

RECOVERY TIMES

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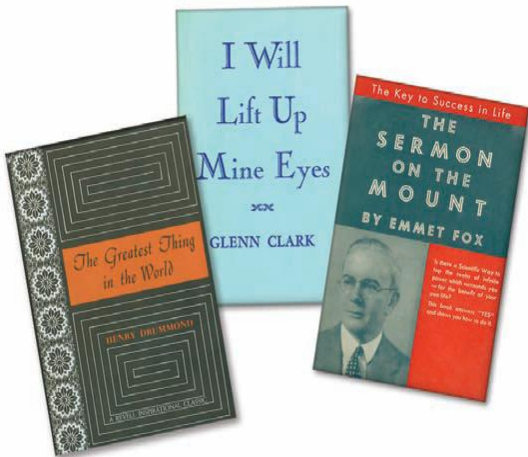
The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

A.A. Celebrates June 10th as Founders Day

It was June 10th, 1935 that Bill W. cites as the day A.A. was born. After meeting Dr. Bob, another seemingly hopeless drinker, he went to live at Dr. Bob's house in May 1935. "Smithy stayed sober briefly and then got drunk at the Atlantic City Convention. Returned home from there about June 6th, nursed him through hangover to sobriety in time for a surgical operation. During this bender, he hit bottom never to drink again, dating from June 10, 1935."

Then came the hard work to build the fellowship, with the first A.A. group started in Akron, Ohio in September 1935. Once back home in Brooklyn, Bill and Lois began to take in drunks at Clinton Street. Referring to the trials and tribulations of helping these early drunks, Bill writes, "Not a single one of them made a recovery in our house but we learned a lot about drunks."

But by the end of 1935, a small meeting had developed at Clinton Street and over the next couple of years, the movement gained traction. By the fall of 1937, 40 had gotten sober. The three books pictured below were popular among early members of the Fellowship since there wasn't any A.A. literature in the early days.



The Story of the Big Book

Bill talked about how the Big Book came about in a talk he gave in 1954 in Fort Worth, Texas. He said that while visiting Dr. Bob in Akron in the autumn of 1937, the two reflected on the program and the affect it was having on "really fatal cases of alcoholism." At that time, it hit them that "this thing was going to succeed." However, they also realized that they needed some kind of literature because up until that time, "not a syllable of this program was in writing." Bill and Bob agreed on the need for a text that described the method that was keeping them and others sober. In May 1938, the A.A. members in New York

formed the Alcoholic Foundation to fundraise but were unsuccessful. Finally, in 1938, Bill produced a few sample chapters for his Foundation to read of what would become the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous. At that time, Bill had been sober for about 3.5 years and Dr. Bob, less than 3 years, by a few months. Of the 100 or so early members who contributed to the Big Book, their sobriety ranged from a few months to a few years. In April 1939, the blueprint for recovery from alcoholism was published.

A.A. Gets Good Press

On February 8, 1940, **John D. Rockefeller Jr.** gave a dinner for Alcoholics Anonymous in New York City. There were several hundred guests. Among them was Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Reverend of New York's revered Riverside Church, who spoke favorably about the early movement which gave it clout. On February 19, 1940, news coverage of this dinner appeared in **Time** magazine giving it a favorable review.

(Continued on Page 5)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



CENTRAL OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED FOR BOOK SALES ON MONDAY, JULY 4TH.

Antelope Valley Round-Up

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

June Lake Kampvention

June 24 – 26, 2011
www.kampventionjunelake.org

Foothill Roundup

July 29 – 31, 2011
Flintridge Prep Academy
La Canada, CA
www.foothillroundup.org

8th Annual Mountain AA Conference (with AI-Anon)

July 29 – July 31, 2011
Performing Arts Center
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315
www.mountainaaconference.com

2011 Pacific “Additional” Regional Forum

August 19-21
Warner Center Marriott, Woodland Hills

Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast

Sept. 24, 2011
Woodland Hills, CA

60th So. CA AA Convention

Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, 2011
Westin Mission Hills Resort & Spa
Rancho Mirage, CA (Palm Springs)
www.aasocal.com

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, June 20, 2011: 7 p.m. Orientation/
8 p.m. Business Meeting
5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana, CA

Gen Service, District 11: Mon, July 4, 2011*
6 p.m. New GSR orientation/ 6:30 p.m. Bus. Mtg
315 W. Vine Street, Glendale, CA

Gen Service, District 16: Mon, July 4, 2011*
6:15 p.m. meeting
15950 Chatsworth, Granada Hills

Gen. Service, District 17: Mon, July 4, 2011*
6 p.m. New GSRs. /6:30 p.m. Bus. Meeting
5000 Colfax, N. Hollywood

Gen. Service, District 2: Tues. July 5, 2011
6:30 p.m. Business Meeting
4011 Dunsmore Ave., La Crescenta

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

SFV Central Office Board Mtg: July 6, 2011
6:30 p.m., Valley Central Office

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

SFV Intergroup: Mon., July 11, 2011
6:30 Orientation, 7 p.m. Business Meeting
St. Innocent Ch., 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana

*Call Central Office or your DCM to confirm date since the meeting falls on the July 4th holiday.

**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 7 p.m. 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.

To serve 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).

**MAY 2011
A.A.
BIRTHDAYS**
By making a \$1.00



donation for every year of your sobriety, you can support Central Office in reaching out to alcoholics all over the county (our phone lines are open 24-hours a day and we receive calls so we receive calls from alcoholics outside of Los Angeles and the Valley).

Please send your donation in during the month of your birthday so we can acknowledge you in the correct issue of Recovery Times.

This month's sober birthday celebrants are:

**Steve M. – 29 Years
Belinda T. -Years/Years**

Central Office: IGR Mtg Notes of May 9, 2011

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

• **Treasurer Brian H.** reported that Central Office is currently in the red by \$1,127.99 MTD and in the black \$2,083.45 YTD.

• **Executive Secretary Bob F:** Phone volunteers are still needed, especially for the 9PM-12AM/Sat and 12AM-9AM/Sun shifts. Those willing to do 12-step work, including being a contact person for out-of-town guests are also needed. Interested parties should contact Central Office.

○ Prospective volunteers who just want to observe how Central Office operates are welcome to drop by the office during business hours.

H & I: There is a need for volunteers and panel members to cover jail panels, as well as to staff the "Bridging the Gap" committee, which acts as a liaison between alcoholics in hospitals and institutions and the general recovery community. H&I Committee meets the 3rd Monday of the month at St. Innocent. Orientation at 7PM, meeting at 8PM. New members are always needed and welcome.

San Fernando Valley AA Convention: The 2012 SFVAAC Planning Committee held 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.

IGR Rep Birthdays:

Lloyd - 8 years

Scott - 8 years

Angel - 12 years

Andre - 18 years



Online Resources for AAs:

www.xaspeakers.org – Free downloads of AA speakers worldwide.

A.A. Word Search #6: by Susan H. Find the A.A.-related words in the puzzle. Words can be read forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally.

H O U S E C L E A N I N G
S I M O V Q K B Y J O E W
Z S Y T O L E R A N C E R
U W E F E S O P R U P V H
U V H R V G K D T P S R T
C J I T G R U T O S S V H
I Y X Q I O N C M O E I Y
X T H Q J A R Z J Z N C C
V B D B Z P F P M A I T R
P A T I E N C E C R L O E
F V B D I F V T W J D R A
Q K R Y O L I A Q C N Y T
R Q L S V O O L J F I R O
D G N I N K U Q Y X K D

ACTION
PROGRESS
FAITH
HOUSECLEANING
VICTORY
PURPOSE
CREATOR
PATIENCE
TOLERANCE
KINDLINESS

Co-Founder Quotes:

"When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is or He isn't. What was our choice to be?" (P. 53, BB)

AA Morning Prayer:

"God direct my thinking today so that it be divorced of self pity, dishonesty, self-will, self-seeking and fear. God inspire my thinking, decisions and intuitions. Help me to relax and take it easy. Free me from doubt and indecision. Guide me through this day and show me my next step. God give me what I need to take care of any problems. I ask all these things that I may be of maximum service to you and my fellow man in the name of the Step I pray. Amen." (P. 86, BB)

AA Night Prayer:

"God forgive me where I have been resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid today. Help me to not keep anything to myself but to discuss it all openly with another person – show me where I owe an apology and help me make it. Help me to be kind and loving to all people. Use me in the mainstream of life God. Remove worry, remorse or morbid (sick) reflections that I may be of usefulness to others. Amen." (P. 86, BB)

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

JUNE 10TH: AS FOUNDERS DAY

A.A. Gets Good Press

And on March 1, 1941, the lead story in the **Saturday Evening Post** by Jack Alexander created immediate impact, nationwide, boosting A.A. groups' membership with groups forming in Canada, Hawaii and elsewhere in the country. By 1944, there were approximately 10,000 members of A.A. By 1950, that number had grown to over 100,000.

The Twelve Traditions

By 1945, with group membership quickly growing, problems also began to manifest which the limited staff at the A.A. office tried to answer in individual letters by hand. In 1945, Bill W. drew up a draft of what boiled down to the long form of the Twelve Traditions. Referring to that process, Bill writes, "At first, practically nobody approved the Traditions. As time went on, they became valuable in solving group problems. By the time of the Cleveland International Convention in 1950, the common consent was so large that we asked the Convention, - a good cross-section of A.A. to approve them – which it did."

It was at A.A.'s first convention, the Cleveland International Convention, that Dr. Bob gave his last talk. He died November 16, 1950. Bill Wilson passed away on January 24, 1971 after delivering the presentation at the 35th A.A. Anniversary International Convention.

Membership Today

Because A.A. has never attempted to keep formal membership lists, there is no way to obtain completely accurate figures on total membership at any given time. However, based on reports to the G.S. O. office as of January 1, 2010, it is estimated that there are now more than two million people who call themselves members of Alcoholics Anonymous around the world. Approximately 35% of those are women. Within the U.S., there are about 56,694 groups and 1 million, 265 thousand members. Canada has 4,887 groups and over 94 thousand members. There are over 52,600 groups outside of the U.S. and Canada, 1,589 groups in correctional facilities in the U.S. and Canada, three Internationalist Groups and several hundred Lone Members. Today, A.A. is found on every continent in the world.

Pat K. with information from GSO Archives and A.A. Fact File

Getting Sober in a Muslim Country

My sobriety date is 19 Oct 2005. I come from a family of 12 (including half siblings as my father has remarried since my mom and he divorced) but this is quite normal in the Maldives. At age 26, my sister told me that I might be an alcoholic, I just laughed at her! I thought she was joking. The word "alcoholic" was so foreign to me and the truth is, I didn't even know what it meant back then but that was my reaction to most things in life...joke, laugh and have this really carefree attitude with life, as though I knew what it was all about!

Fast forward to few years later while on a trip to the US, and after another crazy drinking episode, I began to see what she was talking about - from a distance, of course. I went back to the US on family holiday and got really sick from drinking again and then I was willing to see someone, a counselor, who told me that I 'could be borderline alcoholic.' Upon hearing this, I was determined to show the world that I was normal. In that time, I stayed without booze for 2 years - complete dry drunk. I opened a cafe and told myself that I would pick up after I had opened etc. I didn't so now I believed that I must be N O R M A L. can handle the drink, that I had control - delusional to the max! I picked up shortly after that and continued drinking. At this time, I also attended my first A.A. meeting in Singapore and spoke to another counselor who made me do 'work' like, I had to write down how many drinks I had, etc. That's how they did things in Singapore: very structured, of course, so I didn't really care for that.

I eventually had to surrender. Total surrender and so I did. After 6 months of meetings in Singapore, I left to the U.K. and did my 90 days there. That's when the magic of A.A. hit me. I say magic cause I really felt like something was happening to me. There was a transformation in my thinking. I didn't know it at the time; I just knew that whatever it was, I was liking it. I started to 'see' again. It was an amazing feeling, letting go.

Since then, my cafe has expanded and the promises of A.A. have and are coming, one day at a time. I have come to love the fellowship and the people.

And now, since the opening of the café and seeing the growth, I have to be in Maldives. There are no AA meetings here so when I am not in Singapore, I listen to the speakers from www.xaspeakers.org, I email my sponsor in Australia (she used to live in Singapore). I also had my 1st sponsor in England, who at that time, gave me her 10 year medallion to take away with me and give it back in my 2nd year!! I did do that as I visited the UK a second time! This was such an amazing act that had happened to me!

I am now 37 years old, gay (I came out in my 1st year of recovery) and this truly freed me. That's another story, coming out in A.A. and living today in a conservative 100% Muslim society). Things I never thought or believed would happen, has. This program not only has saved my life but is showing me that there is one. That is my life; that I could do things differently. I took everything for granted, I wasted away my father's money, but of course my mistakes are my greatest assets today. I am truly very lucky to come into this program at the age I did. I am learning and growing everyday. Life is a gift.

In the meantime, I am hoping to start a Women's meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka. This is where I grew up as a child. I left Maldives when I was 6 and even though I have the business there, I feel more comfortable to do this in Sri Lanka as I also stay there and that where my girlfriend and I have our place. We are both working together at the cafe and we can't be open and free in the Maldives due to the culture. I can accept this today and let it go and pray.

Sometimes I feel like I am all over the place, but I have now come to realize that I can't change everything. I get frustrated that I have business in Maldives, home in Sri Lanka and meetings in Singapore. But the fact is that I DO HAVE THIS and there are many people that don't, so I learn to be grateful. I could not, for the longest time, accept it. I still get days where I find myself complaining so I pray, and then remember how fortunate I really am. I have grown up as a spoilt child given everything, and yet, had no clue!

Today, being an alcoholic, acceptance of my disease, working this program, I am happy. All I have received, I only got from surrendering and letting go to a HP. It was not that I didn't like the God idea or believed in God,

or that I didn't have a faith. It was because, I *thought* I did. And A.A. has given me a faith, a God of my understanding, to love and seek. My God does not condemn me for being gay or alcoholic. I am so very blessed. I get on my knees now. I didn't do that before cause I thought it was a Christian way and now I know that I could go to a temple, church or mosque or sit on a bench cause God is everywhere for me -.WHEN I let HIM into my life. Thank u for letting me share this. Sera, Maldives

NOTES FROM A.A.S AROUND THE WORLD:

"My name is David G and I'm an alcoholic. I live in a very small township called Fox Glacier in New Zealand and there is no AA fellowship. I have been in contact with a fellow alcoholic (who is in the same situation) and she put me on to LIM (Loners, Internationalist Meeting)." **David G., New Zealand**

"Hello to everyone in LIM. It has been awhile since I've written. Just need to say thanks to all the friends I had not met before for your letters of love and caring support since my wife, Anna, died June 14, 2010. You are all very precious. It is not easy to explain the situation. Since joining A.A. back in 1974, practically all of my family has passed – first my dad and then my mom. In the last 10 to 12 years five of my brothers and two sisters have died. My youngest sister lives in the U.K. My son lives in Australia. So I am the only one left living in Ireland. I live completely on my own. My neighbors are very special people. There are many good friends in A.A. who call me every now and then so I keep active in many ways. I go to about five or six meetings a week. I have many letters to write and emails to reply to. I visit my wife's grave on a regular basis. I also visit many good members who are buried in the same cemetery; I have fond memories of their love and care in my early sobriety. Thank you all for being there. Just keep on keeping on." **Frank F., Dublin, Ireland**

"By way of introduction, my name is David W. and I'm an alcoholic, over 8 years sober and from the Royal York Group in Toronto, Canada. I have taken a teaching contract here in Antofagasta, Chile for two years and from what I can tell, there aren't any A.A. groups here (Spanish or English-speaking). I'm in the northern part of Chile, about 10 hours north of Santiago, the country's capital city. The A.A. contracts are extremely far away – one in Santiago and the other on Easter Island. Although I am here for two years, travel to other cities is difficult due to the fact that I'm not provided with a vehicle. I have started to research online meetings, Skype meetings and I am still in contact with my sponsor weekly. The most difficult part of my situation is the social atmosphere in Antofagasta; they begin partying at 10:00 p.m. and don't go out to the clubs till approximately 3:00 am! I understand that I have choices today and can choose not to go out, but drinking and partying is a large part of the Latin American culture. Therefore, for my first little while here, I have to make certain appearances at social events. The other concern is that I will be living with two large party-type guys. I am not sure how things will play out, but at present, I have met a group of other teachers that do not party very much and who engage in the social activities that we as alcoholics can enjoy: sports, dinner out, coffee, etc.

So there you have it! Hopefully, you might be able to provide me with some insight/help in finding recovery while I'm here over the next couple of years. It is an incredible fantastic opportunity that my recovery has brought me, but that being said, I will allow nothing to jeopardize everything that I have worked so hard for over the past number of years. Thank you for your time and support. God Bless." **David W., Antofagasta, Chile**

The Loners-Internationalists Meeting is an A.A. meeting in print for those who cannot attend regular A.A. meetings. For information on how to become a LIMs member or write to other A.A.s, write to: **A.A. World Services, Inc.**, P.O. Box 459, New York, NY 10163 or Call: (212) 870-3400.



San Fernando Valley Central Office

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