

RECOVERY TIMES

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The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S AA CONFERENCE COMING TO LOS ANGELES IN FEB. 2019

On February 7 – 10, 2019, the 55th International Women's Conference comes to Los Angeles for the first time in its 55 year history. The conference is a closed event for sober women and will be held at The Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites, 404 South Figueroa Street, L.A. On behalf of the organizers of this international AA conference, Amy M. of San Diego has shared the following:

"The IWC has traveled the globe in its 54-year history, and most recently, welcomed over 3,600 registrants in Phoenix, Arizona, this past February. We are very excited to be hosting the 55th IWC in Los Angeles in 2019, and encourage all women of A.A. to join us in sharing your experience, strength, and hope and celebrating our sobriety!

Mission Statement:

"The International Women's Conference is the bridge to a better understanding of the Alcoholics Anonymous philosophy and way of life because of our special needs in sobriety as women. We as women members of Alcoholics Anonymous are survivors. We have found a way to obtain meaning, depth and responsibility in our lives. This came about out of desire, decision, determination and spiritual guidance. An elevated sense of belonging that is brought about by the special services and a special need provided by our Women's Conference is our goal."



The information that follows are excerpts from historical data collected in ~1989 from Bertha C., Vernetta W, Jane J., Fawn H., Sally T. (a Sister in Sobriety who wished to remain Anonymous), and others who have contributed gathering names and making phone calls. We dedicate this history of the NAAWC to you, our sisters in sobriety.

- First conference for women was February 14, 1964, Kansas City, Missouri
- NAAWC (National Alcoholics Anonymous Women's Conference in 1965)
- IAAWC (International Alcoholics Anonymous Women's Conference in 1991)
- IWC (International Women's Conference in 2007)

Each Conference has remained a closed conference by and for Women of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The story begins with Bernadette O'K. She was 5'1", weighed 155 lbs., had piercing black eyes that could see right through you and was always there when anyone, anywhere needed help. She was ahead of her time having graduated from the University of Michigan in Engineering. At the time one of our sisters met Bernadette in 1963, she had 14 years of sobriety, having sobered up in the late 1940's.

Starting the Women's Conference was only one of many things that Bernadette did to inform women of AA and recovery in the area. Her typical day consisted of working, and then she would stop by Group #1, at 6125 Troost, to see if there was anyone needing help, or a 12-Step call to be made. Then she would have dinner with one of the many women in the program she was sponsoring, and then off to another meeting. She was always helping someone.

In the early 1960's, Bernadette helped to organize the first women's group at Group #1 on Troost in Kansas City, Missouri. It met once a week. That meeting continues today. The first Women's Conference was held at 6125 Troost (Group #1) on February 14, 1964; mainly attended by local Kansas City women. This was Bernadette's AA birthday and the conference has continued to be the closest weekend to February 14th in her honor.

(Continued, page 6)

THE END OF AN ERA: OASIS WOMEN'S RECOVERING COMMUNITY IN SYLMAR CLOSES



At the end of October 2018, Oasis Women's Recovering Community, one of the longest-running, most successful women's recovery programs in Los Angeles closed its doors. This followed the death, in August, of its founder Anjanay Berrocal, an Alcoholics Anonymous member in good standing with 30 years of sobriety.

In 2018 it was discovered that Anjanay, who founded Oasis with her late husband Barney, had terminal cancer. Her wish was to make Oasis a sober living home, as the license to operate Oasis as a recovery community ended with her illness.

Anjanay had spent over 27 years as counselor, case manager, program director and founder of Oasis Women's Recovering Community. She was well-educated in the treatment of substance abuse recovery, both at school and on the streets, having worked through her own sobriety many years ago. Ms. Berrocal graduated from Los Angeles Mission College Addiction Studies Program and has previously held positions as both counselor and group facilitator at New Horizons, The First Stop, Alternative Recovery Services, Fully Alive Drop-In Center, California Association of Alcohol & Drug Programs and more.

Her no-nonsense approach to women's recovery was lauded by both the public and private sector, having been awarded and recognized by The City of Los Angeles, The Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles Women's Foundation, KNXT Radio Citizen's Award, Sylmar Chamber of Commerce, Mercedes Benz Award for Mentoring Women, The Giraffe Project Humanitarian Award, California Department of Children's Services and much more.



With Anjanay and Barney's efforts, 100s of women were able to get sober and maintain their sobriety, creating productive lives for themselves and with their families. Anjanay's dedication to the well-being of women and their families is exemplified by the many success stories of graduates of the Oasis Women's Recovering Community program. The memory of her fine work lives on.

Although Oasis will no longer be located at its former home on Polk Street in Sylmar, CA, the Grateful Camels will be holding their regular Sunday evening meeting at the San Fernando Group's new location: 220 S. Brand Boulevard in San Fernando at 7 p.m.

When a new location is secured for a women's sober living, Oasis will rise again to continue its work in the name of Anjanay and the many women, indebted to them for their sobriety.

This tattoo, which resembles Anjanay's tattoo and recalls her sobriety date, are a testament to the love and service a founding member of Oasis received at the loving hands of Anjanay B., ensuring that her mission will not be forgotten.



DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR SOBRIETY? The Recovery Times is looking for new authors to write about their experiences in sobriety. Due to space limitations, please limit your submission to one story or article, per person, and limit your submission to 650 words. Email your story to:

Editor Pat K. at: xnowisthetime@aol.com.



SAN FERNANDO VALLEY CENTRAL OFFICE
Minutes of Intergroup Representatives Meeting
October 8, 2018

OPENING: Larry S.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT: Larry S. for Adrian I.

- MTD is \$3,779 and YTD is <\$3,497>, as compared with last year's YTD which was <\$9,660>.
- Financial Statements and Group Contributions are available.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT: Larry S. for Bob F.

Central Office is running smoothly. We're getting ready for Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast! We really need new volunteers for all five time slots! One year of sobriety is required. Please contact Central Office for more info. *Recovery Times*: Stories of recovery are welcome. Deadline for submissions is 15th of the month; send to Pat K. at: xnowisthetime@aol.com.

MEETING RELATED BUSINESS: Josh S.

1 new Intergroup Representative this month: Tim L., "Sobriety Together," Thursdays at 12pm in Sylmar.

SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES:

- General Service District 16: Daniel: Had a great turn out for the "Home Sweet Home 'Home Group' Workshop," on Oct. 7, 2018.
- General Service District 1: Cece and District 17's David C.: Preparing for the Old Timers Event on Sunday, October 28 at the North Hollywood Senior Center.
- San Fernando Valley Hospital & Institutions Committee: Nick C.: the 37th Annual H&I Birthday Dinner & Fundraiser will be Oct. 23, 2018, 6-10pm at St. Innocents in Tarzana.
- San Fernando Valley 44th Annual AA Convention: Bernard: Registration flyers are available and the website (www.sfvaaconvention.org) should be up and running in a day or two. 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.
- Santa Clarita Valley 15th Annual AA Convention: Bernard B.: Had a great convention!

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 events and remove expired event flyers from literature tables.
- Continue to send meeting changes IN WRITING to Central Office.

NEW BUSINESS

Diane: Working on a master calendar of AA events in an effort to avoid as many conflicts as possible. Please email your google calendars to: sfvaacalendar@gmail.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AA GROUPS & SEVENTH TRADITION:

- Dawn L., 55th International Women's Conference: International Women's Conference, for women only, will be held February 7 - 10, 2019, at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel. Visit: internationalwomensconference.org
- Marianna and David, YPSFVAA: 47th ACYPAA Round-Up will be held in April 4-7, 2019 at the LAX Hilton. Pre-Registration is \$15.00/\$25 or register online: www.acypaa.org/register. No one will be turned away!

REMINDERS: Larry S. Please bring at least 350 copies of any flyers for upcoming events. Flyers must be

FROM THE FOUNDERS

"Great modesty and humility are needed by every AA for his own permanent recovery. If these virtues are such vital needs to the individual, so must they be to AA as a whole." **AA Co-Founder, Bill W.**, March 1946, "Our Anonymity Is Both Inspiration and Safety," The Language of the Heart

"At my very first AA meeting, I heard words of love, understanding and compassion ... I believe the hand of God reached down at that meeting and healed me. For from that day thirty-eight years ago to this, I have not had a desire to drink or escape from reality again." **Royal Palm Beach, FLA**

"I ask at the end of each day: 'What should I have done better, not to win more money, but to feel more at peace with myself?' Whatever it was, I can put it on the list as a clue to a defect of character. Despite all my experience, I do not find my list getting very long; what I see is the same faults creeping back in like crabgrass." **San Diego**

"I sometimes forget to feel gratitude for my sobriety ... This is why I must continue to work with others, to go to meetings, to be of some service to the world around me -- not because these are 'good' things, but rather so that I can once again be stimulated into feelings of gratitude for this life I have found." **L.A., CA**
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for "AA-related events" ("an event that includes an AA Meeting as part of the event").

ACKNOWLEDGE BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTHS OF SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER: 59 YEARS OF SOBRIETY!

Victor F., 1 year Lee A., 18 years Lyn W., 29 years
Erin B., 11 years

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

CLOSING: A motion to adjourn was recognized and 2ndd. Meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm with *The Lord's Prayer*.

Prepared and submitted by: Sandy R., Recording Secretary



INFO FROM A.A. CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

AA 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.

We are located at 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys and maintain 24/7 free phone service for AAs in need. Our office is in office building on the SW corner of Woodley & Sherman Way, west of the Mobil Station. We are 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, coins, medallions and pamphlets that your group needs.

Please buy your meeting supplies from AA Central Office of the Valley.

By 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.

AA SERVICE COMMITTEES Calendar: 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).

OTHER AA COMMITTEES:

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. To volunteer call Central Office: **(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. for 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: Anonymous – 11 Years, Anonymous – 31 Years and Learning to Live Mens Stag: 8 members, 68 Years. Thank you all for supporting Central Office! Deaths: Mark K. – 15 Years and Agnes M. - 47 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.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS:

31st Inland Empire Convention, Nov. 9 – 11, 2018, The Doubletree, San Bernardino, CA. www.ieaac.org



Serenity in Yosemite, Cancelled due to flooding at Yosemite.

Oregon State Young People of AA (OSYPAA), Nov. 30 – Dec. 2, 2018, Portland, OR, www.osypaa6.com

Sobriety Under the Stars, Jan. 18 – 20, 2019, Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico, www.aapvconvention.com



55th Intl. Women's Convention, February 7 – 10, 2019, Bonaventure Hotel, Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA. Want to be of service? The Intl. Women's Convention organizers are looking for volunteers to help with this event. Call Annie for more information: (818) 281-1767.

Cover Story: 55th Intl. Women's Committee, continued:

Prior to Bernadette's death, she attended her last conference at the Muelebach Hotel in downtown Kansas City, Missouri in 1968. About two weeks after that conference, Bernadette traveled to California to make her amends to her former husband, whom she had not seen for more than 20 years. Although he was not anxious to see her, she was able to tell him a little about what she had been trying to do with her life; so, he finally agreed to see her. After she made her amends, her former husband invited her to dinner to meet his wife and family. As she was crossing the hotel lobby to meet him, she suffered a massive stroke and died a few hours later. It's one of those many stories, we often hear around AA, which once again reaffirms how spiritually-guided our program truly is.

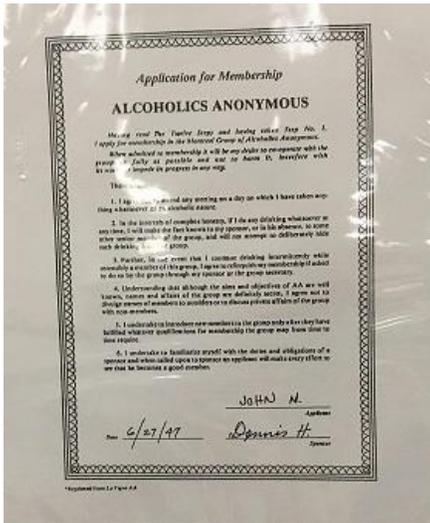
Bernadette was a good friend with Marty Mann, the "first woman in AA." They worked together to get the National Council on Alcoholism in Kansas City.

The spread of the Women's Conference occurred by word of mouth. It started out as local in nature, then in 1970, became a Regional Conference with its first move to St. Louis, Missouri then Wichita, Kansas, and on to other locations: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Little Rock, Arkansas; and then, to Des Moines, Iowa. After the Des Moines conference, it started moving around to various parts of the country finally returning to its roots in its 25th year.

From what we have learned about Bernadette, she was a wonderful, down-to-earth, caring person who showed her love whenever it was needed. She wasn't a person to sit on the sidelines. She was one of those rare people that intuitively could see what was needed and then go about to accomplish it. That is how Bernadette went about helping AA grow in Kansas City. We are grateful she was the initiator for carrying the message to women for what has become one of the truly beautiful experiences within our sobriety.

Now, IWC continues today to further the objectives of this fine sober woman. IWC is a closed AA women's conference for registrants only. Pre-registration is available at a discount through Dec. 31, 2018. Childcare is not provided. Visit: www.internationalwomensconference.org for more information.

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR SOBRIETY? The Recovery Times is looking for new authors to write about their experiences in sobriety. Due to space limitations, please limit your submission to one per person and limit your submission to 650 words.



AAs HEAR ABOUT THE PIONEERS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

On September 29th, Area 93 Archives Committee hosted their **4th Annual AA Pioneer History Meeting** at the Wilkinson Senior Center in Northridge, CA. Attendees listened to four alcoholics share their knowledge on the rich history of AA's beginnings and the Pioneers that shaped AA as we know it today. At the archives table, they were able to view early documents such as a copy of the original 6 steps in Bill W's handwriting, and photos from the SoCal Area Archives, which happens to be one of the most complete and thorough Archives of AA history in the U.S. Guests of the meeting could even take home a copy of a 1968 Young Peoples in AA meeting list or a copy of the invitation from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., from the dinner he hosted, where Bill W. was the guest of honor speaking on his new book "Alcoholics Anonymous."

To kick things off, Danny G., the Area 93 archivist, gave a slideshow presentation that was on the Big Book. A self-described AA Geek, Danny spoke with exuberance about Bill W., Dr. Bob and AA's meager beginnings. Almost as interesting as the history lesson, itself, was Danny's own story of how he came to love the history of AA and the Big Book and how it had enhanced his own program. His enthusiasm and gratitude was infectious.

Next up was, the story of Marty Mann, also known as the "First Lady of AA," told by Alice L. Though Marty Mann was not the first woman to get sober, she was one of the first few and, fun fact: she probably was the first sober lesbian. Amongst other causes, Marty was most determined to fight the stigma of alcoholism. She wanted everyone in the world to know what early AA's had come to learn; that alcoholism was a debilitating disease, not unlike tuberculosis, which she had also recovered from when she was a young girl. Marty is responsible for starting what is now known as The National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence.

John S. shared about Father Ed Dowling S.J., a Jesuit priest from St. Louis who became Bill's spiritual advisor. Father Ed is credited with teaching Bill that "pain is the touchstone of spiritual progress," a lesson that resonates deeply with this alcoholic. In John's share we learned of how Bill and Father Ed met, and how this chance encounter was instrumental in AA surviving its turbulent early-days. Upon Father Ed's passing in 1960, Bill wrote in AA's Grapevine, "...he was the greatest and most gentle soul to walk this planet. I was closer to him than to any other human being on this earth."

Sandra S. spoke in Spanish on "Alcanzando Los 100 Alcoholicos," or, "Reaching 100 Alcoholics." Sandra described how the first groups formed and at the end of her share, listed the very first members of AA, men and women who stood shoulder to shoulder to carry the message when the total number of Alcoholics was less than 100 members. Today, membership is in the millions. The common thread throughout all of these stories was as Danny put it: inches and seconds. That is how he described the culmination of events that eventually got our basic text published and rocketed AA into the mainstream. It was the serendipitous run-ins and the coincidental timings of important moments, both good and bad, that prove how miraculous the evolution of the program was, for had any one of those things happened any other way, AA as we know it might not exist today.

If you've yet to learn about the history of AA I encourage you to attend this meeting next year. As a quote by Carl Sandburg on a banner displayed in the back of the room read, "Whenever a society or a civilization perishes, there is always one factor present: they forgot where they came from." **Amy V., Toluca Lake, CA**

**Central Office of SFV
16132 Sherman Way
Van Nuys, CA 91406**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED