

## Journeys in Service

When I came into Alcoholics Anonymous in 1973, I asked a man to be my Sponsor because he was the person who twelve stepped me, and was my first real link to AA. Afterwards I found out that he was very deep into Service Work through the Area Assembly. Wow- did I think that I had made a mistake in selecting him as my Sponsor.

Of course I had a bad attitude at that time and wanted only to do a little in this A. A. I thought that I was doing him and AA a favor just by attending those meetings, and that I was really into service when I extended my hand to someone who had a few less days than I had (smile). But this guy -my Sponsor— was very active in the San Diego/Imperial Valley Area Assembly. As soon as I had two years of sobriety, he nominated me at our Home Group to be GSR. At this time he was an active District Committee Man.

Was I disappointed when the Group voted me in as their GSR. My mouth was poked out, for you see, all I wanted was to go to all of those smoke filled meetings. After all, I am a single parent and I need to work - and you still expect me to go to all of those AA meetings. My sponsor would not listen to me whine and told me to get off my fur line "pity pot." Sometimes the Sponsor would even insist that I attend a person's 10th or 15th AA Birthday party. Can you believe that our Home Group had an Anniversary Potluck every year and during the Holidays we had a Holiday Party and went caroling? What do they think that I am, "superwoman"? I thought that I would only have to go to a few meetings a week and now he wants me to do all of this stuff. Even worse, every now and then they expect me to spend an entire Saturday at an Area Assembly Meeting. Don't they know that

I have other things to do and can not waste an entire day sitting and listening to AA Members debate whether or not we should have a new edition of the Big Book? Again my Sponsor would not even let me whine about it and said shut up, suit up, show up and smile.

Thirty years later I am so glad that I not only chose that Sponsor, but stayed with him. He became a New York delegate and I remained a GSR and a Service Sponsor. Some of my most rewarding AA moments have been through by Area Assembly assignments. I have been a GSR in San Diego, California, Harlingen, Texas and Long Beach, California. My respect for the structure of Alcoholics Anonymous is immense.

Reprint from *Harbor Light*, submitted by Barbara F.

**In This Issue...**

**\*Upcoming Events**

**\*Service Committee Schedule**

**\*Intergroup Minutes Synopsis**

**\*Happy Birthdays**

**NOTICE TO OUR READERS**

In this month's issue of the Recovery Times, the Contributions Summary is provided as a page insert within the newsletter. The editors are revamping the newsletter layout. Look for more "new looks" in the upcoming months.

## Upcoming Events

Jan. 16-18,2004      14th Annual River Round Up  
 Riverside Resort  
 Laughlin, NV  
 Info: 928-763-4499  
<http://www.rcco-aa.org>

\*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 6-8, 2004      29th Annual SFV Convention  
 Burbank, CA  
 Info: (818) 734-0383  
<http://www.sfvaaconvention.org>

\*\*\*\*\*

Mar. 5-7, 2004      20th Annual High Desert Convention  
 Ramada Inn  
 Victorville, CA  
 Info: (720) 252-7346  
 or (720) 447-8936

Registration forms for the events above are at the  
Intergroup Meeting OR at Central Office

## SERVICE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Jan. 19, 2003 **SFVH&I**  
**THIRDMONDAY**  
 8pm Business Meeting  
 Get Acquainted Workshop, 7pm,  
 5657 Lindley Ave.  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 2, 2004 **G.S. Districts #11, 16**  
**FIRSTMONDAY**  
 6pm, 11455 Chandler Blvd, N. Hollywood  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 2, 2004 **G.S. Districts #17**  
**FIRSTMONDAY**  
 6pm, orientation, 6:30pm meeting  
 5000 Colfax (church), N. Hollywood  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 3, 2004 **G.S. Districts #2**  
**FIRSTTUESDAY**  
 6:30pm, 4011 Dunsmore,  
 La Crescenta  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 4, 2004 **G.S. District #1**  
**FIRSTWEDNESDAY**  
 6:30pm, 7552 Remmet,  
 Canoga Park  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 4 2004 **SFV Board of Directors**  
 6pm, Central Office  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 14, 2004 **G.S. District #7**  
**SECONDSATURDAY**  
 Agua Dulce Woman's Club  
 33201 Agua Dulce Cyn Rd  
 Sharon G. (661) 951-0372  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 9, 2004 **SFV Intergroup**  
**SECONDMONDAY**  
 6:30 pm Orientation  
 7pm Business Meeting  
 St. Innocent's Church  
 5657 Lindley Ave, Tarzana

## Service Opportunities Alcoholics Anonymous in the San Fernando Valley

### PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE -

Provides information to the general public about what A.A. does and does not do. Could always use volunteers, especially young people and Spanish speaking A.A.'s for health fairs and to speak at various schools and businesses. Contact Central Office (818) 988-3001.

### HOSPITAL AND INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE -

Carries the message of Alcoholics Anonymous into hospitals, prisons & treatment facilities to those who are unable to get out to meetings. Meets the 3rd Monday of the month 8:00 PM @ St. Innocent's Church, 5657 Lindley Ave, Tarzana, CA. Info: Sarah G. (818) 894-9921.

### SAN FERNANDO VALLEY INTERGROUP -

Elected Intergroup representatives maintain and develop policies for Central Office, and inform other IG Reps about Alkathons & fund raisers, etc. Meets second Monday, monthly, St. Innocent's Church, 5657 Lindley Ave, Tarzana, CA. Contact: Central Office at 988-3001.

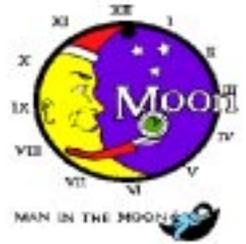
### SAN FERNANDO VALLEY CONVENTION -

Planning and executing all phases of our annual convention, at the Burbank Hilton, Feb, 2004. Committee meets every 3rd Tuesday of each month; 7 PM at St. Innocent's Church, 5657 Lindley Ave, Tarzana, CA.



# CENTRAL OFFICE

## GUIDELINES FOR PUBLICATION OF ARTICLES



**All** articles published in the Recovery Times will be reviewed by a committee of three (3) members. Articles must therefore be received by the 10th of the month for consideration of publication in the following month's issue. Guidelines for publication are as follows:

- 1) No use of profanity.
- 2) Primary content must pertain to alcoholism, the recovery from the disease of alcoholism, the 12 Steps or the 12 Traditions.
- 3) The committee reserves the right to edit all articles submitted.

As stated in each issue of the Recovery Times: "RECOVERY TIMES presents the experience and opinions of members of A.A. (and occasionally others) on the subjects bearing on the disease of alcoholism. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement of its content by the San Fernando Valley Central Office or Alcoholics Anonymous. Articles from A.A. World Services, Inc. (AAWS, Inc.) and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. (as well as other publications) appearing herein are reprinted with permission. The names ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS and BIG BOOK are registered trademarks of AAWS, Inc."

*Opposing views and rebuttals to articles published are also welcomed.*

**Submit correspondence to:**

**SFVCO Newsletter Committee  
7417 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite E  
Van Nuys, CA 91405**

### **Your Birthday Gift to Central Office**



**M**any A.A. members share their birthdays with those who need the same help and opportunity that A.A. gave to them.

By sending a donation to Central Office you share your birthday with Recovery Times readers. Send a dollar (\$1.00) a year - or \$1.00 for each year of your sobriety - or send as much as you wish to give to celebrate your birthday. The amount doesn't matter - it's the "counting" that counts.

May your special day be filled with joy from morning until night, and may the "24's" that lie ahead be especially glad and bright.

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

December 2003

Kathy T	17 yrs
Ron A.	14 yrs
Susan C.	14 yrs
Roger P.	14 yrs

*Learning to Live Men's Stag*  
51 yrs



## ISOLATION

I was reading an article recently in *The New Atlantic* about torture in the modern world. As you can imagine, in light of 9/11, the question comes up in regard to needing information that is held by captured terrorists. What can a civilized society do?

They interviewed a number of CIA spook-type people from the Cold War/Vietnam era. The experts pretty much agreed that physical torture will get some information - the problem is that people will say anything to get the torture to stop. In other words, the information obtained by those who torture can be pretty close to useless.

What does work is isolation. When you can isolate people, to the point where they don't know if it is night or day, they can't tell their friends from their enemies, and all their points of reference for truth are either gone or lost or confused - then you pretty quickly get to the point where they believe and do things that are contrary to everything principle or belief they hold.

Here's where this begins to relate to alcoholism (you were wondering, I'll bet!). Look back at that last paragraph-"don't know if it is night or day," "can't tell their friends from their enemies," "reference for what is truth either gone, lost or confused" - that describes those last days of drinking for me.

No thinking person would volunteer for the hell of alcoholic drinking. Yet, the disease, by gradually isolating us, can lead us into inflicting horrors on ourselves and our loved ones that we never imagine before we start to drink alcoholically.

The amazing thing about this, looking from a perspective of some years of sobriety, is that it doesn't change. That little voice in my head, at the most unexpected times, will say things like, "You're doing great. You don't need to go to so many meetings."

Another of its favorites is, "You've been sober a long time. You shouldn't be feeling this way. No one will understand why you're hurting, with years of sobriety. In fact, they'll probably make fun of you. Let's just keep this to ourselves." And my favorite, "You're different." All of those things are ploys to get me isolated, to lose my perspective so that the disease can get to working on me.

In my sobriety, I have only found one thing that works to combat it - being close to at least one other person, preferably many people. Close enough that I can say, "I feel a little crazy today," or "Here's what's going on in my head-does this seem right to you?"

That's where a sponsor, a Home Group, and a Men's group come in. All of these are ways to keep me connected to people, to keep me safe and comfortable enough to let people see what is inside. Otherwise, the disease can isolate me, I start to believe things that aren't real, and I make decisions based on that false information. I end up believing and doing things that are completely contrary to everything that I believe in, lying and hurting the people that I love - and eventually, drinking.

So, the article was a good reminder to me: Be involved. Stay close. Stay connected.

Reprinted from *The Last Drop*, submitted by Bill P., Englewood, CO

---

---

### Cherokee Wisdom

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that was going on inside himself.

He said, "My son, it is between 2 wolves."

"One is evil: Anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego.

The other is good: Joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, faith and determination."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather - "Which wolf wins?"

The Old Cherokee simply replied - "The One I Feed".

---

---

## The Man in the Glass

When you get what you want in your struggle for gain  
And the World makes you King for a day.  
Just go to the mirror and look at yourself,  
and see what that man has to say.

It isn't your father or mother or wife  
Whose judgment upon you must pass,  
The one whose verdict counts most in your life  
Is the one staring back in the glass.

He's the one you must satisfy beyond all the rest,  
For he's with you right up to the end.  
And you have passed your most difficult test  
If the man in the glass is your friend.

You may be one who got a good break  
Then think you're a wonderful guy;  
But the man in the glass says you're only a fake;  
If you can't look him straight in the eye.

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of  
years  
and get pats on the back as you pass;  
But your final reward will be heartaches and tears,  
If you cheated the man in the glass.

## WE DRANK

*We drank for joy and became miserable.  
We drank for sophistication and became  
obnoxious.*

*We drank for friendship and became en-  
emies.*

*We drank to help us sleep and awakened  
exhausted.*

*We drank to gain strength and it made us  
weaker.*

*We drank for exhilaration and ended up  
depressed.*

*We drank for "medical reasons" and ac-  
quired health problems.*

*We drank to help us calm down and ended  
up with the shakes.*

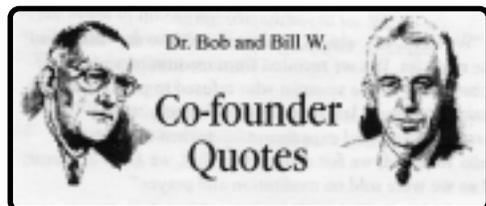
*We drank to get more confidence and be-  
came afraid.*

*We drank to make conversation flow more  
easily and the words came out slurred and  
incoherent.*

*We drank to diminish our problems and  
saw them multiply.*

*We drank to feel heavenly and ended up  
feeling like hell.....*

*Courier*



“Since our tradition of anonymity designates the exact level where the line should be held, it must be obvious to everyone who can read and understand the English language that to maintain anonymity at any other level is definitely a violation of this Tradition.

“The A.A. who hides his identity from his fellow A.A. by using only a given name violates the Tradition just as much as the A.A. who permits his name to appear in the press in connection with matters pertaining to A.A.

“The former is maintaining his anonymity above

the level of press, radio, and films, and the latter is maintaining his anonymity below the level of press, radio, and films — whereas the Tradition states that we should maintain our anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.”

Doctor Bob from *Doctor Bob and the Good Oldtimers*, pp. 264-265

“If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent unhealthy demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling liabilities.

“Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to twelfth-step ourselves, as well as others, into emotional sobriety.”

Bill W. from *As Bill Sees It*, page 288

## November & Bill W.

It has been said that November was always Bill Wilson's favorite month. In fact it was the month of his last drunk. After a dry spell. Bill started drinking again on Armistice Day, November 11th, 1934. Around November 26th, Bill had a visit from his friend, Ebby. On December 10th, Bill had the last of four beers and decided to get help one more time. On December 11th, 1934 Bill checked into Townes Hospital. On December 15th, 1934 Bill became a free man:

"My depression deepened unbearably, and finally it seemed to me as though I were at the very bottom of the pit. For the moment, the last vestige of my proud obstinacy was crushed. All at once I found myself crying out, "If there is a God, let Him show Himself! I am ready to do anything, anything!"

"Suddenly the room lit up with a great white light. It seemed to me, in the mind's eye, that I was on a mountain and that a wind not of air but of spirit was blowing.

And then it burst upon me that I was a free man. Slowly the ecstasy subsided. I lay on the bed, but now for a time I was in another world, a new world of consciousness. All about me and through me there was a wonderful feeling of Presence, and I thought to myself, "So this is the God of the preachers!"\*\*\*

Each time I read that passage, my spine tingles, my heart beats faster and I know and BELIEVE I'm Never Alone.

Reprinted from Harbor Light, submitted by Ron T., Long Beach, CA

\*\*\*From "A.A. Comes of Age" p. 63



*We ran the cartoon above for a few months and here are a few of the captions submitted:*

- If the mixer raft is not here by sunset, ....
- To lighten the load, should I dump the plaque or the barrel?
- Where are those pirates with the cola mixer?
- This is the last sober cruise I am going on.
- A dry drunk looking for dry land.
- Water, water everywhere and not a sot to drink.
- Where's that mermaid with my glass of ice?
- At some point, one of us has to go.

---

---

### **The Twelve Steps in Plain English (that even I can understand)**

1. Alcohol will kill me.
2. There's a power that wants me to live.
3. Do I want to live or die? (if you want to die, stop here.)
4. Write about how I got to where I am.
5. Tell another person all about me (let God listen).
6. Want to change.
7. Ask a power greater than me to help me change.
8. Write down who I've hurt.
9. Fix what I can without hurting anyone else.
10. Accept that I'm human and will screw up. Fix immediately.
11. Ask a power greater than me to show me how to live.
12. Keep doing 1 through 11 and pass it on.

Rule # 62: "Don't take yourself too damn seriously."

Help us! Think of a caption for the photo!

Give it a try - let your imagination fly.

In the January 2004 issue, we will post some of the submissions so you can see what some of the other wonderfully wacky people are thinking.

**San Fernando Valley Central Office  
Intergroup Representatives Meeting – Oct.13, 2003**

Paul D Chairperson – Meeting opened at 7:00 pm

Treasurer's Report; See Insert

Service Committee information see page 2 of the Recovery Times for more information

Old Business: None

New Business: First vote to move meeting location. Passed - second vote next month.

Birthdays Ron 4 yrs, Debbie 19 yrs, Joi 2yrs, Sarah 19yrs, Henry 3yrs, Bob 2yrs. George 1yr.

Motion to adjourn 7:30 PM

The long form of the Intergroup Meeting Minutes for Oct. is available at Central Office or at the Intergroup Meeting.

Next Meeting - November 10, 2003

Prepared and submitted by: Marie B Recording Secretary

## JANUARY IS GRATITUDE MONTH

What if AA had not been there for you when you reached out?

Are You Grateful the Hand of AA was there for you?

Support Your Central Office during Gratitude Month

Secretaries, Please read the following to your group:

Remember reaching out for help?

AA was there. You were greeted by a caring fellowship, offered a safe place to be, and the only thing required of you was a desire to stop drinking. Your Central Office is the voice of AA for many who still suffer in our area. Now AA can use your help.

We ask that you show your gratitude to Alcoholics Anonymous today by making a contribution in the provided envelopes. Additional envelopes are available for individual contributions. Please include the name of your home group. Thank You!



**Newsletter Subscription:** If you wish to receive your copy of the Recovery Times at your home, please complete this form and return with a check (\$7 donation to cover delivery cost) to:

San Fernando Valley Central Office  
7417-E Van Nuys Boulevard  
Van Nuys, CA 91405

### Current Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

New

Renewal

Additional Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Moving ???:** We need your former address as well as your new address to correct our records. Fill out both forms and mail to the address above.

### Former Address

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_