

RECOVERY TIMES

Vol. 35, No. 4, April 2011

The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

ALOHA: TAKING AA ON THE ROAD TO HAWAII

What Could Be Better for an AA Than an Island Where They Make Their Own Coffee?!!!



When I first decided to go to Hawaii on this solo trip, I was really excited about seeing the Big Island again. I had heard about the Big Island Bash from the famous raffle that is held every year at the San Fernando Valley AA Convention and it looked like it would be a lot of fun. I also wanted to be sober when I revisited Hawaii, as my last trip here was during my drinking years when I propelled myself through a crash course of “fun” on a three-island tour over ten days’ time. This time, I wanted to do it slowly, appreciating each moment with AA as the central theme.

However, two days before my big trip to Hawaii, I was seized with overwhelming irrational fear. I worried that going alone would be a mistake; that I might not fit in or find people I liked, that the plane might crash, or that I might feel out of place. I worried about another tsunami hitting from Japan (the Big Island received quite a bit of damage in March from the tsunami). I wondered if it was really worth going on this trip. I now know that my fear had to do with my fear of new experiences, kind of like when I started Junior High or High School or when I took my first drink to “fit in.”

To relieve my fear, an AA buddy suggested I call the West Hawaii Intergroup Office to see if someone could meet me at the place I was staying and take me to my first meeting in Hawaii. I didn’t know people did that! I made the call and Rachel of Kailua-Kona told me not to worry. She would find someone to come get me. Sure enough, just as I was picking up my rental car in Hawaii, my phone rang. It was AA Donna asking when I would like to go to a meeting.

That’s pretty much how the whole week I spent in Hawaii went. Every time I felt alone, I would see someone who I had met at a meeting and I would remember that I am never alone in this program. In addition to going to five meetings at the Bash, I attended four local West Hawaii AA meetings: Nooners on the Beach was awesome with the waves crashing just 20 feet away. The Torch Light meeting on the beach Saturday night was lit by tiki torches and those of us who braved the rain enjoyed the company of other “die-hards.” The Daily Reprieve meeting on Sunday night brought together a large group of “locals” and travelers from the Bash. And the Hana Liki meeting at the Kailua-Kona Alano Club gave me the structure I’ve grown to love at Alano Clubs in L.A.

At the 23rd Annual Big Island Bash, which was held at the Sheraton Keauhou Bay Resort & Spa Convention Center, there were two speakers on opening night. Larcine, the AI-Anon speaker, and her husband Butch, the AA speaker, were from Hawthorne, CA. I had heard Larcine before and had her CD in my collection. The Saturday speaker was Karl from Covina, CA., who it turns out, went to some of **(Continued on Page 6)**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Tri-State 27th Annual Round-Up

May 19 – May 22, 2011
Riverside Resort Hotel & Casino,
Laughlin, NV,
www.tristate-roundup.com

San Fernando Group Alcathon

May 27 – 30, 2011
Opening: Friday, May 27th, 8 p.m.
13245 Gladstone Ave., Sylmar, CA

Woman to Woman 32nd AA Retreat

June 3 – 5, 2011
Mount St. Mary's College
Brentwood, CA
www.womantowomanla.org

Bike-N-4_Books

June 4, 2011
Woodley Park Picnic Area #2
6350 Woodley Ave., Van Nuys, CA
www.bikenforbooks@gmail.com

Area 93 Old Timers' Event

June 11, 2011, 12:30 – 4:00 p.m.
Freedom Park, 515 Eubanks, Camarillo, CA
www.aaarea93.org

8th Annual AA Alcathon

Stepping Stones Alano Club
June 10 – 12, 2011
26111 Bouquet Cyn. Rd., #H-1
Santa Clarita, CA 91350

A.A. Desert Pow Wow

June 9–12, 2011
Renaissance Esmeralda Resort
Indian Wells, CA

Antelope Valley Round-Up

June 24 – 26th, 2011
Lancaster Performing Arts Center
750 W. Lancaster Blvd., Lancaster, CA
(661) 945-8819

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: Mon, May 16, 2011: 7 p.m. Orientation/
8 p.m. Business Meeting
5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana, CA

Gen Service, District 11: Mon, June 6, 2011
6 p.m. New GSR orientation/ 6:30 p.m. Bus. Mtg
315 W. Vine Street, Glendale, CA

Gen Service, District 16: Mon, June 6, 2011
6:15 p.m. meeting
15950 Chatsworth, Granada Hills

Gen. Service, District 17: Mon, June 6, 2011
6 p.m. New GSRs. /6:30 p.m. Bus. Meeting
5000 Colfax, N. Hollywood

Gen. Service, District 2: Tues. June 7, 2011
6:30 p.m. Business Meeting
4011 Dunsmore Ave., La Crescenta

Gen Service, District 1: Wed., June 1, 2011
6:30 p.m. Business Meeting
7552 Remmet, Canoga Park

SFV Central Office Board Mtg: Wed., June 8, 2011
6:30 p.m., Valley Central Office

Gen. Service District 7: Sat., May 14, 2011
9 a.m. Business Meeting
Agua Dulce Women's Club
33210 Agua Dulce Canyon Road

SFV Intergroup: Mon., June 13, 2011
6:30 Orientation, 7 p.m. Business Meeting
St. Innocent Ch., 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana

**SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES
IN THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY:**



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: Carry the message of A.A. into hospitals, prisons and treatment facilities to those who are unable to get out to meetings. Call Central Office if interested.

San Fernando Valley Convention Committee: Volunteers are welcome to participate in the planning of the 2012 SFV AA Convention to be held in Woodland Hills at the Warner Center Marriott. The Committee meets the 3rd Tuesday of every month at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana.

San Fernando Valley Young People in AA: Committee Meeting is held the 1st Sunday of each month at Unit A., 10641 Burbank Blvd., NoHo.

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 Valley. 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., Tarzana. New Intergroup reps should arrive at 6:30 p.m. for orientation. Main meeting is 7 p.m. **For info on serving as an Intergroup rep, call Central Office: 818 988-3001.**

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.

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).



APRIL 2011 A.A. BIRTHDAYS:

Ira – 1 Year Anonymous: 12 Years, 13 Years & 25 Years
Eleanor D - 28 Years Jack L. – 30 Years Arnold S. – 34 Years
Mike “Shamu” E. – 30 Years Bob F. – 30 Years

Co-Founder Quotes:

"With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves." **Spiritual Experience**, Big Book AA Appendice.

"More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life. He is very much the actor. To the outer world he presents his stage character. This is the one he likes his fellows to see. He wants to enjoy a certain reputation, but knows in his heart he doesn't deserve it."

Big Book, Page 73

Heard Around AA:



"If I could drink like a normal person, I would drink all the time!"

"If I can't forgive myself, there's no room for God to come in."

"You can't 'snow' the Snowman."

Recovery is in the heart of the alcoholic and their relationship with God."

"In prayer, it's better to have a heart without words, than words without heart." (Anon)

Central Office: IGR Mtg Notes of April 11, 2011

Chairman Tom T. opened the meeting with the Serenity Prayer. **Recording Secretary Dawn H.** accepted a motion to approve the minutes from March's Intergroup meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer Brian H. reported Central Office is in the black by \$3,921.78 (Year-to-Date) but \$710.00 behind for the month of March. (See Recovery Times insert).

Executive Secretary Bob F. The new green SFV meeting directories are out now which show Radford Hall's listings under "Van Nuys." Central Office still needs phone volunteers for the hard-to-fill time slots on weekends (especially weekend over-nights). **Call Central Office to volunteer: (818) 988-3001.** Right now, Intergroup is very under-represented. There are over 800 meetings and 300 groups in the SFV but only 50-60 IGRs who attend IGR meetings each month.

H & I: AA needs volunteers and panel members to cover jail panels. Interested parties can contact Tom T. by leaving a message at Central Office: **(818) 988-3001.**

San Fernando Valley AA Convention: The 2012 SFVAAC Planning Committee holds its first meeting for the new season on April 19th at 7:00 p.m. at St. Innocent Church. All are welcome to attend and be part of this annual event. The 2012 AA SFV Convention will be held January 27-29, 2012 at the Warner Center Marriott.

Announcements: The new blue meeting directories are out. In them you will find **Radford Hall** listed at its new **Van Nuys** address (as of May 1st). Radford holds its Grand Opening on May 14th at their new location, 13627 ½ Victory Blvd. in Van Nuys, CA (just east of Woodman, behind Tequilas Restaurant).

Intergroup Birthdays:

- Eileen – 4 Years, Diana – 22 Years,
 - Shamu – 30 Years, and Bob F. – 30 Years.
-

Online Resources for AAs:

www.xaspeakers.org – Free downloads of AA speakers around the world.

AA Digital History: <http://www.aahistory.net/>

Newsletter Subscriptions: If you would like a copy of Recovery Times mailed to you, please complete this form with your new address, and 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: _____

(Please circle): **New** **Renewal** **Additional Contribution**

Moving? Please give us your former address too! _____

I hold onto my new life

My name is Alistair and I'm an alcoholic. I can be honest today and tell you who I am and what I am. I didn't like the word 'alcoholic' when it was applied to the great me! I see things differently today. I used to be a hopeless, helpless drunk, but I have come up in the world. I am an alcoholic now and I am proud of it. I could have been afflicted by many many other things. I am not saying that this is a mild illness - it is a fatal killing disease and I am so grateful that I managed to crawl out of the trenches of alcoholism into a life that is so freely given to me. Booze just kept taking everything that I held so dear in my life.

When I took a drink when I was young, I loved it. I loved what it did for me. It took away a lot of my fears and allowed me to act with bravado. It gave me the ability to dance, but I also remember the feelings of rejection when I got a refusal. It also gave me the ability to be cheeky because sometimes when I got refused I would say: "I didn't notice your wooden leg!" or something like that. Alcohol was not my problem, it was my solution. Alcohol gave me wings to fly and then it took away my sky.

As time went on the clouds became blacker until there was nothing left. I couldn't live with it and I couldn't live without it. I was at the jumping off place. I was a broken man and I was spiritually and emotionally bankrupt but I believe there was still a flicker of hope and that is why I'm here to tell the tale.

I grabbed what was on offer here - I found the unexpected inner resource, the great reality deep down within me (it was only there that He may be found). The Book even told me where to find this power that was going to save my life. I know today that God has done for me what I could not do for myself. What a wonderful journey I have been given freely. From the hopeless, helpless life I led to a life of contentment and peace (two lives in one). We are very lucky people to get here and all we have to do is clear away the wreckage of the past and make amends and practise, practise this God given, God inspired Programme of Recovery.

I hold on to my new life with both hands. That way I won't have a free hand to pick up a drink. Love to all my brothers and sisters in the Fellowship. Alistair, Aberdeen, Scotland

Reprinted with permission from AA Roundabout

Continued from Page 1, AA on the Road to Hawaii

the meetings I go to now. There were two speakers on Sunday – Al, who did a spiritual/meditation meeting and Tim H. from Louisville, KY. When I spoke with Tim, I found out that he knew someone who I know in Louisville’s AA program. So for all my fear about not knowing anyone, it turned out that we were all connected through this program. It’s truly a small world in AA!



For recreation during the convention, the Bash held Golf, Fishing and Tennis Tournaments plus a 5K/10K Walk/Run and a “No-Booze Cruise” which I attended. The cruise took 16 of us AAs out into Kealakekua Bay, a world-class snorkeling site and the historic place where Captain Cook was killed by Hawaiian warriors. We got to enjoy four hours out on the water with a large pod of Spinner Dolphins entertaining us and when we donned our snorkeling gear, the underwater world opened up with beautiful tropical fish swimming in the coral reef!

Some of the people I met on that boat ended up sitting with me for the Bash’s Luau Saturday night which provided a delicious array of traditional Hawaiian dishes while we were serenaded by a local entertainer and a woman performing the hula. It was a smaller convention than what we have in L.A. – only 213 people attended. Of those, 162 were from Hawaii, 54 were from California, and the rest were from as far away as Alaska, New Zealand, Montana and New York. Some came for the great golfing and fishing; others came for the beach and sun, but we all came together at the end of the day for our sobriety.

As a result of taking a risk to do something “new” in sobriety, I got to expand my horizons while staying close to my “safety net” of the program. The theme of the Big Island Bash this year was: “I Can’t...We Can.” That pretty much summed up my experiences. With the hand of AA always extended to the newcomer or the out-of-towner, there is never any reason to be afraid to have new experiences in sobriety. Now that I’ve done this, I’ll look forward to the next AA convention I go to: whether it’s the Big Island, Honolulu, Maui or elsewhere.

Pat K., Sunland, CA

Area 93 Old Timers Event – A Local Living History: June 11, 2011

Yes, you did read that correctly! The Old Timers call it the Old Timers’ Event. Count on alcoholics to enjoy the luxury of not taking themselves too seriously while celebrating something that much of the rest of society curses. Maybe it’s because, we as a group, were not supposed to get anywhere near “old.”



Once again, the Central California AA Area 93 of General Service presents its annual Old Timers Event to celebrate, honor and, hopefully learn from our members who have thirty or more years of continuous sobriety. Let all the good folks you know with 30+ years that we fondly look forward to hearing them speak on Saturday, June 11, 2011 from 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Freedom Park, 515 Eubanks Street, Camarillo, CA. All those willing to speak to us can call Carla F. at (805) 856-8035 or Laurie H. at (805) 861-8002. Tickets are available through these ladies for \$8.00 each or two for \$15.00 and lunch is included. Of course, Old Timers get in free!

Last year’s event was held at the Glendale Public Library in September. It seems like we had twelve, five-minute speakers whose name was drawn from a hat, a husband and wife team who spoke for a half hour each and a fellow with over fifty years whose father was a founding member of the oldest AA group in the San Fernando Valley – the North Hollywood Group. Those of us who hope to be Old Timers some day were blessed to hear them all. **John M., Burbank**

A.A. Word Search #5:

Find the A.A.-related words in the puzzle. Words can be read forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally.

E E C N E I C S N O C L *GRATITUDE*

V E L M E C U N N I N G *SERENITY*

E Y T Y O G E N I I Q P *COURAGE*

E S J E B D A Q J G H C *WISDOM*

G B O P O Z S R L Q Y B *ACCEPT*

S D Y R C X A I U E N A *CONSCIENCE*

T P A C C E P T W O S F *RESTORED*

J U V H P I A Y I C C F *CUNNING*

P O W E R F U L O K U L *BAFFLING*

S E R E N I T Y R H F I *POWERFUL*

S O Y D E R O T S E R N

E D U T I T A R G K L G

(Submitted by Susan H.)

Keeping the Cow Together

Teacher asked her class what was the most important use for cowhide. After many answers about saddles, shoes and suitcases, one little fellow said he thought the most important use for cowhide was to keep the cow together. Now we think that was a very smart answer and could be given for the most important use of our Traditions: to keep AA together.

It is hard to believe that the purpose in setting up the Traditions was to offer us a field for controversy. Yet, sometimes it seems that this is the only way in which the Traditions are brought to mind.



Every area has its self-appointed guardians of the Traditions, as if the Traditions need a guardian, when in very substance they are the guardians of our conduct as members of Alcoholics Anonymous. It would be refreshing to hear the Twelve Traditions discussed from the standpoint of their benefit to our general welfare. It would not only be refreshing, it would be a real step forward towards a better understanding of their real purpose. To penetrate the consciousness of every one of us there is nothing to equal repetition. To have them read at every meeting would soon bring about new concepts of their meaning and enhance our perspective of the overall picture of AA in general.

Eye Opener, California. Reprinted with permission from the Grapevine.

San Fernando Valley Central Office

7417-E. Van Nuys Boulevard

Van Nuys, CA 91405

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