whether there are committees at the District level which the Chairmen chair. Roger clarified that District Chairs are part of Area Committees. Amber added that groups should have reps for the various committees. Service Workshops Kal F. suggests using the Munson Saturday night open talk, four times a year, to talk about service work. Shannon informed us that she is on the Munson Committee which meets the first Saturday of every month at 6:30 at Munson to plan the speaker meeting. She said that in order to be on that committee one needs to be a TC group member but that anyone can come and offer input. Motion by Amber that Kal F. represent D11 at the next Munson committee meeting to discuss how to have district service information provided to AA as a whole at the open talk. Seconded by Deb R. Motion passed

Changing Meeting Time and Place Jerry H. said that a local Alano club would be willing to host a Saturday meeting. Amber suggested that we separate the discussion of time and place, starting discussion with changing the time. Amber recommended that we change the meeting time to the first Tuesdays of every month from 7 to 8:30. Jerry suggested that we go to counties and find what venues would be available for that time frame. Amber suggested we check with Munson to see if we can use our current room on the Tuesday time slot. Various people will investigate a different venues and will report at next month's meeting.

Funding for Area Assembly Mel went over who has offered to provide food and drink for the Assembly.

New Business

None Motion to close at 11:00 by Shannon D. Seconded by Deb R. The meeting closed at 11:10 AM with the Responsibility Statement.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday, May 14, 2016 at the Munson Hospital Cafeteria Dining Room #2 at 9:30 AM.
- **Art H., District 11 Secretary**

The CAMEL COURIER seeks a NEW EDITOR

Are you looking for an opportunity to serve? Our Camel Courier, in print since 1989, needs you! This is Central Office's monthly newsletter in print, notifying the entire area about events, along with articles and minutes of important meetings.

If you have at least 1 year of sobriety, computer savvy and willing to put together a great read for the community, please let us know immediately at Central Office and come help be of service to our AA community!

IF INTERESTED --- Call **(231) 946-8823** or Email: district11centraloffice@yahoo.com

I am
more
powerful
than the
combined
armies
of the world
I have
destroyed
more men
than all the
wars
of all the nations
I have caused
millions
of accidents and
wrecked more homes
than all the floods
tornadoes and hurricanes
put together
I am the worlds slickest thief
I steal billions of dollars
I find my victims among
the rich and poor alike
I am relentless insidious
unpredictable
I bring sickness, poverty and death
I give nothing and take all
I am your worst enemy
I am
alcohol



"All of us in AA have a right to our own opinion, even if that opinion is that somebody else's opinion is not as good as ours ... The whole structure of AA is based on a democratic spirit. There are no bosses or gurus."

West Springfield, Mass., June 2002
From: "Live and Let Live"
AA Grapevine

About the **CAMEL COURIER** Newsletter

Published monthly, the **Camel Courier** is free to anyone.

Back issues can be found online at www.district11-aa.org . Hard copies available at Central Office.

Articles printed in the **Camel Courier** are the opinions expressed by individuals and not necessarily those of Central Office, its Board of Directors, or AA as a whole.

If you have an AA announcement, a meeting change, an upcoming AA event, or a story to tell ... please submit via email to: mthotis@aol.com .