

## The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

### Dumped on Valentine's Day

In my first few months of being sober, I didn't believe the dating suggestions applied to me. I was seeing another AA member, and you could say we were on a pink cloud. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was using men as my Higher Power. I thought as long as the two of us were staying sober together, I would be OK.



About three months after we started dating, he had to move away to go to school, so I visited him on weekends. I soon got pregnant, and things started to get rocky. He began to come off his pink cloud and felt his old habits coming back. So he did what the program suggests and got a sponsor and started working the Steps.

I began to get jealous. I wanted all his attention. When he chose Step work over me, I got resentful. I began to start acting out and wanting control. When that didn't work, it left me feeling alone, scared, unwanted and resentful. So I gave him an ultimatum. But he chose to work his Steps and find himself.

On Valentine's eve, he called and told me it was over. Now it was Valentine's Day, and I was pregnant—and dumped—by a recovering alcoholic. I felt I had a justifiable resentment. This led to an emotional rock bottom. I wanted to die. And since I had not gotten “in the middle” of AA, I felt I had nowhere to turn.

Then one night, while lying in bed and picturing putting a gun to my head, I asked for help. I prayed for God's will. I admitted to whatever could be out there that I had once again screwed everything up and couldn't go on anymore. Just then, a feeling of warmth surrounded me like arms holding my body. I felt willing to reach out to other members.

Right away I got in the middle of AA. I started calling my sponsor and working the Steps. I also started going on AA road trips. My sister got sober, and I was able to reach out to her too. My attitude and outlook changed. I learned to forgive and see my part in things. As my sponsor always says, I got to “see the lesson.”

Nine months later, our baby was born. Both of us were still sober and continued working our own programs. We learned how to communicate, and about three months after the birth, we reconciled peacefully—all thanks to AA. We are both sober and happy today. Things are better than I could ever have planned, and when times are tough, we have our own Higher Powers and our own programs. The Promises are all coming true.

—Chantelle D., Smithers, British Columbia, Copyright c. 1944-2012. AA Grapevine, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Reprints by permission only. —

Central Office is a legitimate non-profit. Personal donations cannot exceed \$3,000 per year and must be from members of alcoholics anonymous, not from outsiders. Central Office is open every day (Monday – Sunday) except for holidays for sales of books. We are closed the last Friday of the month for inventory. Our large warehouse has all of the A.A. approved literature and pamphlets that your group needs, plus medallions and chips. Please come visit us and say 'hi' at our new location: 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91406 or visit: [www.SFVAA.org](http://www.SFVAA.org)

## SERVICE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE:

**San Fernando Valley Central Office Board Meeting:** March 4, 2015, 6:30 p.m., Central Office, 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91406

**San Fernando Valley Intergroup Meeting:** March 9, 2015: New IGRs: 6:30 p.m., General Meeting: 7 p.m., St. Innocent Church., 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana.

**San Fernando Valley H & I** (3rd Monday): Feb. 16, 2015: 7 p.m. Orientation, 8 p.m. Bus. Meeting, St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana

**General Service Dist. 1:** (1<sup>st</sup> Wed.): March 4, 2015: 6:30 p.m., 7552 Remmet, Canoga Park.

**General Service Dist. 2:** (1<sup>st</sup> Tues.): March 3, 2015: 6:30 p.m., 4011 Dunsmore, La Crescenta.

**General Service District 7:** (2<sup>nd</sup> Sat.): March 14, 2015: 9 a.m., Women's Club: 33201 Agua Dulce Canyon Rd, Agua Dulce, CA.

**General Service District 11** (1<sup>st</sup> Monday): March 2, 2015: 6 p.m. New GSRs - 6:30 p.m., 315 W. Vine Street, Glendale



**General Service District 16** (1<sup>st</sup> Monday): March 2, 2015: 6:15 p.m. meeting, 15950 Chatsworth, Granada Hills.

**General Service District 17** (1<sup>st</sup> Monday): March 2, 2015: 6 p.m. New GSRs, 6:30 p.m. Bus. Mtg., 5000 Colfax, NoHo.

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### 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, please **call Central Office: (818) 988-3001**.

**Public Info. Committee** provides info to the public about what A.A. does & doesn't do. Need volunteers, especially young people and Spanish-speaking AAs, for health fairs & to speak at schools & businesses.

**SF Valley Hospitals and Institutions Committee:** Temporary contacts are needed to pair the alcoholic leaving rehabilitation, treatment or jail with A.A. in their home community. Contact Central Office for information. H & I also needs volunteers to carry the message of A.A. into hospitals, prisons and treatment facilities to those who are unable to get out to meetings. See meeting time/date above (SFV H & I).

**San Fernando Valley Convention Committee:** Volunteers are welcome to participate in the planning of the 2015 Convention. (See Page 4 for more info under SF Valley AA Convention).

**San Fernando Valley Young People in AA:** 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month @ 1 p.m. at Unit A., 10641 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood. (Regular weekly meeting: Monday night at 8 p.m.).

**San Fernando Valley Intergroup:** Central Office holds 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. Intergroup reps provide an important service to the group by sharing information on upcoming AA events in the Valley. **To serve as an Intergroup Rep, call: (818) 988-3001. Please Support Your Central Office** by sending a representative to the Intergroup monthly meetings. We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month at **St. Innocent Church at 5657 Lindley in Tarzana**. We would love to see you!

**Celebrating an A.A. Anniversary?** Please consider making a \$1.00 donation for each year of your sobriety and we will list your name and birthday year in the month of your sobriety. Please send your donation during your birthday month. **For Jan. 2015, we celebrate: Marcia H. – 20 years, Roy G. – 22 years, Frances K. – 30 years and Learning to Live Men’s Stag: 8 men, 104 years.**



**Deaths (Things We Cannot Change):** If you are aware of the passing of a Fellowship member, please call us at (818) 988-3001 or email obituary to: [sfvco@la.twcbc.com](mailto:sfvco@la.twcbc.com). **Tom B. – 42 Years & Walt K. – 49 Years.**

**Has your meeting changed?** Please provide meeting updates in writing to: **The Valley Central Office**, 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91406. If you would like a copy of **Recovery Times**, please send us your name, address and payment for \$7.00 to cover cost & delivery. Also include information on whether you want a new subscription, are renewing, or if you are enclosing an additional contribution. If moving, please give us your former address.

**A.A. Central Office maintains 24/7 Phone Service** for AAs: **(818) 988-3001**. Go to: [www.sfvaa.org](http://www.sfvaa.org) to find meeting info, upcoming events, service meeting info, or download a copy of Recovery Times. **Want to be of service?** We are always in need of volunteers to answer phones, especially on weekends and holidays.

**Upcoming Calendar of Events:**

**2015**

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75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1<sup>st</sup> permanent meeting of A.A. in Los Angeles, March 28, 2015 at 8 p.m., The Cecil Hotel in "The United States Room," 640 S. Main Street, L.A.

27<sup>th</sup> Big Island Bash: April 24-26, 2015, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. [www.bigislandbash.com](http://www.bigislandbash.com)

31<sup>st</sup> Annual Tri-State Roundup, May 14-17, 2015, Laughlin, NV, [www.tristate-roundup.com](http://www.tristate-roundup.com)

AA Desert Pow Wow: June 4 – 7, 2015, Indian Wells, CA

31<sup>st</sup> Annual South Bay Roundup: August 27-30, 2015, Torrance Marriott, [www.southbayroundup.org](http://www.southbayroundup.org)

64<sup>th</sup> So. CA AA Convention: October 2-4, 2015, Rancho Mirage. [www.aasocal.com](http://www.aasocal.com)

## MINUTES FROM INTERGROUP REP MEETING, Jan. 12 2015

### OPENING: Dawn H.

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

### TREASURER'S REPORT: Josh S.

- Josh thanked the groups for their contributions. YTD \$13,213.39 and Previous YTD \$8532.64 in the black.

### EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT: Bob F., Central Office

Everything is running smoothly at Central Office, and we are scheduling an open house for the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in February. Directories with all the new information will be available in mid-January. In the meantime, all pertinent information is available on the website at [www.sfvaa.org](http://www.sfvaa.org).



**Recovery Times** - Deadline for submissions is 15<sup>th</sup> of the month; send to Pat's e-mail: [xnowisthetime@aol.com](mailto:xnowisthetime@aol.com).

**Introduction of New Intergroup Representatives** – Brian H. welcomed ten new IGRs: Judy K – HITS Women's Stage, West Hills, Lynn B. – Leader's Choice Women's Stag, Dunsmore; Niki M – Candlelight, Woodland Hills; Aaron R – USR Men's Stag, Northridge; Frank K. – Canoga Park; Christian T. – Learning to Live Men's Stag – Canoga Park; Laura K. – Odyssey BB

Ladies of Success – Canoga Park; Pat K. – Lowell Companions, Tujunga; Nicole S. – The Burbank Group; & Maggie E. – Women's Big Book Study, Northridge. IGRs were reminded to encourage recruitment of IGRs from meetings that are not currently represented. There are currently 700 meetings in the San Fernando Valley, with only 50-60 meetings represented monthly at IGR. Orientation for new IGRs begins at 6:30 p.m. prior to monthly IGR Meeting.

### **Service Representatives:**

- General Service District 16: Daniel says they need more participation. Good stuff is coming up.
- San Fernando Valley Hospital & Institutions Committee: A full H&I Literature report was available.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Literature Sales are CLOSED the last Friday of each month. Central Office doors remain open; phones are still answered. Reminder for groups to report upcoming group events, and remove expired Group event flyers from literature tables. Continue to send meeting changes IN WRITING to Central Office.

**NEW BUSINESS:** No new attendance certificates were awarded.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AA GROUPS & SEVENTH TRADITION:

- Joshua A: announced the Joe & Charlie Workshop at Unit A.
- Tigran announced a Jan 17 dance with DJ Nicole at the SF Group after the 8pm meeting
- Dawn H: Reminded everyone that groups should bring at least 350 flyers for upcoming events so that each meeting can have at least 5 copies. Flyers must be for "AA-related events" (defined as "an event that includes an AA Meeting as part of the event").

### IGR BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2015: 81 YEARS OF SOBRIETY!

Joshua M. – 2 years	Judy K – 2 years,	Jerry W. – 4 years	Regina – 4 years
Tammy E. – 4 years	Michael B. – 8 years	Jessica T. – 8 years	Kate F – 8 years
Carrie – 12 years	Antoinette K. – 29 years		

## Message

"Our personal ambitions will have to be set aside every time they conflict with the safety or the effectiveness of our Fellowship. We must sometimes love our Society more than ourselves."

**AA Co-Founder, Bill W., November 1960,**  
*"Freedom Under God: The Choice Is Ours."*

"We shall often miscalculate the future in whole or in part. But even so, this will be far better than to refuse to think at all." **AA Co-Founder, Bill W., April 1959**  
*"Leadership in AA: Ever a Vital Need," The Language of the Heart*

**"Anger in all its forms is ugly. I see the absence of anger as one form of grace."**  
**Ottawa, Ontario, April 1992**

"Each day I turn my ongoing spiritual experience into a sane and happy usefulness among my fellow travelers."

**Nome, AK, June 2009**  
*"It's Showtime,"*  
Spiritual Awakenings II

"Today it is no longer about who cares for me, it is about learning to love others." *Schaumburg, Ill., March 2006*

## VACANCIES ON BOARD: NONE.

**CLOSING:** Dawn H. wished everyone a very happy New Year. A motion to adjourn was recognized and seconded. Meeting adjourned with *The Lord's Prayer* at 7:22 p.m. Prepared and submitted by: Cheryl A, Recording Secretary.

## Honesty

Life wasn't going well for me when I showed upon the scene, but I was ready for the change, whatever that would mean.

The life I'd led was scandalous - I think you get the gist, and to get rigorously honest, was the first thing on my list.

When practicing this principle I was brutal from the start, but that sometimes caused reactions, and it wasn't very smart.

My wife asked me a question while trying on some jeans: Did they make her look extended? Well, you know what I mean.

That put me in a quandary and, I knew I had to lie, If life has to be that rigorous, well, I guess I'm gonna die.

I told a friend about it and he said "you got it right." *Kindness* trumps the *rigorous* clause, and you gotta keep it light.

He gave a definition and for our purpose, I believe, kind honesty is *devoid of all motives to deceive.*

It gives a little wiggle room and, I think God wouldn't mind, if self-righteousness takes a little hit, *if only to be kind.*

I've learned there are few absolutes, and my conscience is my Guide, and I must put self-honesty first when *these thing I decide.*  
By Rick R., Poway, CA

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"I have an AA friend, a good and gentle soul. He recently joined one of the great religious orders, one in which the friars spend many hours a day in contemplation. So my friend has plenty of time to take his inventory. The more he looks, the more unconscious self-deception he finds. And the more astonished he becomes at the elaborate and devious excuse-making machinery by which he had been justifying himself. He has already come to the conclusion that the prideful righteousness of 'good people' may often be just as destructive as the glaring sins of those who are supposedly not so good. So he daily looks inward upon himself and then upward toward God, the better to discover just where he stands in this matter of honesty. Out of each of his meditations there always emerges one dead certainty, and this is the fact that he still has a long way to go." **AA Co-Founder, Bill W., August 1961,** *"This Matter of Honesty," The Language of the Heart*

## Behind the Scenes: That meeting book in his hand did not magically appear



(From the Archives: Reprint, Grapevine September 1996 "Meetings, meetings, meetings")

As my life got increasingly unmanageable during the last years of drinking, I withdrew more and more and became isolated from meaningful interactions with others. That this was happening in midtown Manhattan made life all the more lonely. So it was with amazement that in early sobriety I discovered AA's meeting book for our greater metropolitan area.

While it was as confusing as a train schedule at first, I was like a kid with a new-found toy, running around town to meetings in a great many unlikely places at all hours of the day and night. Here was a listing that said a particular sort of AA meeting would be held at a certain time and place, and behold, there it was—and run by drunks that I would guess hadn't always been reliable for keeping commitments. This world was a radically different place from where I'd so recently lived and drunk. A whole different set of principles were guiding these mostly sober folks who, while they seemed pretty laid back and casual, were well enough organized to be there when the meeting book said they would be.

A couple years later when doing a weekly stint as a telephone answering volunteer at our intergroup office, I was able to see how the information was gathered, updated and regularly published. The meeting lists hadn't just happened miraculously. They were the result of well-organized effort and just plain hard work. At last I came to understand that while AA itself must never be organized, there were some jobs in AA that need to be well-planned.

As a member of our general service area, I found myself working on the planning committee for our annual area convention, and saw how AA members find strength in getting together to enjoy the broadest community aspects of our Fellowship. So our convention has become an annual custom that provides much joy in living and sharing. It needs a lot of careful planning and organizing to make it happen and to provide for the needs of an unbelievably diverse range of tastes, spirits and temperaments. The going was not always as smooth as we planned as we did the necessary tasks, but the results were beyond our wildest dreams. And we all stayed sober right through the Sunday morning meeting that closed the event. We had created a committee directly responsible to those who need our services. —*Boyce B., Brooklyn, N.Y.*

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**The 40<sup>th</sup> Annual San Fernando Valley AA Convention was, once again, a festive event for everyone who attended. A total of 2,553 people attended (AAs, Al-Anons and Ala-Teens). Thank you to 2015 Convention Chair Dawn H. and incoming convention chair Brian H. for their hard work. To hear speakers from AA and Al-Anon, please visit [www. sfvaaconvention.org](http://www.sfvaaconvention.org)**



## The Origin of our Serenity Prayer (from [www.AAhistory.com](http://www.AAhistory.com))

In 1942, a New York AA member named Jack brought to everyone's attention a caption in a routine New York Herald Tributary obituary that showed the Serenity Prayer that we in AA now say. Bill W. then wrote in A.A. Comes of Age, "With amazing speed, the Serenity Prayer came into general use and took its place alongside our two other favorites, the Lord's Prayer and the Prayer of St. Francis."

Thus did the "accidental" noticing of an unattributed prayer, printed alongside a simple obituary of an unknown individual open the way toward the prayer's daily use by thousands upon thousands of A.A.s worldwide.

Today, there is still a question about where this prayer originated from. Some say it was originally called the 'General's Prayer' dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Another source says it dates back to the Roman philosopher Boethius (480-524 A.D.) or more recently, to the theologian Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, who claimed he wrote it. Here is a long version of the Prayer, one of many versions that Dr. Niebuhr is said to have written:

God grant me the SERENITY to accept the things I cannot change;  
COURAGE to change the things I can;  
And WISDOM to know the difference.

Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment of time;  
accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;  
Taking, as HE did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it:

Trusting that HE will make all things right if I surrender to His WILL;  
That I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with Him forever in the next. Amen.



## FREEDOM FROM . . . FREEDOM TO

We are going to know a new freedom. . . .  
— ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p. 83

Freedom for me is both freedom *from* and freedom *to*. The first freedom I enjoy is freedom from the slavery of alcohol. What a relief! Then I begin to experience freedom *from* fear — fear of people, of economic insecurity, of commitment, of failure, of rejection. Then I begin to enjoy freedom *to* — freedom to *choose* sobriety for today, freedom to be myself, freedom to express my opinion, to experience peace of mind, to love and be loved, and freedom to grow spiritually. But how can I achieve these freedoms? The Big Book clearly says that before I am halfway through making amends, I will begin to know a "new" freedom; not the old freedom of doing what I pleased, without regard to others, but the new freedom that allows fulfillment of the promises in my life. What a joy to be free!

From the book *Daily Reflections*

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**San Fernando Valley Central Office**

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Van Nuys, CA 91406

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**