

RECOVERY TIMES

Vol. 35, No. 9, Sept. 2011

The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

A.A. GENERAL SERVICE COMES TO WOODLAND HILLS, CA

Woodland Hills, CA was the place to be Friday, August 19 – 21, 2011 to learn about the structure and workings of Alcoholics Anonymous and to meet the Trustees and members of the General Service Office of New York. Over 700 people turned out for the Additional A.A. Pacific Regional Forum at the Marriott Hotel for this three day, free, information-packed event. It was a chance to ask questions of the Trustees and General Service Office staff such as, "Is there any truth to the statistic that only 1 in every 10 A.A.'s (or 5% of all A.A.s), or 70% of A.A.'s who are in service stay sober?" To that question Trustee Ward Ewing replied, "It's really clear that getting into service aids in sobriety," however he said there's no actual data supporting any statistics on how many people have stayed sober through the years and no one even knows where those figures that are commonly cited as fact came from! Trustee Rod B. added: "What we DO know is that 100% of those who are of service and don't drink stay sober."

A.A.

Chairing this unique event were Class A (non-alcoholic) GSO Board Chairman The Very Reverend Ward Ewing and Pacific Regional Trustee Rod B. General Service Forums began in 1975 at the suggestion of late GSO chairman Dr. Jack Norris. The purpose of the Forums are to enhance communication and participation among A.A. members, the General Service Board, and staff and directors from the A.A. Grapevine, La Vina and the General Service Office in New York. The Forums offer a meeting place to ask questions and spark new ideas to help carry the A.A. message of hope to the still suffering alcoholic. This particular Additional Pacific Regional Forum was hosted by Area 93 (which covers the San Fernando Valley and parts north) with delegate Ken S. and past delegate Jeff J.).

Attending the event was an interesting experience. It was a chance to meet A.A.s representing different states in the Pacific Region as far away as Alaska and Hawaii. It was also great to see valuable archive materials and flip through Big Books in the languages of Arabic, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Filipino, Greek, Hebrew, Korean, Swahili, Thai, Urdu, and Vietnamese, to name a few. But my favorite event came at the event of the Forum when past trustees shared what A.A. was like during their terms in office and way it's changed through the years. Read on for a perspective from attendee Susan H., below. *Editor, Pat K.*

A Personal Perspective on the Event by a Local A.A.

I walked into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous in April 2010 because my life had become unmanageable. It had taken me about 25 years to finally get there. I was reminded of something William Shakespeare had written: "To climb steep hills requires slow pace at first." As my footsteps slowly became more steady and sure on the path that A.A. had provided for my healing journey towards a new and undeniably better life, I found myself becoming increasingly more curious about the enduring structure of the A.A. organization and how one has their voice heard by its "Trusted Servants."



I was, therefore, very pleased to attend the August 2011 Pacific Additional Regional Forum held at the Warner Center Marriot in Woodland Hills and have the opportunity to learn more about the internal operations, or the "nuts and bolts" of the A.A. framework. Over a period of three days there was an abundance of information provided in various forms, which included speaker presentations, videos, workshops, general sharing sessions, and the ever-popular "Ask-it Basket" to answer attendee's questions, address member's concerns, and hear suggestions for enhancing A.A.'s service to its worldwide Fellowship. (Continued on Page 5)



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Stepping into the Sunlight

Sept. 17, 2011, 10:00 – 4 p.m.

A series of talks presented by The Sunrise-Sunset Group of A.A. (with free lunch)
North Hollywood Senior Center
5301 Tujunga Ave., No. Hollywood, Ca

2012 SFVAA Convention Bingo Night

Sept. 17, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana

SFV Young People in A.A. Dance

Sept. 17, 2011, 10 p.m.

Radford Hall, Victory Boulevard
Van Nuys, CA

Take Your A.A. Sponsor to Breakfast

Sept. 24, 2011, 8 a.m. – 10 breakfast

AA Speaker Meeting: 10:30 a.m.

DAV, 6543 Corbin Ave, Woodland Hills, CA

Tickets: \$10.00 each (proceeds raised go to fund Central Office).

60th So. CA AA Convention

Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, 2011

Westin Mission Hills Resort & Spa
Rancho Mirage, CA (Palm Springs)
www.aasocal.com

Bingo Night/ H & I of the Foothills

October 1, 2011, 7 p.m.

Windsor Club, 123 W. Windsor, Glendale, CA

30 Year Anniversary Alcañon, BBQ & Wacky Auction

Oct. 15, 2011, 7 a.m. – 9 p.m. meetings, 3 p.m. potluck

BBQ/ 4 p.m. Auction

Unit A., 10641 Burbank Blvd., NoHo

24th Annual Inland Empire A.A. Convention

Oct. 14 – 16, 2011

Hilton Hotel, San Bernardino, CA

www.ieaac.org

8TH Annual Santa Clarita Valley AA Convention

Oct. 21- 23, 2011

Hyatt Valencia

www.scvaaconvention.org

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, Sept. 19, 2011:

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

Gen Service, District 11: Mon, Oct 3, 2011

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

Gen Service, District 16: Mon, Oct 3, 2011

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

Gen. Service, District 17: Mon, Oct 3, 2011

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

Gen. Service, District 2: Tues, Oct 4, 2011

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

Gen Service, District 1: Wed., Oct. 5, 2011

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

SFV Central Office Board Mtg: Oct. 5, 2011

6:30 p.m., Valley Central Office

Gen. Service District 7: Sat., Oct. 1, 2011

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

SFV Intergroup: Mon., Oct. 10, 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.

Valley 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. 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:**

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Rudy – 2 Years | Tony S. – 11 Years | Randy H. – 14 Years | Kit – 18 Years |
| Carrie – 18 Years | Lyn W. – 22 Years | Joan E. – 24 Years | Anon. – 27 Years |



Heard Around AA:

“Utilize, don’t analyze.”

“Talk about it; don’t drink about it.”

“Laughter heals, sadness kills.”

“Isolation is the darkroom to expose our negatives.”

Co-Founder Quotes:

“For most normal folks, drinking means release from care, boredom, and worry. It means joyous intimacy with friends and a feeling that life is good.

But not so with us in those last days of heavy drinking. The old pleasures were gone. There was an insistent yearning to enjoy life as we once did and a heartbreaking delusion that some new miracle of control would enable us to do it. There was always one more attempt – and one more failure.” **Big Book, Pg. 151**

“We are sure God would like to see us happy, joyous, and free. Hence, we cannot subscribe to the belief that this life necessarily has to be a vale of tears, though it once was just that for many of us. But it became clear that most of the time we had made our own misery.” **Big Book, Pg. 133**

Central Office: IGR Mtg Notes of Aug. 8, 2011

Chairman Tom T. opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with *The Serenity Prayer*. April read “*The Twelve Traditions*”. **Recording Secretary Dawn H.** accepted a motion for approval of minutes from July’s Intergroup Meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer Brian H. reported Central Office is currently in the black \$137.34 MTD and in the red <\$1,663.02> YTD. Personal Donations are down. A full Treasurer’s Report is available in this *Recovery Times*.

Executive Secretary Bob F said things are running smoothly at Central Office, with the *Recovery Times* and the Internet site: SFVAA.org. The A/C is working and the men’s restroom has been fixed.

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. Please encourage meetings that are not currently represented by IGRs to appoint someone. There are 300+ groups in the S.F. Valley but only 50-60 meetings represented at IGR. Orientation for new IGRs begins at 6:30 p.m. prior to monthly IGR Meeting.

H & I: Tom T. said H&I will hold a fundraiser in October. There is a need for volunteers and panel members to cover jail panels. The H&I Committee meets the 3rd Monday of the month at St. Innocent. Orientation at 7PM, meeting at 8PM. New members are always welcome.

San Fernando Valley Convention Committee (2012) hold monthly meetings at St. Innocent. There will be a BINGO Night fundraiser on September 17th. The convention will be held Jan. 27-29, 2012 at the Warner Center Marriott.

General Service District 1: Wayne reminded everyone about the 2011 Pacific Additional” Regional Forum Aug. 19-21 at the Warner Center Marriott in Woodland Hills. See: www.aaarea93.org.

David G. said **The Sunrise-Sunset Group** will host a series of talks from 10AM-4PM on September 17th, featuring Patty O. of Laguna Beach. Lunch will be provided, and all are welcome (donations welcomed).

IGR Rep Birthdays:

- James: 1 year
- Dan – 8 years
- Tom T. – 9 years
- Brian H. – 11 years
- Karrie – 18 years
- Trevor – 19 years



Burma Shave Ad, popular in the 1940s & 1950s:

“Car in ditch, driver in tree, the moon was full and so was he.”

“The one who drives when he’s been drinking, depends on you to do his thinking.”

The man who drives when he is drunk, should pack his coffin in his trunk.”

(One A.A.'s Perspective... Cont. Page 1)

The Forum was attended by 15 Pacific Region areas and hosted by Area 93 Central California. Staff and Management from the New York General Service Office, Class A and B Trustees, Directors of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services and The Grapevine, all shared facts and discussed their various responsibilities within the A.A. organization. Pacific Region delegates from Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington State also shared presentations and led workshops to further educate Forum attendees.

Some of the topics included "Special Needs -- Identifying Current Challenges," "Varieties of Spiritual Experience," "Rotating Leadership," "Anonymity in the Digital Age -- Impossible or Not?," and "Generating Enthusiasm for a Group Inventory." I was particularly impressed by the inventory-related discussions which suggested that they be considered "discovery missions" as opposed to inquisitions. The idea of "shortcomings" in any group was contrasted with the term "longcomings," or listing of unique strengths and what the group does best.

I left the Forum with a much better understanding of the A.A. organization and the realization that ALL A.A. Forums are extremely important events as they offer a meeting place for members to ask questions, spark new ideas, and ultimately help carry the A.A. message of hope to the still-suffering alcoholic.

If you are interested in learning more about the A.A. structure and "How it Works," visit www.aa.org and review the A.A. Service Manual. Regional Forum Final Reports are also made available on the same website.

Susan H., Woodland Hills

Estimated number of A.A. Groups & Members as of January 1, 2011:

	USA	Canada	Correctional Facilities	Internationalists	Loners
Groups	57,905	4,968	1,559	3	N/A
Members	1,279,664	94,017	38,938	0	105

Number of attendees at the 2010 International Convention in San Antonio: 52,500.

Newsletter Subscriptions:

If you would like a copy of **Recovery Times** mailed to you, please send 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: _____

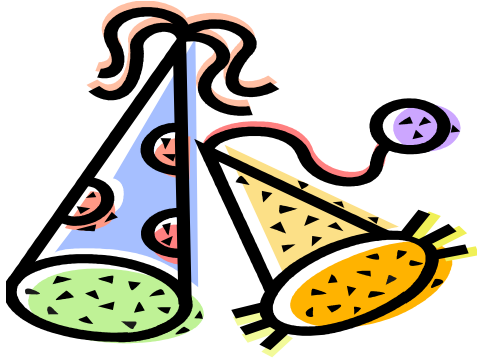


(Please circle): New or Renewal **Additional Contribution** _____.

Moving? Please give us your former address: _____

WEST VALLEY PARTICIPATION GROUP CELEBRATES 65TH ANNIVERSARY ON AUGUST 15TH

The **West Valley Participation Group** (formerly the Old Reseda Group) celebrated its 65th anniversary with a BBQ/ potluck dinner and an outdoor meeting under the stars on Monday, August 15th at Lifehouse Lutheran Church, **18355 Roscoe Boulevard in Northridge**. Don C., a member of the Group with 44 years of sobriety, read the Group's history which was composed by several longtimers through the years. Originally, the history was recorded by Mike Zeale, who lived to be 107 years old with 49 years of sobriety and Stan Dean, who lived to be 94 with 46 years of sobriety. **Here are some facts from their history:**



The **Old Reseda Group** was formed in June 1946 and met in the living room of A.A. member Frank Lindsay on Yolanda Ave. It was one of the first eight meetings in the San Fernando Valley.

The San Fernando Valley A.A. Archives has a clipping from June 27, 1946 in "The News" (local newspaper) which lists an Alcoholic Anonymous meeting at Reseda Park on Mondays at 7:30 p.m. .

Group member **Mike Zeale** achieved the distinction as "**The Oldest Living A.A. Member in the Fellowship,**" from the General Service Office in N.Y when he turned 107. When he passed in Dec. 1995 he had 49 years of sobriety.

Mike Z. was 101 when he put together the Group's history with Stan D., who was a 'youngster' at 80.

For over 36 years, the Old Reseda Group met at Reseda Park on Monday nights.

At some point (that no one can remember) the Group's name was changed to "West Valley Participation" sometime during its 12 moves to different locations for A.A. meetings.

The 12 moves were attributed to everything from rent increases to remodels to finding more suitable locations as the group grew or shrank in attendance.

Since August 2002, the Group has met at the Lifehouse Lutheran Church at 18355 Roscoe Boulevard, Northridge.

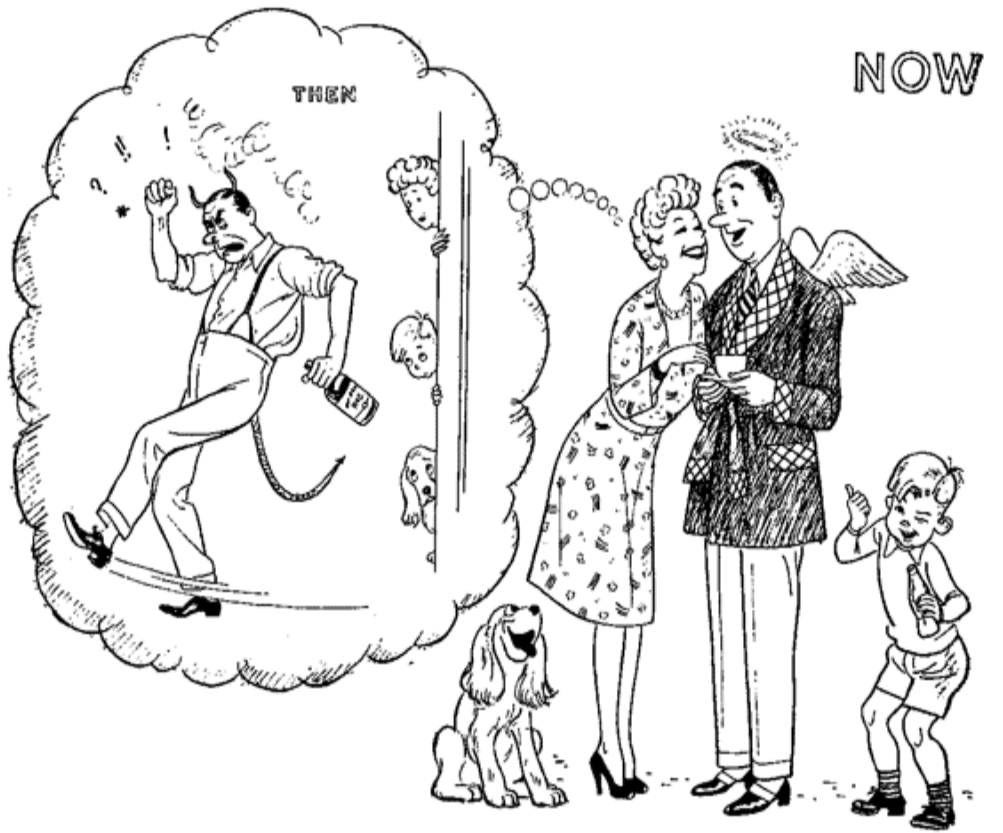
The West Valley Participation Group is an open, coed meeting on Monday nights at 7:30 p.m.

Don C., who lists this as his Home Group for the last 24 years, says it's a typical A.A. meeting that has fluctuated from a high of 50 people to a low of twelve.

The West Valley Participation group is known as "The Best Kept Secret in the San Fernando Valley."



Happy 65th Anniversary!



"But the Spiritual Angle, Sweet I Don't Get It"

A.A. Word Search #9:

Find the A.A.-related words in the puzzle.

Words can be read forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally.

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

DAILY REPRIEVE
 HONESTY
 PURPOSE
 GROWTH
 WILLINGNESS
 DOCTORS OPINION
 ANY LENGTHS
 GRACE OF GOD
 FACE TO FACE
 GRAPEVINE

(Submitted by Susan H.)

San Fernando Valley Central Office

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