

RECOVERY TIMES

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The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

Old timer Strikes Gold

An AA old timer shares his daily program in A.A.'s Loners-Internationalists Meeting. (Loners-Internationalist Meeting or "LIM" is A.A.'s meeting in print. It is sent freely to Loners, Homers, Internationalists and anyone who wants to write to other sober members of A.A. around the world. If you can't get to meetings or want to be of service as a LIM Sponsor, call the General Service Office of A.A.: (212) 870-3400 or write: LIM Coordinator, GSO of A.A., P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, NY, NY, 10163. Editor, Pat K.).

It is time I check back in from Portsmouth, New Hampshire. I have been steadily writing to Loners, but not to LIM," shares Loner Sponsor Paul Boufford. "I did celebrate 35 years on February 10th. I put that much in the collection basket too.

Thirty-five years, plus I was forty-seven when I got sober, which adds up to 82 years for this old bird. Without a doubt the last 35 years have been the best part of that whole 82 year run.

I am still able to get to about six or eight meetings a week. I am a very lucky guy because I love going to meetings and I love writing and receiving mail from my LIM friends.

I suppose this is a good spot to include that I do get disappointed once in a while when my letters are returned because I was unable to correctly read the address on the letter from the sender because it was not legible. That is also why I went to a pawn shop and bought a \$25 typewriter and taught myself to type. Two fingers are all I use, but I get along pretty well that way.

I still can't get over the fact that I joined LIM when I first got to AA because I didn't



want to have to join an AA group; I thought I was a lone-wolf or loner. The truth is that the oldtimers

in my area attracted me to AA with their kind and loving ways. I really wasn't a loner. I was shy and afraid to mix in without any booze in my system. We used to refer to a glass of beer as a glass of "loud-mouth" and with a couple of glasses of loud-mouth, I could mix in anywhere. That is until I got shutoff.

I still meet my sponsor once a week for coffee and a chat. I see him at meetings during the week also. I still get on my knees, too, although I don't have the slightest idea as to what I'm praying to or if there is anything there at all, for that matter. Alcohol drove me to my knees on that last drunk 35 years ago. So whether I believe it or not, I'm still getting on my knees; I'm not taking any chances.

I would say my strongest point is working with others. I was taught to do it right from the beginning. Those oldtimers would take me with them on Twelve Step calls, plus they always had me and some other new guy carting drunks to detoxes. Detoxes were few and far between 35 years ago. They just began building them all over the place around 1977 or so.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The San Fernando Group's 65th Anniversary

Sept. 15, 2010, 7:30 p.m.
13245 Gladstone Ave., Sylmar, CA

The Sunrise-Sunset Group of AA Presents: "These are the Steps we took"

Sept. 18, 10 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.
No. Hollywood Masonic Center
5122 Tujunga Ave., No. Hollywood

Area 93's "Old Timers Event"
Those with 30+ years will share
Sept. 18, 2010, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Glendale Public Library, Glendale

22nd Annual Soberfest 2010
Kern River Valley Campout
Sept. 24-26, 2010
Frandy Park Campground, Kernville, CA
760-417-0957

59th Southern CA AA Convention
Sept. 24-26, 2010
Town & Country Hotel, San Diego, CA
www.aasocal.com (626) 806-6977

Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast B-Fast
Fundraiser to benefit Central Office
Oct. 9, 2010, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. with
speaker meeting to follow at 10:30 a.m.
Woodland Hills, CA
Tickets: \$10.00, Call: (818) 988-3001.

7th Annual Santa Clarita Valley AA Convention
Oct. 15 – 17, 2010
Hyatt Valencia, Valencia, CA
www.scvaaconvention.org (661) 310-0384

2011 San Fernando Valley AA Convention
January 28 – 30, 2011
Warner Center Marriott, Woodland Hills, CA



THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE: If you are aware of the passing of a member of our Fellowship, please call us at (818) 988-3001 or email an obituary to: sfvaanews@sbcglobal.net.

SERVICE COMMITTEES SCHEDULE: **SFV H & I: Sept. 20, 2010:**

7 p.m. Orientation/8 p.m. Business Meeting
5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana, CA

Gen Service, District 11: Oct. 4, 2010

6 p.m. New GSR orientation/ 6:30 p.m. Bus. Mtg
315 W. Vine Street, Glendale, CA

Gen Service, District 16: Oct. 4, 2010

6:15 p.m. meeting
15950 Chatsworth, Granada Hills

Gen. Service, District 17: Oct. 4, 2010

6 p.m. New GSRs./6:30 p.m. Bus. Meeting
5000 Colfax, N. Hollywood

Gen. Service, District 2: Oct. 5, 2010

6:30 p.m. Business Meeting
4011 Dunsmore Ave., La Crescenta

Gen Service, District 1: Oct. 6, 2010

6:30 p.m. Business Meeting
7552 Remmet, Canoga Park

SFV Central Office Board Mtg: Oct. 6, 2010

6:30 p.m., Valley Central Office

Gen. Service District 7: Oct. 9, 2010

9 a.m. Business Meeting
Agua Dulce Women's Club
33210 Agua Dulce Canyon Road

SFV Intergroup: Oct. 11, 2010

6:30 Orientation, 7 p.m. Business Meeting
St. Innocent Ch., 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES
IN THE S.F. VALLEY:



Your Central Office needs telephone volunteers for all shifts (esp. midnight – 9 a.m.). If you have a year or more of continuous sobriety, you can sign up at the office or online: www.sfvaa.org/involve.html

Public Information Committee: Provides information to the general public about what A.A. does & doesn't do. Need volunteers, especially young people and Spanish-speaking AAs, for health fairs and to speak at schools & businesses.

Hospitals and Institutions Committee: Carries the message of A.A. into hospitals, prisons and treatment facilities to those who are unable to get out to meetings. (See Pg. 2 for schedule). For more info, call Central Office: (818) 988-3001.

San Fernando Valley Intergroup If your meeting/group does not currently have an Intergroup Rep, please consider appointing

someone to represent your meeting. Intergroup reps provide an important service to the group by sharing information on upcoming AA events in the San Fernando Valley. The SFV Central Office exists to aid the local AA groups in their common purpose of carrying the AA message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Intergroup Reps Needed:
The SFV Central Office coordinates a monthly meeting for all Intergroup reps on the 2nd Monday of each month at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave. in Tarzana. New Intergroup reps should arrive for the 6:30 p.m. orientation, followed by the regular meeting at 7 p.m. **For more info: on serving as an Intergroup rep, call Central Office: 818 988-3001.**

San Fernando Valley Convention: Volunteers are welcome to participate in the planning of the 2011 Convention. The Committee meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month (except Feb. & March) at 7 p.m. at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana.-

CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS:

Live 24/7 Phone Service: Whether you are reaching out for help from another AA member or surfing the Web, you can find the Valley Central Office any hour of the day or night. Visit us at: www.sfvaa.org for meeting info, upcoming events, service meeting info, and links to other cool AA websites or call to speak with a sober AA member: (818) 988-3001.

Has your meeting changed? If your meeting info changes (location, time, meeting name or type of meeting), let Central Office know. Please provide meeting updates in writing by mail or delivered in person during office hours to: **Central Office: 7417-E Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, CA 91405.**

Having a Birthday? By sending a donation to Central Office, your birthday will be posted in Recovery Times. Send \$1.00 per year of your sobriety (or just send as much as you wish to donate).

August Birthdays:
Rudy – 1 Year
Jerry – 5 Years
Steve S. – 6 Years
Gillian McD. – 9 Years
Brian H. – 10 Years
Randy H. – 13 Years
Jay B. – 15 Years



Karrie – 17 Years
Kit – 17 Years
Tony S. – 10 Years
Colleen – 10 Years
Joan E. – 23 Years
Linda S. – 25 Years

Co-Founder Quotes:

Bill's editorial on the 9th Tradition: "A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

"Each A.A. Group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large Metropolitan area, their central or intergroup committee, which often employs a full-time secretary.

"The least possible organization, that's our universal ideal. No fees, no dues, no rules imposed on anybody, one alcoholic bringing recovery to the next; that's the substance of what we most desire, isn't it?"

Bill W., Grapevine, August 1948



Expressions Heard Around AA:

"In sobriety we get to meet someone new: ourselves."

Missouri -- Son: "Pop, February
what's an alcoholic?" 1947
Father: "A man who tries
to pull himself out of
trouble with a
corkscrew."

Central Office: IGR Meeting Notes of Aug. 9, 2010, 7:00 p.m.:
Chairman Hal S. opened the meeting with the Serenity Prayer.
Recording Secretary Dawn H. accepted a motion to approve the minutes from July's Intergroup meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer Brian H. gave the Treasurer's report: Group contributions are down over this time last year, but personal contributions are up by approximately 30%.

Executive Secretary Bob F. reported phone volunteers are needed for Central Office's phone banks (esp. 9 p.m. – midnight Saturdays and 12:00 a.m.- 9 a.m. Sundays). There are 32 open slots for phones in August. Volunteers are also needed to do Twelve Step work and serve as a contact for out of town guests. Charles has joined Central Office to help with our operating systems.

Internet Guy Michael F. reported www.sfvaa.org is getting 'hits' as far away as Poland and Scandinavia.

Do you have a story or news item to contribute? E-mail: sfvaanews@sbcglobal.net or by mail to the address below.



Newsletter Subscriptions: If you would like a copy of Recovery Times mailed to you, please complete this form with your new address, then return it with a \$7.00 check (donation to cover cost & delivery) to: **SFV Central Office, 7417-E. Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, CA 91405**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

New **or** **Renewal**

Additional Contribution \$ _____

Moving? What's your **former address** (along with your **new address**):

Name: _____

Previous Address: _____

OLD TIMER STRIKES GOLD, (Cont. from Cover):

Working with others always made me feel good. I used to drink to feel good; now I was getting that way without hangovers-how about that?

Though our literature tells us that we should be working with others if we want to stay sober and enjoy a great life, I really didn't get that until I was sober a few years. Today I know that is the only way to go for me.



I sponsor other fellows and always suggest that they work with others, along with service at the group and district levels. Years ago, I heard an old timer say that if you were having a rough time of it, ask your Higher Power to put a drunk into your life. I tried that and it worked for me, even though I didn't have to believe in anything at first. All I had to do was take the AA actions and put them into my life on a daily basis. AA has been very good to me and I believe it is because I took the AA actions.

Yes sir, I struck the gold they talk about in the Big Book, and it goes on to say: "I can't keep it until I give it away." Paul B., Portsmouth, N.H. Reprinted with permission from author.

Writing to Others is Twelve Step Work Too!

I discovered the Loners-Internationalists Meeting in print several years ago when I was serving as my women's group's GSR. I learned that each issue featured shares from A.A.'s around the world whose only contact is this meeting in print every other month.

I was interested in finding out how I could be of service so I called the General Service Office of A.A. in New York which prints LIMs. After leaving a message, I was soon contacted by the chairperson for LIMs who told me the only requirement to receive this free newsletter was requesting to be put on the list.

He asked me if I was a Loner, which is someone who does not attend live AA meetings. I told him I was not. He then asked if I was a Homer, someone who cannot attend meetings due to health reasons. Once he determined I was a regular, functioning AA member, he told me that I could become a "Loner Sponsor," which means I could write to others whose names and addresses (and e-mails in some cases) are listed in the LIMs International Directory.

I have been a Loner Sponsor for three years now and find it extremely rewarding. I have written to and received letters from AAs in Vancouver, Canada; Sudan and Tanzania, Africa; Glasgow, Scotland; London, England; and from members of our armed forces in Iran and Afghanistan. One shared with me that his meeting that day was cut short by shellfire so he and the others had to take cover in a foxhole. Another AA shared with me how she was a hunchback and could not walk or raise her head. However, she felt blessed to be sober and to be able to be part of such a loving network of others in the fellowship through LIMs.

With each letter I write, I try to share hope for a better day. Here in the San Fernando Valley, we have over 500 meetings a week – and another 500 in Los Angeles. Writing to others has allowed me to do Twelve Step work with others and to recognize how fortunate I am to be sober and able to get out to meetings whenever I want to.

Pat K., Sunland, CA



NEW EVENT: "TAKE YOUR SPONSOR TO BREAKFAST" BREAKFAST

The first, annual "Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast" breakfast will be held on Saturday, October 9, 2010 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. with an open speaker meeting to follow at 10:30 a.m. in Woodland Hills.

Tickets are \$10.00 and benefit your San Fernando Valley Central Office. Tickets are available through Central Office.

Adventure of Recovery

ACTIVE ALCOHOLISM for me became a negative, passive, daily experience. The only active role my mind and body performed was in obtaining the next drink, the one that was going to work and turn everything around for me. In retrospect, I see that my thinking was all passive fantasy; I was incapable of assuming an active, "here and now" position.

The day I decided to admit that I was sick, finished, done was the only day in many years that I reached a decision and followed through on it. I made a request for help to a group of people unknown to me, the members of AA.

Some months later, my sponsor explained that my negative attitudes were keeping me from enjoying the kind of sobriety that most members experienced by following the Twelve Steps of recovery in the order they were written.

I did not know how to begin. I was told to keep it very simple. Each day, I was to get up, ask God to keep me sober, plan to go to an AA meeting that night, and do what I was supposed to do that day. I was to make a commitment to God (whom I really did not believe in), to my sponsor (whom I did believe in), and to myself (who was not playing with a full deck). There were good days and bad days after that, but the experience of trying to live up to my commitments gave me good feelings, which I shared with my AA friends.

Gradually, each day became an adventure. As commitments were met, I liked myself better. A little gratitude entered my thoughts, and I began to thank God for each sober day. God and I were beginning a relationship: anger on my part and a patient ear on His.

That is the way the Steps began for me. Today, each one is a living Step, a guide to make me feel better about myself--the adventure of recovery. Once started, the Steps cannot be turned off, I have found. Working them has become an active, joyful, positive experience.

"As a rule, man's a fool.
When it's hot he wants it cool.
And when it's cool, he wants it hot.
Always wanting what is not."

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Grapevine Humor:



Winner: "Last time I ran across the road, I got hit by a Mack truck, but I KNOW it will be different THIS time!"— *Ray M.*

Honorable Mention: The tragic truth behind what really happened to Bambi's dad. — *Nic G., Lemoore, CA*



Winner: "Mr. Jones wanted a second opinion when I told him he was an alcoholic. So I told him he was in denial, too!" — *Fred F., SadBadGlad Group, Albany, NY*

San Fernando Valley Central Office

7417-E. Van Nuys Boulevard

Van Nuys, CA 91405

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