

## The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

### The Pacoima Group Celebrates its 57<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Gratitude

**A Resentment Leads to the Founding of Pacoima:** Like many groups, the Pacoima Group started with a resentment - that the existing group (San Fernando Group) wasn't "doing it right." So in March of 1955, armed with a coffee pot and a Big Book, its founders began meeting in the back room of Bill N.'s cleaning business. By July, they had found a home at 10126 Lev Street and had started a new Men's Stag meeting. By December 1956, the Group blossomed to four, well-attended meetings and it was decided that all the meetings would fall under one group and be listed as: "**The Pacoima Group.**"

**The Courts Get Involved in A.A.:** In 1956, Pacoima member Ray M., who sat in the courts to try and help the drunks, decided to ask Judge Clifton to let the drunks go to a series of A.A. meetings. After much urging, the Judge finally agreed to send them with papers to see how it worked out. The result was more successful than anyone anticipated. Later, Ray convinced Judge Hughes to do the same. This Judge became a close friend of Ray's, showing up with court personnel and other judges each year to celebrate Ray's birthdays.

**Business Meetings Help the Group Grow:** Anyone who has attended an A.A. business meeting will vouch for the fact that they sometimes can resemble battlegrounds. At the Pacoima Group, one of the main issues that came up was whether they should start a building fund (with voluntary contributions to be kept in a box nailed to the side of the wall). There were debates about whether they should draw up plans to build a new clubhouse; whether or not to have coffee breaks; the length of sobriety for trusted leaders and meeting secretaries; who would be responsible for washing dishes; and who would shop for a "real bargain" on soft drinks for the old pop machine in the coffee room - to name a few.

The Group History states, "Of course, highlighting these stories is a long list of names and faces that maintained their sobriety through all the confusion and disagreements - not all of them agreeable ones. These were our masters, our teachers, and our friends."

**Starting Spanish Meetings:** Over the years, the location of the Clubhouse changed from Lev Street to 11263 San Fernando Road, then two locations on Laurel Canyon Boulevard by "Dutch Treat." In September 1972, a **Spanish Meeting** was started by Oscar C. which is now known as "**Que Paso.**"

**Finding a Home:** In 1983, the Group was forced to move again and found its next home at 13243 Osbourne Street in a little house that needed a complete makeover. In 1986, the Group moved to a temporary hall on MacLay before locating next to Grey Jug Liquor Store at 13662 Van Nuys Boulevard. Pacoima stayed at that location for seven years until problems associated with this location forced it to move again. And in 1993, they moved into their current location of 12502 Van Nuys Boulevard, #109 in an office building next door to a mortuary. This Hall has been The Pacoima Group's home for the past 19 years.



(Continued, page 5)





## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### **27<sup>th</sup> Annual A.A. Summer Serenity in the Sierras**

August 10 – 12, 2012: Oakhurst, CA  
Evergreen Conference Center

[serenityinthesierras@yahoo.com](mailto:serenityinthesierras@yahoo.com)

### **2012 District 22 Convention**

August 24- 26, 2012  
San Luis Obispo, CA

[www.district22convention.org](http://www.district22convention.org)

### **37<sup>th</sup> Annual The Great Outdoor Beaver Meeting**

August 30 – Sept. 2, 2012  
Beaver, Utah Racetrack  
A2nster@yahoo.com

### **61<sup>st</sup> Annual So. CA. AA Convention**

Sept. 28 – 30, 2012  
The Legendary Town & Country Resort Hotel  
San Diego, CA

[www.aasocal.com](http://www.aasocal.com)

### **SERVICE COMMITTEES SCHEDULE:**

**SFV H & I: Mon, Aug. 20, 2012:** 7 p.m. Orientation/  
8 p.m. Business Meeting  
5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana, CA

### **Gen Service, District 11: Mon, Sept. 3, 2012**

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



### **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](http://www.sfvaa.org/involve.html) or call **Central Office: 818 988-3001**.

**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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month at Unit A., 10641 Burbank Blvd., NoHo.

### **Gen Service, District 16: Mon., Sept. 3, 2012**

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

### **Gen. Service, District 17: Mon, Sept. 3, 2012**

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

### **Gen. Service, District 2: Tues. Sept. 4, 2012**

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

### **Gen Service, District 1: Wed., Sept. 5, 2012**

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

### **SFV Central Office Board Mtg: Sept. 5, 2012**

6:30 p.m., Valley Central Office

### **Gen. Service District 7: Sat., Sept. 1, 2012**

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

### **SFV Intergroup: Mon., Sept, 10, 2012**

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

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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: 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](http://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.

**HAVING A BIRTHDAY?** 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. 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: Michelle A. – 4 Years, Derek B. – 11 Years, & Anonymous – 39 Years.**

**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.

**DEATHS: THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE: Bill W. – 25 years, Judy K.- 26 Years, and Gay H. – 42 Years.** 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](mailto:sfvaanews@sbcglobal.net).



**A Gig at the Bar: This musician had the chance to see and remember what her old life was like**

I'm a musician by trade, that's how I earn money. A lot of the places I play are private events, corporate events or private parties. Sometimes, I play in places where they serve alcohol. Perish the thought, an alcoholic in a bar! The wineries are usually pretty nice and attract a very social crowd; the bars on the other hand, are usually filled with regular drinkers.



I decided to go check out the "local talent" in my hometown. I do this from time to time to see if there's anyone new worth considering working with. I think of it as a form of networking. I had been to this bar once before and when I tell you this was a sewer, this was a sewer! The locals think it's a great place: fun, loud—the whole thing. This was the kind of place I used to go to when I wasn't too drunk to "socialize." They serve food along with beer, booze and loud, hardcore music. First time I checked it out, I said "I will never come back to this place!" I decided to try one more time, to see if it was my imagination and if I was negatively predisposed. I should have believed myself.

I walked in and at least it wasn't smoky. Anyone needing a puff went outside for a drag. The music was loud and nothing to write home about. The crowd? This is where it got dicey. I sat at my table, sipping on my tonic and lime drink and checked out the scenery.

Same stuff, different day. I watched the parade of tweakers, drunks, hotties, losers, wannabe big shots, you name it. There were actually people that looked and acted normal, but there were a lot more there who were "waiting for something to happen." **(Continued, page 6)**



### **Heard Around A.A.**

"There's nothing I would give up for my 1<sup>st</sup> drink, but I'd give up EVERYTHING for my second drink."

"If you can't help anybody today, don't hurt anybody."

### **How to Avoid Playing God (1-5):**

Offer no advice unless it is asked.

Listen to other people's dreams and help them in the way they wish to be helped.

Encourage them to find their own strength.

Reserve judgment – At all times.

Admit that you don't know all the answers.

(More to come)

### **Quotes from our Founders:**

"Our recovery from alcoholism is dependent on humility, honesty, faith in God, appreciation, and service to other alcoholics." **The Little Red Book, pg. 42**

### **Central Office: IGR Mtg Notes of July 9, 2012**

- Cheryl A. opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with *The Serenity Prayer*
- Michele R. read the Twelve Traditions.
- Dawn H., Recording Secretary, accepted a motion for approval of Minutes from June's Intergroup Meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Brian H. reported Central Office is in the red <-\$258.83> MTD and <-\$3,124.27> YTD. Group donations are up, but sales are down a bit for July. Brian requested that meeting treasurers be made aware of the importance of sending in group donations to Central Office in a timely manner. A full Treasurer's Report will be available in next month's *Recovery Times*.

**Executive Secretary, Bob F. reported that everything is running smoothly at Central Office. Our volunteer staff is currently running well, but Central Office can always use new volunteers, especially with summer/vacation months ahead.**

**Recovery Times:** Everything is terrific with the newsletter.

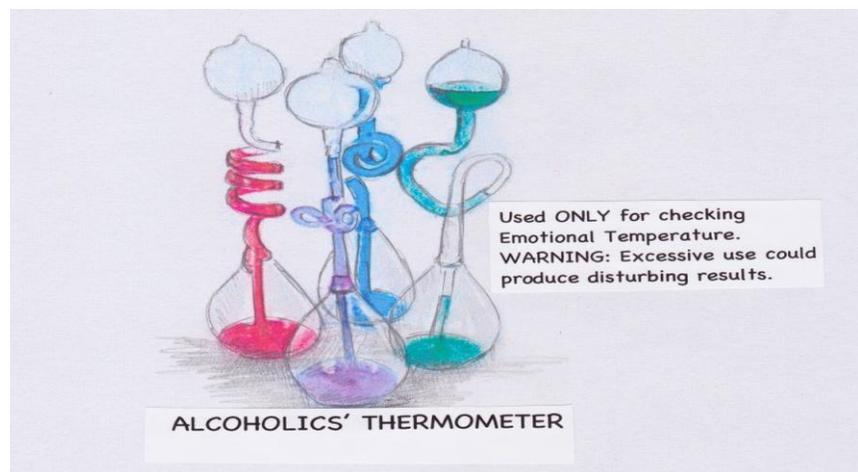
**Internet** – Everything is running smoothly with the [www.sfvaa.org](http://www.sfvaa.org) website.

**Co chair Andre W. welcomed three new IGRs and reminded everyone to encourage recruitment of IGRs from meetings that are not currently represented. There are currently 300+ groups in the San Fernando Valley but only 50-60 meetings represented at IGR.**

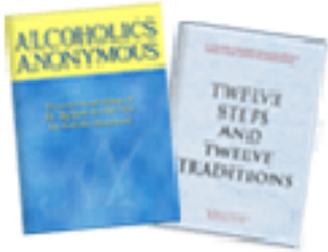
- **GSO District 1:** *Wayne said* General Services is promoting subscriptions to the Grapevine, (aka "a meeting in a book").
- **GSO District 17:** *Michele reported* from the recent Delegate Report Back, that by year's end, a toll-free phone number will be available where AAs can call in and record their stories for consideration of publication in the Grapevine.

**San Fernando Valley AA Convention:** The next meeting for the 2013 SFVAAC Planning Committee takes place on Tuesday, August 21 at St Innocents at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to help plan the 2013 convention.

**IGR Rep Birthdays:** Joel – 6 years, Michele – 11 years, Derek – 11 years  
Motion to adjourn was recognized and seconded. The meeting adjourned with *The Lord's Prayer* at 7:17 p.m.



**Illustration by Leslie Z.**



READ THE BIG BOOK AND  
TWELVE AND TWELVE

## The Pacoima Group, (continued)

Throughout the years, one name has been synonymous with Pacoima – Doris W. “Doris was a tall, fair-skinned woman of German descent who would tell it like it is,” recalls Pacoima Group Chairperson Tara K. “Doris always wore stiletto heels and she always meant business, but she epitomized everything that Pacoima is now: loving, welcoming open arms with an adherence to basic A.A. and A.A. traditions. The one line that everybody seems to credit her with,” says Tara is, ‘with total surrender goes the obsession.’”

“To say Doris was committed to Pacoima and Alcoholics Anonymous is an understatement,” states the **Pacoima Group History**. “She was a true example of the unconditional love one alcoholic has for another.”

In July 2001, Doris went on to join the Big Meeting in the Sky. After her passing, some worried that Pacoima would end, but because of the example that Doris and others set and the guidance of a loving Higher Power, the Group has outgrown these fears and continues to thrive.

From its humble beginning, the Pacoima Group now has to 20 weekly meetings. In addition to its popular Speaker Meetings on Tuesdays and Fridays at 7:30 p.m., its Sunday Beginners Meeting at 11 a.m. remains the most well-attended weekly meeting and one of the largest in the entire Valley. With a theme of Gratitude each week, the Leader/Participation formatted meeting draws a typical attendance of 75 or more A.A.s.

Each year, to honor its founding, The Pacoima Group holds an Alcathon with meetings that run, back to back, all weekend long. With food donated by gracious and humble A.A.’s, it is a wonderful reprieve from life and a true celebration.

Says Tara, “The Alcathon is to celebrate our anniversary so we invite groups to come host meetings for us to share our home with them and express some gratitude. If you ask most members of Pacoima what ‘Gratitude’ is, they would say, ‘gratitude is an action; it’s about being of service and putting your gratitude into action.’”

“What makes Pacoima unique from a lot of other meetings is that it’s very diverse,” she says. “There are a lot of people who wouldn’t normally mix. There’s always a lot of talk about Pacoima love - I see that a lot at Pacoima. We always do our best to make sure that anybody who walks through the door, whether they are new to the meeting or new to us, are welcomed and feel a part of.”

The group’s commitment to the Twelve Traditions, the active involvement of its old-timers, middle-timers, and newcomers, all combine to make Pacoima a vibrant, hopeful, and loving example of the A.A. way of life. The Group’s History states, “One of our members says that coming to Pacoima is like going to Grandma’s house for chicken soup - Pacoima offers comfort and love to those who come to us looking for a solution to their problem with alcohol. Many of us are often heard to say that the Pacoima Group is the best home group in the world. And it is, for us. We hope that while you celebrate our anniversary with us, our actions will show you why Pacoima is worth every ounce of love and effort we can put into it and we hope you will come to feel the same way.”

**Join The Pacoima Group for their 57<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, August 10 – 12, 2012 at 12502 Van Nuys Boulevard, #109, Pacoima, CA. Pat K. (with excerpts from The Pacoima Group History).**



## A.A. Worldwide Calendar: August 2012 (partial list)

62<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Area Convention, Reston, VA: Aug. 17-19  
35<sup>th</sup> Cornhusker Roundup, Omaha, Nebraska: Aug 16 – 19  
10<sup>th</sup> Northwest Fellowship of the Spirit Conference, Ocean Shores, WA: Aug 17-19  
14<sup>th</sup> Big Book on the Beach, St. Pete, FL: Aug. 17-18  
Hog Heaven Campout, Kettle Falls, WA: Aug. 17-19  
Woodstock's 31<sup>st</sup> Marathon of Unity, Woodstock, Ontario: Aug. 17-19  
32<sup>nd</sup> Green Lake Conference, Green Lake, WI: Aug. 17-19  
37<sup>th</sup> Hill Country Roundup, Kerrville, TX: Aug. 24-26  
26<sup>th</sup> Roundup in the Netherlands, Elspeet, The Netherlands: Aug. 24-26  
Miracle Beach Campout, Miracle Beach, British Columbia: Aug. 24-26  
Illinois State Conference, Springfield, IL: Aug. 24-26  
26<sup>th</sup> Tampa Bay Fall Roundup, Tampa, FL: Aug. 31 – Sept. 2  
San Antonio Roundup, San Antonio, TX: Aug. 31- Sept. 2  
Colorado State Convention, Colorado Springs, CO: Aug. 31- Sept. 2  
Redwood Coast Roundup, Fortuna, CA: Aug. 31- Sept. 2  
Arizona State Convention, Phoenix, AZ: Aug. 31 – Sept. 2  
7<sup>th</sup> Berlin Convention, Berlin, Germany: Aug. 31 – Sept. 2  
Big Country Conference, Abilene, TX: Aug. 31-Sept. 2  
29<sup>th</sup> Singles in Sobriety, Pottsboro, TX: Sept. 6-9  
New Jersey Roundup, Asbury Park, NJ: Sept. 7-9  
54<sup>th</sup> ICYPAA (Intl. Young People in A.A.), St. Louis, MO: Sept. 13-16  
Int. Native American Indian Conference, Scottsdale, AZ: Sept. 13-16

## A Gig at the Bar, (continued from page 3)

I sat there and thought to myself, thank God I don't live like this anymore, thank God I'm not out here in this world acting out. Thank God I have a wonderful (99 % of the time) husband at home waiting for me to come home. It wasn't particularly entertaining watching this sad parade. When I'm working in a bar, a winery, whatever, I see the same stuff, but usually, I'm too focused on what I'm doing and not what the customers are doing. This time, I got the chance to observe up close and personal. It was scary.

When I have a gig any where, I do my job, get paid and then leave promptly. I watch myself carefully, am very polite to everyone and have really clear boundaries. Being a musician has its drawbacks. Sometimes people confuse the stage persona with the real person and get kind of ticked off when they find out they don't have a ticket to ride.

I'm there to work, not to play games. I love music and I love doing what I do, but I do not like some of the stuff that I sometimes see. I feel very sorry for some of the women in the bars. I know they're going to walk out the door and go home to someone that probably doesn't care about them, or at least doesn't care enough to give them a reason to stay home. It was a window back into time. I never ever, ever want to live that kind of life again. Not ever. Bad choices, bad company, bad way to live, and very dangerous.

Sometimes I ask myself if the musician life style is worth it. It's worth it to me. Believe it or not, while bars are not the kind of place you want to 12 Step some one that ain't lookin' for that kind of change in their life, you'd be surprised at what goes in one ear and doesn't go out the other. I still remember some of the real kindness that complete strangers offered me when I was deep in that life years ago. I remember people whose names I never knew, who cared enough to extend a hand and offer help. Those people are long gone and I'll never know who they were, but they were part of a long road to the kind of life I found in AA. It's not often when you get a firsthand look at the way you were and the way you could be if you made the choice to drink. It's definitely a choice. I'm so grateful for the women friends I have in AA. The places I frequent today are filled with love and respect. —**Ann S., Hemet, Calif.** Reprinted with permission from the A.A. Grapevine.



**Please Support Your Central Office.** We really could use more support by sending a Representative from your group to the IGR meetings. We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month at St. Innocent Church at 5657 Lindley in Tarzana. Please Come! We would love to see you!

**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**

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**(Please circle):** **New**   **Renewal**    **Additional Contribution**  
**Moving?** Please give us your former address:

**The 12 Steps through Word Search.** Each month, Recovery Times features the Step of the month. In August we are featuring Step Eight. **Find the words to Step Eight below: "Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all."**

Can you find all the words? Look closely and read across as well as up and down.

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

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