

The MESSAGE March 2024



Shower Not Required

Only one thing is asked of him to become a member, he learned, and it's not whether he has clean socks
BY: KEVIN S. | HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

"Perhaps you should find a different meeting." That's what the woman said to me as we stood shivering outside the church. I was newly sober and still relapsing. "This is a Twelve Step meeting and you're struggling with Step One. You really cannot discuss the other Steps," she said. "You belong in a newcomers' meeting."

I was crushed. Was I really getting kicked out of AA? Ever since my alcoholism had taken over my life, I had lost so much. Had I screwed up my chance at this too?

I didn't argue with the woman. I went home and called my sponsor. We did have choices, he said. I could find another meeting, but did I want to? I explained to him that there were other newcomers at the meeting and there were also people with long-term recovery whose experience was benefiting me.

Then he asked me what the book was that we read from in the meeting. "The "Twelve and Twelve," I replied. "What's that other Twelve?" he asked. He was asking me? I could barely grasp the Steps. "Go back to that meeting," he said. "Take a look at the rest of the book, especially the Traditions. Read Tradition Three, which says the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking."

I did as he suggested, and when I read Tradition Three I wanted to jump up and do a cartwheel. That was the only requirement? A desire to stop drinking? I wasn't required to have worked the Steps. I wasn't required to quit the meeting when I relapsed. Just the opposite. I was encouraged to keep coming. Someone even told me that hearing from a newcomer helped him stay sober. Soon after that, I won a drawing at another AA meeting. My prize? My own copy of the "Twelve and Twelve."

The more I read the more I saw how the Traditions were put into practice. I lived in Massachusetts, but much of my worst drinking and drugging had taken place in New York City. I would travel down there for visits. And sometimes I would revisit my old behaviors and I would relapse. My sponsor suggested that I begin my day with a meeting, putting my sobriety first. If I still felt shaky after that, I could double up.

So I did. I discovered that a nearby church held one AA meeting after another throughout the morning. I fell in love with the group, even though we were all crammed into a little room in a basement. I learned that if I arrived at the meeting late, I might get turned away due to fire code restrictions on the number of people allowed.

One morning, I showed up and the only seats open were in the back row. As soon as I sat down, I understood why the seats were empty. A gentleman sitting in the corner stank. His clothes were filthy, and he needed a shower desperately. I remembered Tradition Three. The only requirement for membership had nothing to do with

Continued Next Page

AA Central Office of Shreveport

24 Hr. Hotline (318) 865-2172 office@aa-shreveport.org www.aa-shreveport.org

Office Hours

Mon & Thurs 10am-5pm Tues, Weds, & Fri 10am-4pm

Groups Responsible for

HOT LINE March 2024

In A Pinch Mary 4-10
5:30 Highland March 11-17
Fairfield March 18-24
No Guarantee March 25-31

This is a great service
that you do for the person
that is still suffering.

THE HOT LINE OUR MISSION:

"When anyone anywhere reaches out I want the hand of A.A. to be there. For that I am responsible." BW

If your group is not currently taking the hot line at least one week a year, please call us to add your group!
Call the Central Office for the schedule!

We need the help of your group and individuals to keep the 24 hour Hotline open for the still suffering alcoholic!

We need you!

a shower.

But this fellow appeared to be asleep. I had earned my seat in AA while he was taking up someone else's seat. Did this man desire to stop drinking or did he just desire shelter? Others around me seemed to be focused on the speaker in front, not on the gentleman in back. I followed their example. I also vowed to arrive early next time so I could sit in front, near the window.

I continued attending that meeting whenever I visited the city. That gentleman didn't always attend, but when he did, those in the back of the room knew it. Since this was New York, members made darn sure something was going to be done.

But they were doing it the AA way—through a group conscience. One person expressed their opinion vigorously outside on the sidewalk: "We must begin with Tradition One. Our common welfare should come first. That has got to inform how we practice Tradition Three."

I couldn't attend the group conscience, but at my next visit one woman shared her gratitude for the group decision. They had strengthened their commitment to Tradition Three by stating that this was a closed meeting, every seat was needed for someone who had a desire to stop drinking. I noticed that the man's smell had improved. Somehow Tradition One was also being practiced and the common welfare was coming first.

As time went on, the gentleman began to speak regularly. More than once, it was his share that kept me away from a drink for that day. I also had to face my own hygiene issues. When I heard someone disclose that they now changed their socks and their underwear every day, I thought that I better start doing that too.

My life kept me away from New York for a while. When I returned to my new AA friends in the crowded basement, the corner seat was occupied by someone else. I felt bereft that perhaps the gentleman had lost his battle with alcoholism.

At the end of the meeting, a well-dressed figure stood up and made an announcement about service positions. The voice sounded familiar. He finished by repeating his name. I was stunned. I was looking at the same man who used to sit in the back, only nothing about him was the same. He was sober, he took an interest in others, he laughed and carried himself with pride. In every way, he had cleaned up his act.

I approached him and introduced myself, and congratulated him on his recovery. I didn't need to ask him how he had done it. It was obvious. He kept coming back. As he got sober, he was changing the person he brought into the rooms.

Perhaps he was looking at me and thinking, This guy Kevin is being transformed by this program. He used to sit there and judge me. AA has even right-sized a guy like him. Maybe he took to heart the slogan on the wall: There but for the grace of God.

We were changing, both of us, but we couldn't do it alone. It was other alcoholics practicing the Traditions who saved our lives. We were just able to stay in the rooms of AA long enough for the miracle of recovery to occur.

The <u>AA Grapevine online store</u> has a variety of books, ebooks and other publications full of inspiring stories of fellow AAs on their journey to recovery.

Reprinted with Permission, AA Grapevine, March 2024

Like this story ????

SUBSCRIBE TO AA Grapevine

www.aagrapevine.org

STEP 3: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions pg. 34
Reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services

TRADITION 3: "The only requirement for A.A. membership is the desire to stop drinking."

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions pg. 139 Reprinted with permission of A.A. World Ser

The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.

- 1. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
- 2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
- 3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
- 4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
- 5. Am I overimpressed by a celebrity, a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
- 6. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he had been to AA before? What his other problems are?





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<u>CONCEPT 3</u>: "As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional "Right of Decision."

Twelve Concepts for World Services, pg.13

Where is the Hamburger?

The Real Problem Lies Between Our Ears By Rick R.

The disease of alcoholism is difficult to understand in a world that looks at everything in a logical way. Many of the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, (A.A.) spend years struggling to find the answers to this complicated malady. Our behavior while drinking often becomes the focus of our attempt to deal with this problem. It is logical to think that a person can just quit drinking when it starts to become a problem, and we know that this kind of logic does not work on alcoholism, but why not? If you remove the alcohol from the equation, his problems should diminish and things should return to normal, right? That seems logical but the real problem lies between our ears.

I was listening to a local sportscaster on the radio one day talking about his sparse college days when he was cramming for exams and working long into the night. He got hungry and ran out to the market to pick up something he could heat up for a quick meal. He purchased a box of Hamburger Helper, ran back to the dorm, opened the package, and the first thing out of his mouth was, "Where's the hamburger"? He was not aware that there is no hamburger in Hamburger Helper. All the ingredients were there and all he needed to do was to add the hamburger; then he would have a meal.

That scenario is like the way I have come to understand the disease of alcoholism. Many of us may have been alcoholics long before we ever took our first drink. All the ingredients of alcoholism were there, and all we needed to do was to add the alcohol; then, we had a meal. The ingredients for alcoholism are not all that obvious. They are often intangible; however, The Big Book and the 12&12 have addressed most of them. They are referred to as spiritual maladies, fears, immaturity, grandiosity, selfishness, dishonesty, guilt, shame etc. These things, and many other subtler issues, are the root cause of our inability to function without the use of alcohol (or other mind-altering drugs). The term "mind altering" is a clue to where the trouble starts. I believe that alcohol worked temporarily by the relief it gave me as it masked all those irrational fears that we alcoholics experience and the peace of mind we experienced midway through our second drink. (So, to speak) Alcoholism is a progressive disease and it requires us to increase our intake to keep up with that progression until we are out of control, and try as we might, we can never regain that control. That is the delusion that all alcoholics are faced with, and I am not sure that any of us can pick the day that we can abandon that delusion but when that day comes, if we remove the alcohol from the menu, but fail to address the other difficult ingredients, in a systematic way, we have little chance of experiencing a happy and successful recovery. Just knowing about them is not enough. We will need to practice the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous on every one of these destructive character traits if we are to experience the freedom of the spirit that we all seek. Our problems did not just appear, they have evolved over a long period of time, and it will take time to heal them. Patience, perseverance, unselfishness, understanding, faith, honesty; these are a few of the new ingredients that we will need to add to our plate if we plan to be around when the desert is being served. "The promises are being fulfilled among us--sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them" (BB pg. 84) HAMBURGER! WHO NEEDS IT?

CENTRAL OFFICE NEEDS YOU!

WHAT IS CENTRAL OFFICE?

CENTRAL OFFICE IS COMPRISED OF A GROUP OF SERVANTS WHO HELP TO FACILITATE THE 12TH STEP CALL AND PROVIDE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE TO OUR LOCAL AA COMMUNITY.



WHERE IS CENTRAL OFFICE?

2800 YOUREE DRIVE
SUITE 362
SHREVEPORT, LA 71104
(318) 865-2172

CENTRAL OFFICE NEEDS

- STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS
 - MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS
 - Your Business

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- SECRETARY
 - o RESPONSIBILITIES
 - RECORD AND MAINTAIN MINUTES AT STEERING COMMITTEE/COI MEETING THE FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH
 - o REQUIREMENTS
 - 3 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SOBRIETY
- TREASURER
 - · RESPONSIBILITIES
 - REVIEW ALL FINANCIAL RECORDS AND REPORTS AT CENTRAL OFFICE, OVERSEE PREPARATION AND TIMELY FILING OF REQUIRED RETURNS AND REPORTS, AND REPORT FINDINGS TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND COI REPRESENTATIVES
 - o REQUIREMENTS
 - **3 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SOBRIETY**
 - EXPERIENCE WITH QUICKBOOKS AND GENERAL ACCOUNTING PREFERRED
- Public Information Committee Members
 - o RESPONSIBILITIES
 - Assist PI Chair in disseminating information about AA to our community
 - o REQUIREMENTS
 - WILLINGNESS TO SERVE

MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS

CENTRAL OFFICE IS KEPT RUNNING FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND BY OUR COMMUNITY!

GROUP DONATIONS ARE DOWN SIGNIFICANTLY AS ARE CENTRAL OFFICE BACKERS.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- ENCOURAGE YOUR HOME GROUP TO SEND
 REGULAR DONATIONS
 - Make a one-time or when-possible donation
 - BECOME A CENTRAL OFFICE BACKER
 (SCHEDULING A REGULAR CONTRIBUTION
 TO CENTRAL OFFICE)

BUSINESS

ONE OF THE EASIEST WAYS TO SUPPORT CENTRAL OFFICE IS BY SHOPPING LOCAL!

COME TO CENTRAL OFFICE FOR ALL OF YOUR RECOVERY/GROUP NEEDS, INCLUDING: LITERATURE, PAMPHLETS, MEDALLIONS, JEWELRY, AND MORE!

CALL OR EMAIL CENTRAL OFFICE TO ORDER AHEAD!



Central Office NEEDS YOU!!!



Join the Central Office STEERING COMMITTEE

Secretary & Treasurer Positions Available

Please Come to Our Next Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 5, 2024 @ 6:00pm

Central Office Steering Committee & COI Meetings

First Tuesday of the Month

6:00 pm— Steering Committee Meeting 6:40 pm— COIs & Steering Committee

@ Central Office, 2800 Youree Dr., Ste 362A, Shreveport 71104

Central Office Intergroup

First Saturday of Month

Generally

Even numbered Months

At Highland Club

1711 Tulane Ave., S'Port 71103

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Odd numbered Months

At Koala Club

4809 Shed Rd., Bossier City 71111

Treatment & Corrections

Second Tuesday Every Other Month

6:00 PM at

Central Office

Tri-State Convention

Committee

Second Sunday of Month

Next Meeting

March 10,2024

2:00pm at

District 1 Area 27

Third Tuesday of Month 6:30pm at Highland Club 1711 Tulane Ave., S'Port 71103

DCM

Jane Rowell

(318) 564-9043

janeerowelll@gmail.com

Thanks to all the **Central Office Backers** contributions for the month of **January 2024**. If you would like to be a Central Office Backer (COB) just give us a call (318-865-2172) and we will happily email, fax or mail the application to you.

January 2024...\$927.64

Thanks for all the Group Contributions...January 2024...\$1053.78

Personal Recovery...\$62.00 T.I.E...\$40.00 Maverick...\$247.50 Tulane...\$27.28 Twin City...\$10.00 White Dove...\$100.00 Winners...\$467.00 Other...\$100.00

Bill W. said "I am responsible. When anyone reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. to always to be there.

And for that I am responsible."

Thanks for helping your Central Office be responsible!!!

Addresses for Group Contributions for 2024:

Central Office of Shreveport

2800 Youree Dr., #362A, Shreveport, LA 71104 (50%)

District 1, Area 27

P. O. Box 3924, Shreveport, LA 71133 (10%)

Louisiana Area Assembly, Inc.

7350 Jefferson Hwy., Suite 485-179 Baton Rouge, LA 70806 (10%)

General Service Office

P. O. Box 2407, James A. Farley Station, New York, NY 10116-2407 (30%)

(Percentages are suggested based on support of four service entities)
(Use your group conscience)

New SPANISH SPEAKING MEETING

Faith Church of God 7701 St. Vincent Ave., Shreveport 71106

La Puerta De Vida

Sunday

3:00 pm-4:00pm

Wednesday & Saturday

7:00pm-8:30pm

All Open-Discussion

Tulane TUESDAY SPEAKER Meetings



March 2024

March 5 Nancy S.

March 12 Eugene T.

March 19 Lisa M.

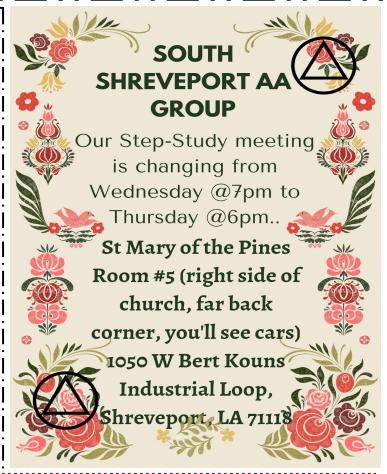
March 26 Antoine H.

7:00pm

Highland Club

1700 Tulane Ave. Shreveport 71103





The Message is published to improve communications between local A.A. Groups and encourage the participation of A.A. members in services and activities that promote sobriety. Opinions expressed in letters and articles are those of the authors and do not indicate endorsement by Central Office of Shreveport Intergroup or Alcoholics Anonymous.



COME CELEBRATE!

BASIC TRAINING

IS TURNING

3/2/2024, 2 p.m. St. Luke's

Join us for fun and fellowship.
We are wishing Basic Training a very happy birthday!
Cornhole Tournament and Speaker Meeting

Speaker: Kyle S.



POTLUCK STYLE SPEAKER MEETING

SAT. 16 MARCH, 2024 HIGHLAND CLUB

1711 TULANE AVE. SHREVEPORT 71103

SPEAKER: MIKE F. KARNACK, TX 37 YEARS OF SOBRIETY

EATING BEGINS AT 6:00PM
MEETING 7:00PM
DANCE TO FOLLOW

PLEASE BRING YOUR BEST HOMEMADE SIDE OR DESSERT!

MEAT PROVIDED BY THE SERENITY WEEKEND COMMITTEE



Want or Need to be of Service??? Join us for the Next **Tri-State Planning Committee Meeting** Sunday, March 10th @

> Central Office of Shreveport 2800 Yourre Dr., Ste 362 A, Shreveport 70014



Gratitude in Action March 21-24, 2024

Celebrating over 60 years of A.A. in Ruston

Convention Chairperson: Joe R.

Voice: **Beau H.**REGISTER ONLINE
AT

www.rustonaa.org

Gratitude House 1501 White Street

Thursday, March 21st

5:00 p.m. Registration Begins at Gratitude House

6:00 p.m. Pot Luck Meal

8:00 p.m. Kick Off Meeting at Gratitude House

A.A. Speaker: Beau H.-Ruston, LA

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hampton Inn by Hilton 1315 North Trenton Ruston, LA 71270 318-251-3090

\$109.00 Per night

Book by 3/15/2024

Civic Center 401 N. Trenton Street

Friday, March 22nd

4:00 p.m. Registration Begins at Civic Center 8:00 p.m. A.A. Speaker: Pepper B.-Liberty, MO

Saturday, March 23rd

10:00 a.m. A.A. Speaker: Terry E.-New Orleans, LA
1:30 p.m. Al-Anon Speaker: Larcine G.-Hawthorne, CA
6:00 p.m. BBQ Banquet (Donations Suggested)
8:00 p.m. A.A. Speaker: Mike A.- Nashville, TN

Sunday March 24th

10:00 a.m. A.A. Speaker: Chet S., West Monroe, LA



Tapes by James (jamestapes@aol.com) (985) 640-5552

The convention Hospitality Room will open Friday at 4:00 p.m. and close during each meeting.

Pre Registration: \$25.00 each received by March 1st, 2024 Registration: \$30.00 each after March 1st, 2024 ** Please wear badges at ALL times**

	** Please wear badges at ALL times*	*			
Name: (Print Clearly)	Mailing Address:	AA	Al-Anon	Alateen	
Email Address		Total Enclosed			
Sponsorship Contributions \$	Lend a hand to those unable to affor	rd registration	١.		

Preregister to be put in a drawing for \$50.00 cash.

Checks payable to: Ruston AA Convention

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 505, Ruston, LA 71273-0505

Beavers Bend Round Robin

April 26-28th, 2024

Crystal Forest Wedding & Event Venue - 263 Crooked Oaks Broken Bow, OK

Friday

11:00 Committee Meeting

12:00 Registration Opens - \$50 for weekend. \$25 for Saturday Only

2:30 AA Meeting

4:00 Old Timers Call Up Meeting

5:00 Dinner

6;30 Al-Anon Open Meeting

8:00 A A Speaker - Richard C. - Shreveport LA

10:00 Campfire Meeting



Limited Lodging Provided on Site Discounted Rooms Available at Charles Wesley Motor Lodge 580-584-3303

Saturday

7:30 Breakfast

9:00 Newcomers Call Up Meeting

10:15 Committee Meeting

12:00 Lunch

1:15 Men's Meeting

Women's Meeting Al-Anon Meeting

Alateen Meeting



\$50 Registration includes meals for weekend.

\$25 for Saturday Only – No Overnight

2:30 Alanon Speaker Meeting- TBD

4:00 Dessert Auction

5:00 Dinner

5:30 Sobriety Countdown

6:00 AA Speaker - Gary K. - Sulphur Springs, TX

8:00 Raffle

9:00 Dance

11:00 Campfire Meeting

Sunday

7:00 Breakfast

8:00 AA Speaker - Shannon L. - Texarkana

9:00 Drawing for Newcomer Prize

10:00 Hugs & Kisses

Contact: Amanda P. - 205-765-4383

Mike D. - 903-826-7989

FOOD, FUN, FELLOWSHIP!

Join our Facebook Group: Beavers Bend Round Robin

Thursday May 16th

Registration Begins at Barak Shrine Temple 5:00 PM 6:30 PM Hospitality Room Opens

8:00 PM Kickoff Meeting

AA Speaker: James M. (Breaux Bridge, LA)

4:00 PM Registration

6:00 PM Hospitality Room Opens

7:30 PM Opening Ceremony: Sobriety Count Up AA Speaker: Carl C. (New Orleans, LA) 8:00 PM

Saturday May 18th

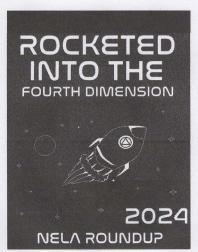
Registration and Hospitality Room Opens 8:00 AM 9:00 AM Al-Anon Meeting Al-Anon Speaker: Maddie T (Houston, TX) 10:00 AM Workshop/Panel (Shriner Room) - Topic TBD 11:15 AM 12:30 PM Hospitality Room Opens 2:00 PM Open AA Meeting Workshop/Panel (Shriner Room) - Topic TBD 3:30 PM 5:15 PM Hospitality Room Opens (Fish Fry) Prize Raffle and 50/50 Raffle 6:45 PM AA Speaker: Jeff N. (Oxford, MS) 8:00 PM 9:30 PM Talent Show (Following Speaker)

8:00 AM Hospitality Room Opens 9:45 AM Sobriety Count Down 10:00 AM AA Speaker: Mitzi R

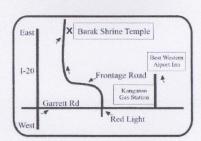
NELY BOUNDUP

37th Annual NELA Roundup AA Convention

In cooperation with Al-Anon



Voice: Ryan P. (West Monroe, LA) Convention Chair: Jill J. (318) 737-8242 nelaroundup@gmail.com



BARAK SHRINE TEMPLE 6620 FRONTAGE ROAD, MONROE, LOUISIANA 71202

37TH ANNUAL NELA ROUND UP 2024 - Rocketed Into The Fourth Dimension - REGISTRATION

The convention Hospitality Room will open Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and close during each meeting

Registration: \$30 each **Please wear badges at ALL times**										
Name:		Mailing Address: (Print Clearly)		Al-Anon	Other	Homegroup				
(Print Clearly)	(Print Clearly)									
ROCKETED INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION	Checks payable to: NELA Roundup Mailing address: P.O. Box 5063, Monroe, LA 71210	Pay online at ladistrict4.com	Total Enclosed:							
₹	Sponsorship Contributions: \$	Lend a hand to those unable	e to afford registration.							
2024	Pre-Registration \$25 per person until May 1st, 2024 There will be one drawing Saturday night for pre-registered guests - \$25 cash prize awarded									

www.LADistrict4.org

NATCHITOCHES AA PRESENTS "THE CONVENTION YOU CANNOT MENTION"



TCYCM 2024

SPEAKERS

LAURA B. - NOLA KANDI Y. - ARKANSAS TOM M. - WINNEIELD ANONYMITY WORKSHOP, GAMES, DRUNK JUNK, MEDITATION, FIELD DAY, FOOD, FUN & RECOVERY!

ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

JUNE



SATURDAY

8:00 AM TO 8:00 PM ISH

NATCHITOCHES EVENTS CENTER

750 2ND ST, NATCHITOCHES, LA

PRE-REGISTER \$15

PRE-REGISTRATION ENDS MAY 14TH DOOR REG \$25 - DINNER MEAL TICKET \$25



WWW.TINYURL.COM/TCYCM/

RON 504-939-1454

DIANNA 318-332-2604

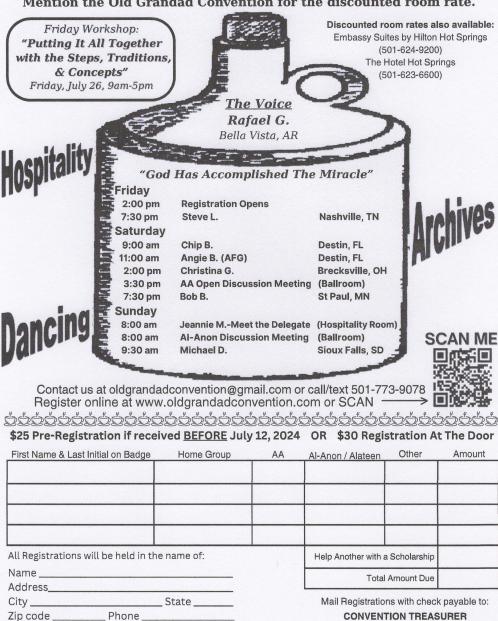
Arkansas State AA Convention
Oldest AA Convention West of the Mississippi

84th "Old Grandad" July 26-28, 2024 Arlington Resort Hotel & Spa

Hot Springs, Arkansas

Contact the hotel directly for room reservations: 501-623-7771

Mention the Old Grandad Convention for the discounted room rate.



See Our Website for More EVENTS www.aa-shreveport.org

Email

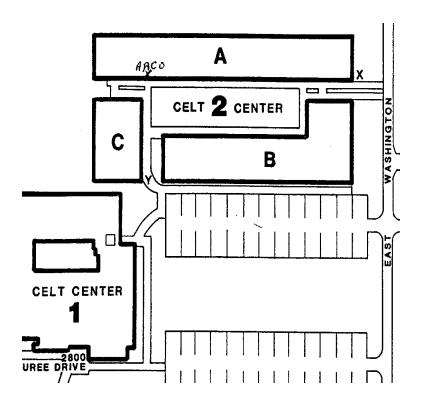
P.O. Box 447

Tontitown, AR 72770

Central Office

Please come by to check out our selection of approved AA World Services Books, Step workbooks, daily meditations, Bill W.'s Autobiography, Al-Anon books and workbooks and more. Colorful tri-plate medallions, recovery jewelry and greeting cards that make *our anniversaries memorable*.

If you don't see what you are looking for we will order it for you upon availability.



The Central Office Intergroup

The Central Office of Shreveport 2800 Youree Dr., Suite #362 Bldg A Shreveport, LA 71104-3646

