

RECOVERY TIMES

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The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

WOMEN PIONEERS IN A.A. – SYLVIA K., MARTY M., HELEN W., LUCILLE K., AND OTHERS – THE UNTOLD A.A. LEGACY IS EXPLORED



Sylvia K. Kauffmann, sober Sept. 13, '39, Chicago. Author of "Keys to the Kingdom", 2nd & 3rd BB Editions

On Saturday October 10, 2015, for a few short hours, "Women in AA History" came alive. Our Area 93 Archives Committee hosted a wonderful event at the Encino Community Center on Balboa Boulevard. Various presenters gave oral history as well as a PowerPoint presentation and video on the big screen about some of our early women members in AA. Also talked about were non-alcoholics very influential in the early years as they supported and believed in Alcoholics Anonymous.

The idea for this event came from an Archives Committee meeting that we realized that we just don't talk about the early members in our meetings today. We talk a lot about Bill and Bob but there were others who should be remembered – the women pioneers of A.A. - and so this event was born. It was a beautiful, powerful day. Adding to it was a fantastic buffet lunch served by volunteers and committee members.

Sylvia K. author of "Keys to the Kingdom"

Approximately 120 A.A. members and visitors were educated about the contributions made by early pioneers Sylvia K., Helen W., Marty M., Ruth H., Pam W., and Sybil C. who were so instrumental to A.A. Unknown by many in attendance was the fact that Marty M. was the author of the chapter "Women Suffer Too" in the 2nd – 4th editions of the Big Book. She also organized the *National Committee for Education on Alcoholism* (now called the *National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence*) at a time when women were often not allowed to open bank accounts without the co-signature of their husbands. Presenter Alice L. gave the attendees background about Marty that most of us would not have known. She really knocked it out of the park when she played the film of Marty speaking (for the first time) about alcoholism being viewed as a "disease" back when that was not the popular ideology.

Another presenter, Jackie M., spoke about Ruth H. who was the first secretary of A.A. (though she wasn't an alcoholic). This is somewhat common knowledge in A.A. but too often we do not get to discuss Ruth or her EXTRAORDINARY contribution to A.A. It was she who, while employed as Bill and Hank's secretary, witnessed the birth of the Big Book and typed it from the notes and dictations given to her. By the way, if you do not know who "Hank" is – just wait. In September 2016, Area 93 Archives will be hosting another event focusing on both men and women in the early years.

Ruth H. has also been credited with witnessing the moments and sometimes heated discussions about the book when phrases came into use or ideas were rejected or accepted for it such as, "God as you understand him." WOW. What it must have been to be Ruth watching and listening back then while the relief for millions of alcoholics was being created right in front of and with her. Jackie M. gave us that experience.

The Area Archives Committee has received so many inquiries about next year's event that we are already in the planning stages for September 2016. (Continued, page 5)

SERVICE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE:

San Fernando Valley Central Office Board Meeting: Dec. 9, 2015, 6:30 p.m., Central Office, 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91406.

San Fernando Valley Intergroup Meeting: Dec. 14, 2015: Orientation for 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): Nov. 16, 2015: 7 p.m. Orientation, 8 p.m. Bus. Meeting, St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana.

General Service Dist. 1: (1st Wed.): Dec. 2, 2015: 6:30 p.m., 7552 Remmet, Canoga Park.

General Service Dist. 2: (1st Tues.): Dec. 1, 2015: 6:30 p.m., 4011 Dunsmore, La Crescenta.

General Service District 7: (2nd Sat.): Dec. 12, 2015, 2015: 9 a.m., Women's Club: 33201 Agua Dulce Canyon Rd, Agua Dulce, CA.

General Service District 11 (1st Monday): Dec. 7, 2015: 6 p.m. New GSRs - 6:30 p.m., 315 W. Vine Street, Glendale.

General Service District 16 (1st Mon.): Dec. 7, 2015: 6:00 p.m., 15950 Chatsworth, Granada Hills.

General Service District 17 (1st Monday): Dec/ 7, 2015: 6 p.m. Orientation for new GSRs, 6:30 p.m., Business Meeting: 7:00 p.m., 5000 Colfax, NoHo.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

A.A. Central Office maintains 24/7 Phone Service for AAs. Go to: 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. If you have a year or more of continuous sobriety, please call Central Office: (818) 988-3001.

Central Office has moved to 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA. (SW corner of Woodley & Sherman Way, west of the Mobil Station). Many people don't realize that Central Office is open every day for book sales (Monday – Sunday) except for holidays. However, 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. 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. For more info, call: (818) 988-3001 or check out our website: www.sfvaa.org.

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

SF Valley Hospitals and Institutions Committee (H & I): Temporary contacts are needed to pair the alcoholic leaving rehabilitation, treatment or jail with A.A. in their home community. Contact Central Office for info. 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 to meetings. See meeting info above. (SFV H & I).

San Fernando Valley Convention Committee: Volunteers are welcome to participate in the planning of the 2016 Convention. (See Page 3 for more info under SF Valley AA Convention).

San Fernando Valley Young People in AA: 1st 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 2nd 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 2nd Monday of every month at St. Innocent Church at 5657 Lindley in Tarzana. We would love to see you!

Happy Birthday!



Celebrating an A.A. Anniversary? Please consider making a \$1.00 donation for each year of your sobriety during your birthday month and we will list your name and birthday year in the next issue. This month's birthday celebrants are: Paul R. – 8 Years, Larry F. – 28 Years, Hilary R. – 31 Years, and Mary Jane A. – 33 Years.

Deaths (Things We Cannot Change): If you are aware of the passing of a Fellowship member, please call us at (818) 988-3001. We said goodbye to Tom McC – 30 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 with \$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.

THE RECOVERY TIMES would like to hear your story. Please keep it to 500 words and focus on sobriety. Please include your sobriety date and an email or phone number then email Pat at: xnowisthetime@aol.com. Thank you!

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY CENTRAL OFFICE
Minutes of Intergroup Representatives Meeting, October 12, 2015

OPENING: Dawn H.

- Dawn opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. with The Serenity Prayer
- Nicole read "The Twelve Traditions"
- Cheryl A. accepted a motion for approval of Minutes from the September Intergroup Meeting, with corrections.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Josh S.

- Personal contributions are \$14,500 ahead and literature sales (\$28,000) down compared to last year.
- MTD (\$1889) and YTD (\$3486). This is a 5-week payroll month.

CENTRAL OFFICE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT: Bob F.

There are 8 new phone volunteers at Central Office. The fundraiser, Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast, was nearly sold out at 400 tickets. **Recovery Times:** Deadline for submissions is 15th of the month; send to Pat's e mail xnowisthetime@aol.com.

MEETING RELATED BUSINESS: Adrian I. (for Brian H.)

Three new Intergroup Representatives this month:

- Jill, *Platt Speaker*, Friday, West Hills
- Herb, Unit A, *Sunday Speaker*, Pass Avenue, Toluca Lake
- Adrian, *Attraction in Action*, Saturday 7pm, Northridge
- IGRs were reminded to encourage recruitment from meetings that are not represented. There are currently more than 780 meetings in the San Fernando Valley, but only 50 - 60 represented monthly at IGR. Orientation for new IGRs begins at 6:30 p.m. prior to the meeting.

SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

- General Service District 11, Tigran said they are hosting a 12 Concepts Study the 1st Monday of each month and a Sponsorship workshop through next year at the Windsor Club
- General Service District 17: Paul: They are working on a Newcomer Packet. The next Area Assembly will

Message

"The history of AA shows that whenever a great need arises, that need is always met. In this respect, I'm quite sure that our history will go on repeating itself." AA Co-Founder, Bill W., April 1958 "Guardian of AA-Our General Service Conference"

"Look to the Heavens, row toward to the shore."

"Mind your own business and people won't get in your face as much."

"Trust God but tie up your horse."

"Alcoholism, when untreated, always shows up at mental illness."

"God lives in a realm where there is no time."

"AA us full of friends you haven't met yet."

"Action doesn't care how you take it. You just have to do it."

"The program of AA may not open the gates of Heaven and let you in, but it will open the gates of Hell and let you out."

"Most days, this life in AA feels like a magic carpet ride."

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be held in Bakersfield in November.

- San Fernando Valley Hospital & Institutions Committee, Nancy: Financials are good thanks to group donations; 34th Birthday Dinner of H&I was to be held 10/22 "Cruising Along in Service to H&I."
- San Fernando Valley 41st AA Convention, Joel S. welcomed everyone to attend the convention January 29 -31, 2016 at the Warner Center Marriott in Woodland Hills. Registration is available online.

OLD BUSINESS

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

NEW BUSINESS

- No attendance certificates were awarded this evening.
- **November is month is Gratitude Month, the main fundraiser for Central Office**

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AA GROUPS & SEVENTH TRADITION:

- Tigran: Windsor Club (Glendale) Dance and Meeting every 3rd Saturday per month, 10pm to 1:30am; also 11/21, 12/19, 1/16, and 2/20
- Unit A: Thankathon, Nov 25 and Nov 26, 2015.
- Dawn H: Reminder 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")

ACKNOWLEDGE BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER – 35 YEARS OF SOBRIETY!

Paul: 10/8/00, 15 years; Dottie: 10/24/95, 20years

VACANCIES ON BOARD: NONE.

CLOSING: Dawn H. a motion to adjourn was recognized and seconded. Meeting adjourned with *The Lord's Prayer* at 7:19 p.m.

Prepared and submitted by: Cheryl A., Recording Secretary

November is Gratitude Month – Please remember to pass the basket at your meetings



in November to cover Central Office's expenses. We thank you!

Women Pioneers in

A.A., (Continued, page 1)



Pioneer Elizabeth Elizardi

For this first-time Archives presentation, many of our attendees came from as far away as Bakersfield, Lancaster and Oxnard. As a committee we were excited to find that the fellowship is truly interested in who the early members were.

We also realized we need a bigger venue! To be fair to the fellowship, we are currently looking for a facility that would hold 300 persons for the next event somewhere in the Gold Coast District. We would like to host the event in different districts with an in-depth look at other early men and women in A.A.. It will provide a wider access for our fellowship.

While I listened to the struggles and triumphs of these women, I felt a part of something big. I really came away knowing that what we do today *does matter* for the alcoholic tomorrow - and I mean very tomorrow. I am here today in part because these women over sixty-years ago made their sobriety and their commitment to A.A. as important as their fellow alcoholic. And for that I am grateful. **Niki M., Granada Hills, CA**

For more information on the A.A. AREA 93 archives, please email: area93archives@gmail.com.

FACTs about A.A. Women Pioneers:

- Sylvia Kauffmann, who got sober in 1939, was known to have had the longest sobriety in A.A. at that time. She was also the author of "Keys to the Kingdom."
- Helen Wynn, another A.A. pioneer, was the first editor of the Grapevine, our A.A. magazine.
- Sybil, a bootlegger and dancehall girl, was the first woman to get sober in California and was also the first executive secretary for CA AA.
- Marty Mann (1904 – 1980) was known as "The First Lady of A.A." She co-founded the Grapevine and was A.A.'s first international speaker. Bill W. was her sponsor. Marty Mann wrote a primer on alcoholism and made sure there were hospital beds for A.A.s. She created the (now) widely known adage that alcoholism is a disease and that alcoholics are "sick" people, helping to break the stigma of alcoholism. There was a biography written on Marty Mann in 2005, authored by Sally & David Brown.
- Ruth Hock was Bill W.'s secretary and affectionately known as "Dutch." She served as the national secretary for A.A. from its founding and helped transcribe and write the Big Book.
- Florence, Ruth's housekeeper, was the first woman to get sober in A.A.
- An alternate title proposed for the Big Book was "The Way Out."

Sister Mary Ignatia (1889-1966) Born Della Mary Gavin in 1889 in Ireland, Sister Ignatia worked with Dr. Bob to help admit alcoholics into St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, Ohio, starting in 1939. She surmounted obstacles to personally care for thousands of alcoholics over the next several decades, both in Akron and later at St. Vincent Charity Hospital in Cleveland. Beloved by all who were associated with or helped by her, she was commonly referred to as the "Angel of Alcoholics Anonymous."



Originally a musician, Sister Ignatia was transferred by her order, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Augustine, to St. Thomas Hospital in Akron to work in their admissions office. It was in that capacity that she first met and worked with **Dr. Bob**. In an interview with **Bill W.**, Sister regaled the co-founder with cherished recollections of Dr. Bob and their work with drunks at St. Thomas:



“Dr. Bob was the essence of professional dignity. He had a fine sense of humor and exceptional vocabulary.... Now, as I look back over the years, I realize that Dr. Bob was slowly but surely preparing me for the great project he had in mind. We often discussed the problem of alcoholism and the tragedies caused by excessive drinking. The individual given to alcoholic addiction is frequently a wreck of humanity – broken in body and soul, and heart and unable to help himself. His loved ones suffer, too; there were many broken homes and hearts because of compulsive drinking.” (Recording of Sister Ignatia, 1954)

Her work in helping alcoholics was done with much dignity and modest distinction. In December 1949, she was presented with the Poverello Medal of the College of Steubenville. The medal was given to her for the A.A. Fellowship for her untiring efforts with alcoholics in Akron. In March 1961, Sister Ignatia received a letter of acknowledgment for her pioneering contributions from the White House (President Kennedy), which she shared with Bill W. The letter read:

“Dear Sister Mary Ignatia: Through an admirer of yours, the President has learned of the fine work you have done in the past at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, and, more recently, at St. Vincent’s in Cleveland. He has been informed that a large number of citizens have been restored to useful citizenship as a result of your efforts. As you have been a strong influence for the good to many people, you have added strength to your community and nation.”

In response to receiving a copy of the President’s letter, Bill responded to Sister Ignatia and wrote:

“We have read the marvelous letter which President Kennedy requested be sent to you. It reminds me that I have no words to tell of my devotion and my gratitude to you, of the constant inspiration you have given me and so many over the years by your example of the finest in all that is spiritual and eternal, as well as temporal.”

Following Dr. Bob’s death in 1950, Sister Ignatia continued her work at St. Thomas. Then in 1952, she was transferred to St. Vincent Charity Hospital at Cleveland, where she was placed in charge of its alcoholic ward. Upon arrival, the ward at “Charity” was part of a dilapidated wing and was in great need of rejuvenation. Through the Sister’s urging and much assistance from A.A. members with carpentry skills, the ward was soon transformed and named Rosary Hall Solarium. Sister Ignatia provided each patient who left her care with a Sacred Heart badge. Receiving this item was accompanied by a personal promise to the Sister that the patient would return the badge before they drank again. She died in Richfield Ohio, at age 77, on April 1, 1966. There were reportedly about 3,000 people present at the funeral, including A.A.’s co-founder, Bill W. Copyright © 2015 Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Illustration by Leslie Z.

Calendar of A.A. Events:

Yosemite Summit Conference, Curry Village, Yosemite, CA: Nov. 19 – 22, 2015:

www.serenityyosemite.com

49th Las Vegas Roundup: Las Vegas, NV: Nov. 26-29, 2015:

www.lasvegasroundup.org

Western Australian Young People in A.A.: Perth, Australia, Dec. 11 – 13, 2015:

www.waypaa.org.au

Western Area Conference of Young People in A.A.: Portland, OR, Dec. 17 – 20, 2015:

www.wacypaaxix.org

46th Southwest Conference, Dodge City, Kansas: January 8 – 10, 2016: www.kansas-aa.org

Tar Heel Mid-Winter Conference, Raleigh, NC: January 14 – 17, 2016: www.tarheelmidwinter.org

14th Sobriety Under the Sun, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico: Jan. 22 – 24, 2016: www.aapvconvention.com

Imperial Valley Roundup, Brawley, CA: Jan. 29 – 31, 2016: clarksmotorcyclecenter@live.com



San Fernando Valley 41st AA Convention, Warner Center Marriott, Woodland Hills, CA: Jan. 29 - 31, 2016. <http://sfvaconvention.org>. **The theme of the upcoming convention is "We Are Not a Glum Lot." Our own Brian H. (Central Office Board) is the chairperson of the 2016 convention! Please get your tickets early and reserve your room at the Marriott for the 2016 Convention.**

Artwork depicts the late Alabam Carruthers from Radford (North Hollywood A.A.), a legacy in the San Fernando Valley A.A. community.

A.A. Trivia:

Nov. 9, 1975: General Service Board officially opens the GSO AA Archives with a ribbon cutting.

November 13, 1939: New York AAs urge Bill W. to stay on as a Fellowship leader and not hunt for a job despite money problems.

November 15, 1955: First appearance of AA on TV. One Day at a Time appeared on ABC Tuesday at 9:30 p.m. on the Cavalcade Theater starring James Daly.

November 21, 1939: The first West Coast AA meeting takes place in San Francisco.

November 16, 1950: Dr. Bob, AA co-founder, dies of cancer.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED