

East Tennessee Intergroup

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Dear Friends in the Fellowship,

Thank you. Your generosity and commitment to A.A. and East Tennessee Intergroup. We are enclosing our 2019-2020 year-end report. Please share this with your groups and sponsees. It describes how your Intergroup Office and committees are continuing to meet our responsibilities, and what efforts we are making to help all of us stay sober and carry the message to newcomers. We are also incredibly grateful for your support and patience during this pandemic as we transitioned to virtual meetings while working from home. This is a time like no other in A.A.'s history. The past few months have brought challenges and new opportunities to our fellowship. More than anything, these times have proven to us again that this is a 'we' program. Whether we are newcomers or old-timers, we need each other's support in and out of meetings more than ever. In the midst of it all, there have been beautiful moments. We have been amazed to see newcomers finding the "doors" of A.A. online and staying sober. Some have never even been to an in-person meeting! It has also been incredible to connect with A.A. friends all over the world as they visit our meetings and we visit theirs. Fortunately, we now know that A.A. is not a place. It is a spirit. It is resilience. It is adaptable and flexible. It is a community that extends beyond our physical limitations and connects us to each other in our shared desire to stay sober one day at a time. We have a powerful fellowship. Our job collectively is to carry the message of hope and recovery to still suffering alcoholics. We could not accomplish all we do without your support. You demonstrate A.A.'s Responsibility Statement: I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible. We are truly grateful.

Yours in the fellowship,

East Tennessee Intergroup Board

East Tennessee Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous 2019-2020 Year-End Report

The East Tennessee Intergroup Office is a clearinghouse of information assisting local A.A. groups, meetings, and members in carrying the message of hope and recovery to still suffering alcoholics. Your Intergroup Office is directly responsible to the groups it serves and provides resources to make Twelfth Step work possible individually and in the larger community so that all of us can stay sober.

As Bill W. wrote in 1967, “Though not costly, these service agencies are absolutely essential to our continued expansion—to our survival as a Fellowship.” A 2017 article from Box 459 News and Notes from the General Service Office of A.A. puts it this way: “We have to keep reminding groups that things don’t happen by magic in A.A.: there is hard work in carrying the message... The A.A. message of recovery is free; for intergroups to pass it on costs money.”

What do our contributions buy? This year-end report details all the services your East Tennessee Intergroup Office provided in 2019-2020.

24- HOUR HOTLINE

The Intergroup Office supports and coordinates a 24-Hour Hotline with the help of the Hotline committee. Intergroup maintains a monthly schedule of Service Workers to answer the hotline, both in the office and from their own homes. These Service Workers provide meeting locations as well as experience, strength, and hope to suffering alcoholics and their families.

- **Office Service Workers** answer phones in the office during business hours
- **Hotline Service Workers** take shifts on the hotline during the hours the Intergroup Office is closed. Calls are forwarded to their home or cell phones.
- **12th Step Service Workers** agree to talk with suffering alcoholics in their area who need more support than a quick call to the hotline can provide.
- **Bridging the Gap Service Workers** act as a temporary contact for newcomers just out of treatment by meeting them at meetings and introducing them to our program of recovery.

There were 15 Service Workers and substitutes who worked and answered the phones in the office, while 15 Service Workers covered from home. Additionally, **58 A.A. members** are on the 12th-step list. This list covers **21 counties**. We need everyone’s support because we never know where the next call for help is going to come from. Simply put, the hotline would not operate without the dedicated service of these A.A. members. In fact, many areas in the U.S. cannot maintain a hotline simply because they do not have enough Service Workers, so we are very fortunate to have a hotline that is available 24-hours a day. **In 2019-2020, the cost of maintaining the Hotline was \$1,814.58.** *This does not include the administrative cost of the hotline.

MEETING DIRECTORIES & NEWSLETTERS

The office prints an updated directory of meetings monthly but that has increased since March of 2020 to roughly once every two weeks and sometimes weekly. In 2019-2020, the office mailed a total of **372 hard copy newsletters plus 6,035 emails with a 34.13% open rate.** **The cost for all printing in 2019-2020 was \$1,495.40.** *This does not include the administrative cost of updating

information with groups and coordinating the layout of the meeting list. This includes the cost of paper and maintenance for our printers and equipment but does not include the administrative cost of compiling information or coordinating each mailing.

Each newsletter includes information regarding:

- Meeting changes, announcements, and service commitments
- The member anniversary list
- The monthly contribution report
- Flyers for upcoming fellowship events
- Minutes from the monthly Intergroup meeting and any district minutes submitted, among other things.

Subscriptions to the newsletter are available to all A.A. members who want to stay informed of events, announcements, and anniversaries. In 2019-2020, we had **31 postal and 530 online subscribers**. Electronic subscriptions to the bulletin are free to any A.A. member who wants to receive one.

In 2019-2020, we printed **105 A.A. members' anniversaries**. While we strive to include every anniversary that's sent in by the 15th of the month for the following month, there are always a couple that arrive too late for the printed list but are included but are always included in the next month.

SEARCHABLE WEBSITE & MOBILE SITE

The East Tennessee Intergroup website (www.ETIAA.org) is often the local alcoholic's first point of contact with A.A. In 2019-2020, our website received a total of **59,006 hits and 31,374 users**. The busiest day was December 31, 2019 with 314 users. In 2018-2019 we received 46,298 hits and 26,343 users. **In 2019-2020, the total cost of updating and maintaining our website was \$215.98.** *This does not include the administrative cost of maintaining accurate meeting information to post.

UP-TO-DATE MEETING DATABASE

To keep our website current and direct meeting goers to groups, we maintain a large database to track new and discontinued meetings, meeting changes, 12th Step Service Workers, group contributions, and other important information. Currently, there are **151 groups and 488 meetings** in the East Tennessee metropolitan area which **covers 7 districts and 26 counties**. These numbers change constantly as new meetings start and others discontinue the accuracy of our database relies on the timely information that is called or emailed into the office. We do not want to send a newcomer to a that isn't there.

LITERATURE STORE

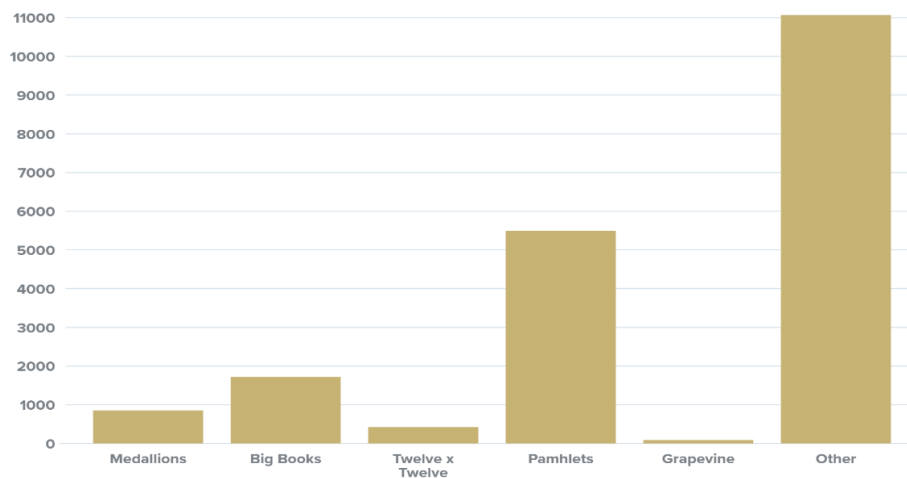
The Intergroup Office houses a literature store for the convenience of the groups. We sell literature from A.A. World Services, Grapevine, and other select publishers. We also carry medallions and specialty items and can accommodate special orders if needed. In 2019-2020, we sold a total of **19,638 items for \$40,997.64** (up from 17,909 in 2018) and shipped many orders. **In 2019-2020, the cost of ordering literature and keeping the bookstore stocked was \$32,100.08** and the profit was **\$8,252.50**. Intergroup only marks up the price of literature from A.A.W.S. and

Grapevine, 10%. Any income generated from literature sales covers the overhead costs of maintaining a bookstore. Every sale helps us keep the doors open. The Office also provides members with a safe place to relax between meetings. Many visitors come to buy literature, while some come to talk with other alcoholics. If you were one of them, we are glad you stopped by to see us!

Items sold for 2019-2020 fiscal year:

- Medallions: 852 (164 x 1 year)
- Big Books: 1,717 (922 Hardback)
- Twelve & Twelves: 423 (206 Hardback)
- Pamphlets: 5,490
- Grapevine Items: 88
- Other Books & Items: 11,068

Literature Items Sold in 2019-2020



CONSISTENCY & CONTINUITY

While A.A. Service Workers handle the important 12th step work of answering calls from alcoholics needing help, Intergroup employs a special worker. One part time special worker performs all the behind-the-scenes administrative tasks that require consistency and continuity to keep the office running smoothly. It takes dedicated effort to:

- Keep the website directory current
- Stock the bookstore and ship literature orders
- Answer emails and maintain correspondence with groups
- Publish the meeting directory
- Process contributions and acknowledgement letters
- Prepare monthly financial reports
- And act as a conduit between professionals, the public, and A.A. as a whole
- Answer questions about the traditions
- Keep a list of available meeting spaces and facilities requesting meetings

- List emergency closings on the website

An amazing team of service workers:

- Collate and mail the monthly bulletin
- Schedule Service Workers to answer the 24-hour hotline
- Guide distraught family members to Al-Anon
- Compile the 12th-Step list of Service Workers.

INTERGROUP COMMITTEES

The Intergroup Office supports its committees in their important work of bringing A.A. meetings to institutions, jails, and hospitals; engaging the professional community with information and speakers; hosting workshops; and providing fellowship opportunities at annual events. Our committees are tasked with doing 12th step work in various ways to carry the message to newcomers and old-timers alike. In addition to the Hotline Committee, which were already mentioned, here is an update on the work of some other committees in 2019-2020

The Outreach Committee is tasked with maintaining a communication link between groups. When we send newcomers or out-of-towners to A.A. meetings, we want to make sure the doors to the meetings are still open! The committee also works to ensure that the Intergroup Office has emergency contact information for each group.

Our Corrections Committee has been working hard to communicate with all local districts to increase participation and distribute literature to service workers taking the AA message behind the walls. Our Corrections Chair was able to attend the National Corrections Conference in Texas to share her experience, strength and hope with other corrections service workers.

The CPC (Cooperation with the Professional Community) and Public Information Committee have been working to increase awareness about A.A. in the community. In 2019-2020, we visited the Metropolitan Drug Coalition health fair to distribute AA information. There are many resources that A.A. offers to the community by providing literature, speakers, and general information, yet many people in the recovery field still do not fully understand how A.A. can help. The CPC and PI committees have been committed to reaching out and clarifying what A.A. does and does not do to help alcoholics.

The Technology & Website Committee oversees the website, hardware, security, and programs for the Intergroup Office. The committee also finds new avenues to improve our services and outreach. This year, the Website Chair and Office Manager attended the National A.A. Technology Workshop (NAATW) in Bowling Green, KY, where A.A. “techies” from across the country share best practices and latest innovations to improve 12th Step work. Some examples that other Intergroups have incorporated that we’d like to emulate is a chat feature on their website as well as mass texting capability to reach multiple 12th Step Service Workers when a call in their area comes in.

MOBILE INTERGROUP

Our Mobile Intergroup, our bookstore in boxes, attended 10 Mobile Intergroup Events and was featured in Box 459 in 2020. The Mobile Intergroup is one of our most important outreach tools that allows us to meet members outside the Knoxville area. We have met members who did not about Intergroup and the many ways we are of service to our area and how we could be of service to them. While many of the events we attend are not very financially profitable they are

absolutely invaluable to extending the hand of AA. If you would like the Mobile Intergroup to attend your event, please contact us at manager@etiaa.org.

https://www.aa.org/newslett.../en_US/en_box459_summer_2020.pdf

NEW INITIATIVES & UPGRADES

Upgraded computer programs to Office 365. In April 2020, the Website Committee assisted the office in upgrading to Office365, a cloud-based suite of Microsoft programs which, among other things, gives staff the capability to access our files from home. We also purchased a new computer and cell phone for our Office Manager to enable her to work from home and keep our meeting lists and app up to date during turbulent March and April.

Currently, we are in the midst of **re-designing our online literature store and website**. This pandemic is also prompting us to brainstorm new ways to carry out 12th Step work.

In October of 2019, we moved into a **new office space** in West Knoxville that happens to be next door to the largest clubhouse in Knoxville and much closer to the interstate than our previous office.

In January 2020, we **moved our Intergroup Committee Meeting** to the third Monday night of the month and have seen a marked increase in participation. We have also purchased a year membership to Zoom to continue the meeting online for at least one year to see if that will enable more members to participate, especially those with a long commute to the meeting.

Our Office Manager attended **the Intergroup/Central Office of AA Workshop** in Mesa, Arizona where she collaborated with other special workers to share ideas, innovate and collaborate on the best practices for Intergroups. We find this is one the most important events for us each year and we credit it with the majority of our growth the last few years.

2019-2020 INCOME & EXPENSE

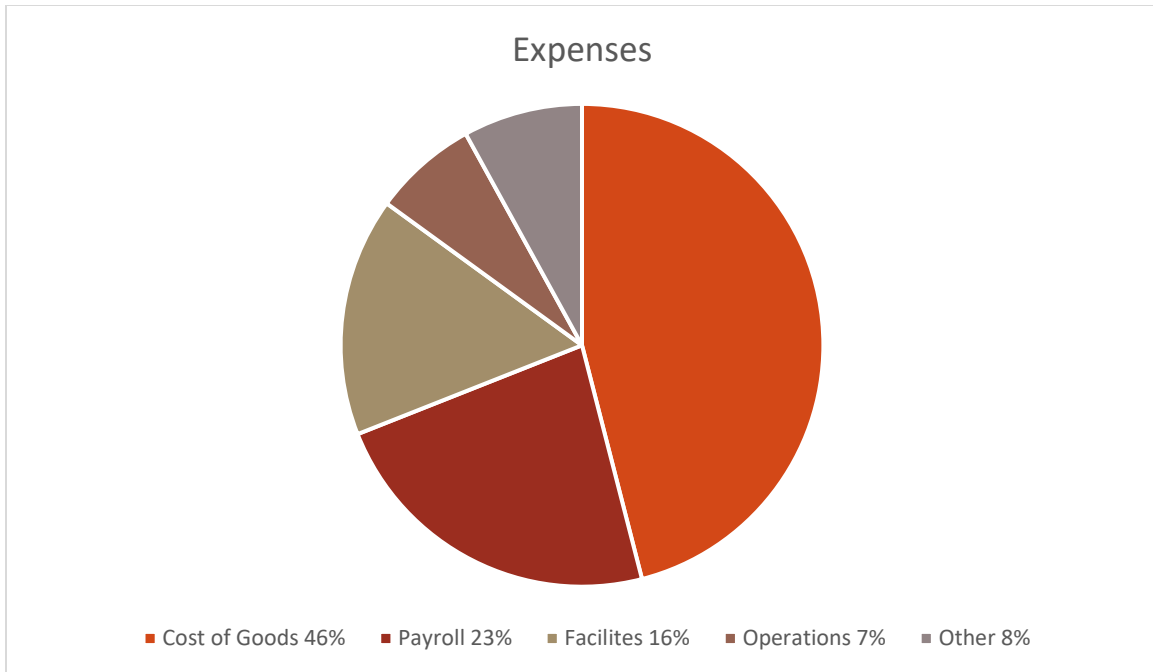
Here is a breakdown of Intergroup's income for 2019-2020: Of the 151 groups listed in the directory, **70 groups** contributed to Intergroup totaling **\$27,953.91**. *Down from 71 groups and \$31,759.14 in 2018.

Individual Contributions: Individual Contributions are those made directly to the Intergroup Office, in addition to the amount that members contribute to the basket in their groups. In 2019-2020, individual members contributed a total of **\$1,667.48** *Down from \$1,780.61 in 2018. Support ranged from \$1 to \$100. The General Service Conference approved maximum amount a member may contribute to A.A. is \$5,000 in a calendar year. Members may also make a one-time bequest of \$10,000 in their wills.

Here is a breakdown of Intergroup's expenses in 2019-2020:

In 2019-2020, the total expense of the Intergroup Office, including rent, supplies, insurance, equipment, utilities, and other expenses was **\$21,846.86**.

Personnel costs in 2019-2020 were **\$16,161.24**. The office employs one part-time Office Manager and this total reflects the wages and taxes.



In February, we were on track to have record growth in sales and contributions but the pandemic set in. As a board, we were pleased to do \$810.13 less than last year and -\$97.79 versus expenses for the whole year considering we were closed for 6 weeks and we missed the Appalachian Regional Roundup, which is our largest sales event of the year.

These are just some of the ways your East Tennessee Intergroup Office has been making 12th Step work possible for groups in our area. Any member is welcome and encouraged to attend our Intergroup Council meetings on the third Monday of each month currently taking place on Zoom. We appreciate all your generosity. If you are interested in supporting Intergroup by getting involved in service work, learning more about our committees, or making a contribution of time, effort, or resources, please let us know!

“The Intergroup associations are the best insurance we can have that our life lines to the hundreds of thousands yet to come will never break or tangle. Let us always be generous. Let us warmly support Intergroup.” --Bill W., 1949