

RECOVERY TIMES Vol. 65, No. 8, August 2018

The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

THANKS FOR THE CALL

All alone and far from home, she really needed a meeting. Luckily, AA has special workers



I'm in Los Angeles today, living the wonderful life AA has given me. I'm visiting from my home in New Mexico with a friend I've known for more than 50 years. This person is still my friend because of our program. We attended a wonderful concert at the Disney Hall yesterday. Now I'm in my hotel room about to pack for the plane ride home.

Last night I knew I'd want to make a meeting in the morning. I went to the lacoaa.org website*, which helped me locate a meeting within walking distance.

This morning my service dog and I got up early and headed out in the rain toward our destination. After about 20 minutes we arrived at the address. It was a residential building. I looked around and spoke with a couple of people there about the existence of the AA meeting and no one knew anything about it. Confused, I turned to my dog and said, "This is L.A. and they can't give correct information to the out-of-towner?"

So I called Central Office—a couple of times. I was directed by the voice on the line toward a phone number for calls between 11:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. It was now 7:00 a.m. and I wanted my meeting. Then I couldn't remember the phone number they gave me so I had to do it all again. I hope you are getting the sense of my injured entitlement and rising resentment.

When I figured out how to put the Central Office voice message on speaker phone and grab the call-back number on my message app, I scribbled it down quickly, making only one mistake, which was easy enough for me to correct. I called the number. And again, I got an answering machine! Now fully frustrated, I left my name and number and a summary of my issue. I asked to be called back.

As I was walking away, thinking about where to get breakfast and how to maybe get to the 11:30 a.m. meeting and still make my plane, the phone rang. The young man on the other end of the line gave me the exact details I needed to get to the meeting. We both laughed, glad that neither of us was going to drink that day. I retraced my steps to the coffee shop I'd just passed, where below the street level AA meets every morning.

The topic at the meeting was a reading from the ***Daily Reflections***, dated October 24: "By Faith and by Works." In the reading, it says, "God has allowed me the right to be wrong in order for our Fellowship to exist as it does today. If I place God's will first in my life, it is very likely that AA as I know it today will remain as it is." **Continued, page 6**

***Note: The author contacted Central Office in LA, not our Central Office in the Valley.**

Central Office maintains a 24 hour phone line for alcoholics in need, hosted by volunteers. Call: 818 988-3001 anytime to speak to a "live" person on the phones.

San Fernando Valley Central Office

Minutes of Intergroup Representatives Meeting

July 9, 2018

OPENING: Josh S. for Larry S.

- Josh opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with The Serenity Prayer.
- Adam read "The Twelve Traditions"
- Sandy R. accepted a motion for approval of the June Intergroup Minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Adrian I.

- MTD is <\$3,376> and YTD is <\$1,579>, as compared with last year's YTD which was \$519.
- Financials and Group Contributions are available.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT: Bob F.

Central Office: New volunteers are needed for all five time slots. One year of sobriety is required. Please contact Central Office. We have a committee working on updating our speakers list. Credit Card sales are looking good for the beginning of August or Labor Day at the very latest.

Recovery Times: Please send stories about your sobriety to editor Pat K. at xnowisthetime@aol.com.

MEETING RELATED BUSINESS: Josh S. - 7 new Intergroup reps this month:

- Rosemary A., "Women's Sobriety First," Mondays at 6:30 pm in Chatsworth;
- Lital Z., "Shadow Ranch," Mondays at 7:30 pm in Woodland Hills;
- Adam C., "S.O.S.," Mondays at 7pm in Canoga Park;
- Cody C., "Visions of the Valley," Wednesdays 7am in Woodland Hills;
- Karen S., "Women's Big Book & Stories," Thursdays at 1pm in Canoga Park;
- Donald C., "USR Men's Discussion," Thursdays at 8pm in Northridge; and,
- Julie W., "12x12 Discussion," Thursdays at 6pm in Woodland Hills.

SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES:

- General Service District 1: Cece: All is well.
- General Service District 17: David C.: All is well.
- San Fernando Valley Hospital & Institutions Committee: Nick C.: Join us on the 3rd Monday of the month at Saint Innocent's Church in Tarzana. New member orientation at 7pm, business meeting starts at 8pm. Always need volunteers for jail panels.
- San Fernando Valley 44th Annual AA Convention: Bernard:
The convention will be held February 1-3, 2019 at the Warner Center Marriott. The theme this year is, "Just Stay, It's the Easier, Softer Way," and colors are baby blue and chocolate brown. Join us for Planning Committee meetings on the third Tuesday of the month, at 7pm, at St. Innocent's Church in Tarzana. Also, Bingo, the convention's only fundraiser, will be on August 18, 2018, at One Generation in Reseda.
- Santa Clarita Valley 15th Annual AA Convention: Bernard B.: September 14, 15th and 16th, 2018 at the Valencia Hyatt. The theme is "Miraculous Demonstrations." Online registration is open at www.scvaaconvention.org.

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.

IGR MINUTES, continued

NEW BUSINESS - No new business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AA GROUPS & SEVENTH TRADITION:

- Lee, The San Fernando Group: The San Fernando Group has moved and is now located at 220 S. Brand Blvd., second floor.
- Cory, Visions of the Valley: New meeting, Wednesdays at 7am at the Prince of Peace Church, 5700 Rudnick Ave., Woodland Hills, starting August 1, 2018. This is an open meeting.
- Marianna, YPSFVAA: 47th ACYPAA Round-Up will be held in April 4-7, 2019 at the LAX Hilton. Register online at www.acypaa.org/register. Pre-registration is \$15 for one / \$25 for two, but no one will be turned away!
- Eddie, The Week That Was: Looking for a new location in the Granada Hills area. Please advise the group if anyone knows of an available spot.

REMINDERS: Larry S.: 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 JULY – 29 YEARS OF SOBRIETY!

- Matt M., 1 year on 7/22;
- Don, 1 years on 7/28;
- Maryann, 3 years on 7/25; and,
- Rita, 24 years on 7/18.

VACANCIES ON BOARD - There are no vacancies on the Board.

CLOSING: A motion to adjourn was recognized and seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm with *The Lord's Prayer*.

Prepared and submitted by: Sandy R., Recording Secretary



Info from Central Office of the San Fernando Valley

AA Central Office of the San Fernando Valley is located at 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys and maintains 24/7 Phone Service for AAs. We are located in an office building on the southwest corner of Woodley & Sherman Way, west of the Mobil Station and remain open every day for book sales, including weekends (except for holidays and 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 buy your meeting supplies from Central Office of the Valley. In doing so, you are supporting our office. (It's always more expensive to buy them from a retail store). **We're open Monday – Friday: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. and weekends: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Literature closed last Fri. of every month for Inventory and on major holidays).** Central Office is a legitimate non-profit. Personal donations cannot exceed \$5,000 per year and must be from members of AA, not from outsiders.

Our website, www.sfvaa.org, provides meeting info, upcoming events and service meeting info. You can also download a copy of Recovery Times (and previous issues) for free. To receive a printed copy of Recovery Times, mailed to your address, please send us your name, address and payment of \$7.00 to cover a year's worth of mailings. Also let us know if this is for a new or renewing subscription and if you have changed your address.

FROM THE FOUNDERS

"Our fellowship has been permitted to achieve -- though still in miniature -- the 'one world' dream of philosophers. Ours is a world in which we can hotly differ, yet never think of schism or conflict as a solution."

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., July 1960, "AA Tomorrow", The Language of the Heart

"Times change, people change, and language may change. But the disease of alcoholism does not change. It always kills." Beaumont, Texas,

"I've found that I'm not a cordless model: I need to plug into God in the morning and check in several times a day just to make sure I'm still plugged in." Salt Lake City, Utah

"I go to lots of meetings. I get there early and help set up. I stay late and help clean up. I extend my hand as it was extended to me ... I've been given a second chance and I'm here to be of service." Blacksburg, Virginia,

"Belonging to a group makes life an opportunity for me... something to encourage the best in me while it helps to keep me humble about the worst in me." Strathroy, Ontario

"I make a conscious effort to keep it simple, because the simpler I make it, the happier I become." Clevedon, Somerset,

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS:

The Foothill Roundup, August 3 – 5, 2018, Flintridge Prep School, 4543 Crown Avenue, La Canada: foothillroundup.org.

AA's 44th Maad Dog Daze, August 3 – 5, 2018, Doubletree Hotel, Cathedral City, CA, <https://www.maaddogdaze.org>

15th Annual Mountain AA Conference, August 17-19, 2018, Big Bear Performing Arts Center, 39707 Big Bear Blvd., Big Bear, CA. www.mountainaaconference.com.

34th South Bay Roundup, August 31 – Sept. 3, 2018, Torrance Marriott, Torrance. www.southbayroundup.org.

40th Annual Ventura County AA Convention, Sept. 7 – 9, 2018, Westlake Hyatt Resort, 880 S. Westlake Blvd., Westlake Village, CA. www.vcaac.org.

15th Santa Clarita Valley Annual AA Convention, Sept. 14 - 16th, 2018, Valencia Hyatt, Valencia, CA.

30th Soberfest Campout, Sept. 14 – 16, 2018, Kernville, CA <https://kernvalleyalanoclub.com>

55th Intl. Women's Convention, February 7 – 10, 2019, Bonaventure Hotel, Figueroa Street, Los Angeles

AA SERVICE COMMITTEES General Service Area 93:

District 1: Meets 1st Wednesday of the month at 7552 Remmet Street, Canoga Park, CA at 6 p.m. orientation; 6:30 for general meeting.

District 11: Meets the 1st Monday of the month at 123 W. Windsor Road, Glendale, CA at 6:30 orientation; 7 p.m. general meeting.

District 16: Meets the 1st Monday of the month at 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA. (Central Office) at 6 p.m. for both orientation and meeting.

District 17: Meets the 1st Monday of the month at 5000 Colfax Ave., North Hollywood at 6 p.m. orientation; 6:30 p.m. general meeting.

For more info, refer to your District Committee Member (DCM).

Public Information 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. Call Central Office if you want to serve on this committee: **(818) 988-3001**



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). Meets 3rd Monday of the month at 5657 Lindley Ave. Tarzana (St. Innocent) at 7 p.m. or orientation and 8 p.m. for the general business meeting.

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 nights at 8 pm.

San Fernando Valley Intergroup: Central Office holds a monthly meeting for all Intergroup reps on the 2nd Monday at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana. (6:30 p.m. for orientation; 7 p.m. for business meeting). Intergroup reps provide an important service to the group. IGRs share information on upcoming AA events in the Valley.

Support Central Office by sending a rep to the monthly Intergroup meeting. We would love to have you represent your group in this important function.

Has your meeting changed? Please provide meeting updates to: **SFVAA Central Office, 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91406.**



Celebrating an A.A. Anniversary? Please consider making a \$1.00 donation to Central Office for each year of your sobriety during your birthday month.

This month, we celebrate the AA anniversaries of: Lani S. -23 Years, Lisa S. - 33 Years, Learning to Live Men's Stag - 411 Years

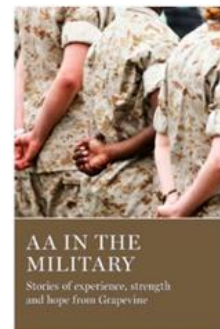
Deaths: We remember: **Anjanay B. - 30 Years and Cowboy - 27 Years**

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: (818) 988-3001 or email: sfvco@la.twcbc.com.

WHAT'S NEW in AA?

AA IN THE MILITARY

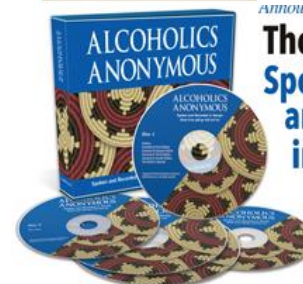
AA in the Military is a collection of stories, previously published in Grapevine, by members of Alcoholics Anonymous who have served in the military. The book begins with letters from the troops during World War II, when Grapevine first became a vital tool in keeping soldiers sober and connected to AA. The chapters that follow are filled with stories of experience, strength and hope—by both men and women—who served their country on land, sea and air. These personal accounts illustrate the challenges alcoholics in uniform encounter, often under difficult circumstances, far from loved ones. The book concludes with a powerful selection of stories by our sober veteran members, titled "Coming Home."



**ANNOUNCING A
NEW BOOK
FROM GRAPEVINE!**

Just published!

AA in the Military
Stories of experience, strength
and hope from Grapevine



announcing the publication of
**The Big Book
Spoken
and Recorded
in NAVAJO**

• **Diné k'eh yáti'go
bik'ini'nil**

14-CD SET AUDIOBOOK

Thanks For The Call, continued from page 1,

The speaker was a young guy, a homeless fellow in his mid-30s. He doesn't have a lot of experience with us yet, but finds that if he sticks with the Steps and his sponsor's suggestions, things go a lot better. He can see the impact of his joy and freedom on the dozens of men he's in the rooms with and knows that there's a reason the old-timers take our Traditions seriously.



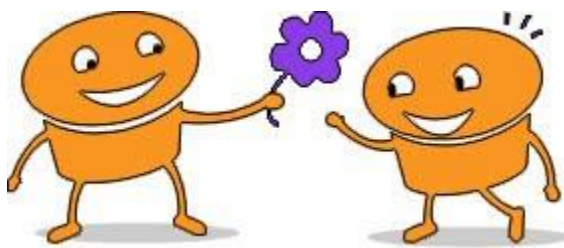
It was a round-robin meeting. When I spoke, I reflected on the beauty of these friends. A designer, a web guy, a man in a suit, a professor, a quiet elderly fellow, a guy in gym clothes—and me, with my dog. These people were like the friends who have sustained me and cared for me for 18 years. I want to give to them what has been given to me, to share in the reality that none of this could happen but for Bill W.'s insistence that he was just a drunk like the rest of us.

The primary purpose of the Los Angeles County Alcoholics Anonymous, like every AA service organization throughout the world, is to do everything it can to help the still-suffering alcoholic. The group I was in that day, and others like it, support a Central Office, with a website and a phone system, to be certain that one way or the other, the alcoholic wandering the streets—me—can find the "fellowship we crave."

So you could say that the website missed the mark and didn't give good directions or that the meeting should have had a greeter. I certainly thought that. You could say I was judgmental and arrogant about the level of service I received, and I'd agree with you. But in AA we have the right to be ineffective, self-absorbed, judgmental and wrong. That's what binds us together.

Once again, on a rainy morning in Los Angeles, when I needed a meeting, a Higher Power and a call from Central Office led me to exactly where I needed to be. -- Kristina F., Tesuque, New Mexico

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Do you have a story to share about your sobriety?

The Recovery Times is always looking for new authors who want to share their stories of sobriety with others within our AA community. The San Fernando Valley Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous would like to read your story. You should email your story to editor, Pat K. at: Xnowisthetime@aol.com.

Due to space limitations and to also give as many people as possible a chance to be heard, we limit our publication to one submission per person. Please feel free to tell us your story in your own words. Submissions should be no longer than 650 words.

Possible topics: how you got sober, a realization you have had in sobriety, how you are working your program, an experience that stood out for you in sobriety, your Higher Power, or even your experience with sponsoring or being sponsored. We look forward to hearing from you and being able to publish your story. Please note, we reserve the right to use those stories that meet these criteria. Have fun and thank you for letting us get to know you!



BREAK TIME

When you're at a service meeting and about to tear your hair out, remember—don't take yourself too seriously

Here's an idea: Let's get 45 different personalities into one room and try to get some business done. Welcome to the world of AA service work.

Would you like to know what your character defects are? Do AA service work! Would you like to spend an hour and a half discussing which kind of pastries to buy for an anniversary party? Then you may be cut out for AA service work.

I feel, after over a decade of service to AA, that I have seen a lot. Sometimes I experience unique bonds of joy

and work with amazing people whom otherwise I would never know. Sometimes I cry tears of gratitude for the opportunity to step up and make a difference. But there's a whole other side to it that isn't always wonderful. Sometimes I feel like jumping off a bridge rather than going to a service meeting. Sometimes I want to throw things and scream at everyone at the top of my lungs, "Are you all nuts?!"

I've made excuses, skipped commitments and written a lot of inventories around service. I've even called my sober friend in Dallas just to talk to someone far enough away from New Hampshire so that I could tell someone how I **really** feel!

I would not recommend serious service work until you've gone through the Steps. It's good if your spiritual tool kit is stocked with several options to manage the anger, frustration and madness that comes with service. I needed a sponsor, a service sponsor, a host of friends, God, Goddess and Higher Power—sometimes all at once—to survive doing certain AA service jobs.

How did people cope with AA service work before cell phones? I don't think I could make it through a meeting without texting at least one fellow member with my snarky thoughts. But luckily, after all the frustration and difficulty, something wonderful happens. Sooner or later, "Rule 62" becomes my mantra: Don't take yourself too seriously.

Sadly, Rule 62 is not everyone's mantra yet, but it may get to be yours, as it got to be mine. First, I learned not to be so serious a little bit at a time, and then most of the time. It's a gradual process that brought me to a path I once walked hand-in-hand with a sponsee of mine. She was a rare breed, a can of crazy, absolutely nuts. She was so dramatic and every little thing in her life was enormous and felt to her like it was going to be the end of the world.

One day, while she was freaking out about something I can't now recall (and neither can she!), she was ranting and raving and I was exhausted. I finally yelled, "Are you going to **drink**?" She said no, so I asked, "Well, are you going to **die**?" Again, she said no. I finished by asking, "Then who cares?" Then we both cracked up. Born of my frustration and her drama, we'd found a new tool—Rule 62. And I offer it here to you to use if you'd like. I don't hold a copyright on it. The next time you're in a service meeting, 45 minutes deep into a 25-cent debate for the third time that year, ask yourself: Am I going to drink? Am I going to die? If not, then who cares? Welcome to Rule 62! **Anonymous Merrimack, NH Copyright © 2018 Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved.**

Central Office of SFV

16132 Sherman Way

Van Nuys, CA 91406

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED