



# RECOVERY TIMES

Vol. 34, No. 12, Dec 2010, *The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter: Note: Book Sales will be Closed on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> & Jan. 1, 2011 and open for a 1/2 day on Dec. 24 and 31~*

**Solitude--a New Joy** "I'M LONELY--I'm lonely!" is the cry of alcoholics all over the face of the earth--in a lonely room, in a crowded bar, in the heart of a family gathering, walking down the street in the midst of hundreds of people. Then, in contradiction, people would get on our nerves and we would go off by ourselves to "get away from it all," but this didn't work either, for we could not endure for long the burden of our own dark thoughts.

There is a place for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, but no place--no place for me.



Tillich said: "Man is alone because he is man. In some way every creature is alone. In majestic isolation every star travels through the darkness of endless space. Each tree grows according to its own law, fulfilling its unique possibilities. Animals live, fight and die for themselves alone, confined to the limitations of their bodies. Certainly, they also appear as male and female, in families and in flocks. Some of them are gregarious. But all of them are alone. Being alive means being in a body--a body separated from all other bodies. And being separated means being alone. This is true of every creature. But man is not only alone; he also *knows* that he is alone."

We were alone and we knew we were alone, so we tried to assuage that loneliness. Perhaps that is why so many of us had multiple marriages. We sought to remove our aloneness by the encounter of the sexes, and for a little while we did. For moments we could forget our own self in communion with another person, but after these moments our isolation was felt even more deeply than before, sometimes even to the point of mutual repulsion.

We tried hard to remove our aloneness with the bottle and for a little while we could, but not for long. Even in the midst of a laughing, fun-seeking crowd, we were aware, in a sudden break in our sense of the world around us, of our intense aloneness.

When we hit bottom and realized we could not go on as we were, by the Grace of God we found ourselves thrust into an unbearable aloneness and separated from everything and everybody. Thus separated, we were able to look at our life, our problem, the hopelessness of our situation. Only now could we ask questions and give answers and make decisions. Only now could we make a decision to do something about our drinking and living problem.

**(Continued, Page 5)**



## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

### **Stateline Retreat 2010**

Dec. 10 – 12, 2010

Primm Valley Resort & Casino, Primm, NV

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

### **29<sup>th</sup> Annual AA at the VA**

December 18, 2010, 5 p.m.

Veterans Administration

16111 Plummer Street, Bldg. 22

North Hills, CA

### **San Fernando Group AA Alcathon**

Dec. 31, 7 p.m.– January 2, 2011, 8:30 p.m.

The Boracho's Gabacho's & Nachos New Year's Eve Dance, 10 p.m.

13245 Gladstone Ave., Sylmar, CA

### **San Fernando Valley AA Convention**

Jan. 28 – 30, 2011

Warner Center Marriott

Woodland Hills, CA

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

### **Pacific Region AA Service Assembly**

March 4 – 6, 2011

Honolulu, HI

[www.praasa.org/2011](http://www.praasa.org/2011)



### **THE PASSING OF AA'S -THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE:**

Kathy B. – 18 Years (Aug. 2009)

Roy – 5 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).

## **SERVICE COMMITTEES SCHEDULE:**

### **SFV H & I: Mon, Dec. 20, 2010:**

7 p.m. Orientation/8 p.m. Business Meeting  
5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana, CA

### **Gen Service, District 11: Mon, Jan. 3, 2011**

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

### **Gen Service, District 16: Mon, Jan. 3, 2011**

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

### **Gen. Service, District 17: Mon, Jan. 3, 2011**

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

### **Gen. Service, District 2: Tues. Jan. 4, 2011**

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

### **Gen Service, District 1: Wed., Jan. 5, 2011**

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

### **SFV Central Office Board Mtg: Wed., Jan. 5, 2011**

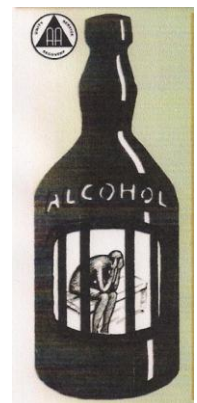
6:30 p.m., Valley Central Office

### **Gen. Service District 7: Sat., Jan., 8, 2011**

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

### **SFV Intergroup: Mon., Jan. 10, 2011**

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



## **SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

**IN THE S.F. 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)



**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.

**Hospitals and Institutions Committee:** Carries the message of A.A. into hospitals, prisons and treatment facilities to those who are unable to get out to meetings. For more info, call Central Office: (818) 988-3001.

**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., No. Hollywood.

## **San Fernando Valley Intergroup** **Intergroup Reps Needed:**

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 SF 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. in Tarzana. New Intergroup reps should arrive for the 6:30 p.m. orientation, followed by the regular meeting at 7 p.m. **For more info: on serving as an Intergroup rep, call Central Office: 818 988-3001.**

**San Fernando Valley Convention:** Volunteers are welcome to participate in the planning of the 2011 Convention which will be held at the Warner Center Marriott, Jan. 28 – 30, 2011. The theme will be "Love & Tolerance." The Committee meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month (except Feb. & March) at 7 p.m. at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana.-

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## **CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS:**

**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.

**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 to: **Central Office: 7417-E Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, CA 91405.**

**Having a Birthday?** By sending a donation to Central Office, your birthday will be posted in Recovery Times. Send \$1.00 per year of your sobriety (or just send as much as you wish to donate).

## **NOVEMBER A.A. BIRTHDAYS:**

Greg – 1 Year  
Aaron - 1 Year  
Michael H. 12 Years  
David H.-20 Years  
Anonymous- 21 Years



Sarah M. – 23 Years  
Herb B – 40 Years

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### Co-Founder Quotes:

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#### Companion and Partner

"Dr. Bob was my constant companion and partner in the great A.A. adventure. As the physician and great human being that he was, he chose work with others as his prime A.A. vocation and achieved a record which, in quantity and in quality, none will ever surpass. Assisted by the incomparable Sister Ignatia at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, Ohio, he – without charge – medically treated and spiritually infused five thousand sufferers.

"In all the stress and strain of A.A.'s pioneering time, no hard word ever passed between us. For this, I can thankfully say that the credit was all his."

Bill W., 1966, As Bill Sees It

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#### Heard Around AA:

"My Higher Power laughs with me and at me and it's my job to get in on the joke!"

"Drinking is not living; it's a live death."

"You're never too young to die; you're never too old to live."

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#### Central Office: IGR Meeting Notes of Nov. 8, 2010

**Chairman Hal S.** opened the meeting with the Serenity Prayer.

**Recording Secretary Dawn H.** accepted a motion to approve the minutes from October's Intergroup meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted.

**Treasurer Brian H.** gave the Treasurer's report: Central Office is in the black \$438.72 for the month but in the red, \$2,810.54 year to date.

**Executive Secretary Bob F.** reported phone volunteers are needed for Central Office's phone banks (esp. 9 p.m. – midnight Saturdays and 12:00 a.m. - 9 a.m. Sundays). Volunteers are needed to do 12 Step work and to help out of town AAs. Bob also suggested groups consider taking a "Group Commitment" for phone work.

**Internet, Michael F.** reports all is well with [www.sfvaa.org](http://www.sfvaa.org).

#### Intergroup Birthdays:

Melisse – 6 Years

Rosanne – 15 Years

Vince – 9 Years

Dawn – 15 Years

Doug – 14 Years

John – 22 Years



**Do you have a story or news item to contribute?** E-mail: [sfvaaews@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sfvaaews@sbcglobal.net) or by mail to the address below.

**Newsletter Subscriptions:** If you would like a copy of Recovery Times mailed to you, please complete this form with your new address, and then return it with a \$7.00 check (donation to cover cost & delivery) to: **SFV Central Office, 7417-E. Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, CA 91405**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**New**    **or**    **Renewal**    **Additional Contribution**

**Moving?** Please give us your **former address** along with your **new address**:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**(Continued from Page 1)** What happens to us in AA that makes it possible for us not only to endure, but to enjoy moments of solitude? What changed our loneliness to solitude?

There are two sides of man's being alone. In our language, loneliness expresses the pain of being alone. Solitude expresses the glory of being alone.

The love and understanding we find in AA is a protective curtain between us and the aching aloneness of our drinking days. The first few weeks some of us spend most of our time in the AA club talking with others. Then, it becomes evident that we must go to work and somehow meet the demands and responsibilities of our daily lives. We are afraid. Will the old loneliness hit us again when we are out of the actual presence of other AA members? Sooner or later, by practicing the principles of the Twelve Steps, we find in ourselves a very precious thing, something inside that we can be comfortable with regardless of whether we are at home by ourselves or anywhere else that life takes us.

AA members are not emotional cripples who need someone to hold their hands every moment of the day and night to prevent their falling. We grow up with the help of God as we understand Him, the fellowship of the group, and by applying the Twelve Steps to our life.

We find as the sober weeks go by that we can enjoy and treasure the few moments of solitude we are able to find in the rush and hurry of life today. When we cease to fear loneliness and begin to cherish and use our solitude to advantage, we have come a long way. We realize a little solitude is necessary to think and to try to work some of the Steps. In solitude we take our inventories. In solitude we admit to ourselves the exact nature of our wrongs. In solitude our spirit seeks that Power greater than we are; in solitude we seek through prayer and meditation to be aware of God's will for us.



Solitude can be sought and ways--in the silence of nature, in reading poetry, listening to music, looking at pictures, and in sincere thoughtfulness. We are alone but not lonely. But these things cannot answer all the questions in our minds. So we return to the world of man.

Some of us long to become creative in some realm of life. But we cannot become or remain creative without solitude. One hour of *conscious* solitude will enrich our creativity far more than hours of trying to learn the creative process.

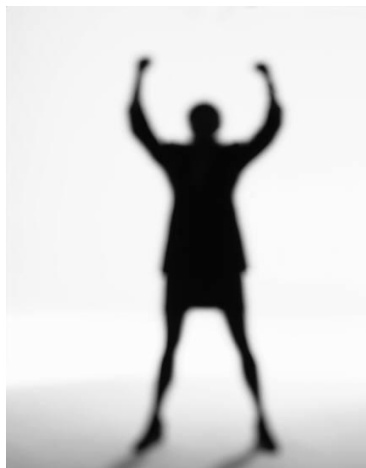
Solitude is not easy; sometimes we can find it only by remaining silent and allowing our souls to sigh without words to God. This we can do even in a crowded day and a crowded room, even under the most difficult external conditions. No one can take these moments from us. The center of our beings, the innermost self that is the ground of our aloneness, is elevated to the divine center and taken into it. Only in a movement that rises first to God and then returns from Him to the other person can we find communion with others.

Even love is reborn in solitude, for only in solitude can those who are alone reach those from whom they are separated. One hour of solitude may bring us closer to those we love than many hours of communication. We can take them with us to the "hills of eternity."

M. C., Texas

## **AREA 93 A.A. ARCHIVES 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL "GRATITUDE DAY:"**

### **GRATEFUL FOR OUR ARCHIVIST'S SERVICE!**



What originally began as a “biker and hot-rodder” trek in 2006 to a then, newly-established, permanent home for the Central California Area 93 A.A. Archives in Oxnard, has now evolved into an annual event known as “Gratitude Day.” On November 27th, the Area 93 A.A. Archives celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Gratitude Day with an open house, several informative and entertaining speakers, and a fabulous breakfast provided by volunteers from District 16.

The outdoor gathering and Fellowship opened with the Serenity Prayer followed by a reading of a 1940 A.A. Preamble in which members from that era were strongly advised, “If you don't have a 'Big Book', it's time you bought one!,” and thus demonstrating how the rhetoric has been “toned down” over the years. There were also readings of selections from Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 taken from an original manuscript before the first “Big Book” was published, which exhibited similar “dogmatic” language.

Area 93 Archivist George R. spoke about his involvement with the Archives, and befitting of one genuinely enthralled with their work exclaimed, “I've been bitten by the disease of archivism!” He discussed how the Area 93 Archives evolved, what the Archivist's responsibilities are, and the various types of items in the Archive's collection. George also provided an overview of the Archive's presence this past year at other A.A. Events via the “Area 93 Traveling Archives Display” that he created.

Cody T., an Intergroup Archivist and Information Technologist from the Akron Group in Ohio, described his experience with both the Akron Archives and his service as a Tour Guide for Dr. Bob's home. He shared how people are deeply affected when they tour the birthplace of A.A., and the tears of gratitude many people shed upon being in the same rooms as the Co-Founders and seeing the A.A. items of historical significance. He added, “When you can touch the history it changes your life.”

Concluding the event was an inspirational talk called “How the Messengers Stopped Drinking” given by Jay S., an A.A. Historian and member of Initiatives of Change (previously known as the “Oxford Group”). He shared some lesser-known (and often amusing) historical tidbits regarding Bill W.'s path to sobriety, including some of the escapades that Bill and “Ebbby” engaged in along the way.

The importance of preserving, documenting, and maintaining A.A.'s history cannot be overstated. It plays a vital role in the sobriety of generations past, present, and future. Speaker Jay S. summed up this sentiment at the Gratitude Day event when he said, “The journey back is as much fun as the journey forward.” Susan H.

*On the twelfth day of Christmas*

*My HP gave to me*

*Twelve Steps a-stepping*

*Eleven "Take It Easys"*

*Ten "First Things Firsts"*

*Nine "Call Your Sponsors"*

*Eight "Live and Let lives"*

*Seven "Easy Does Its"*

*Six "Turn It Overs"*

*~ THIS TOO SHALL PASS ~*

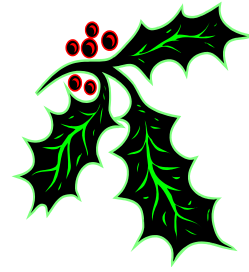
*Four "Keep Coming Backs"*

*Three "Pass It Ons"*

*Two "Just For Todays"*

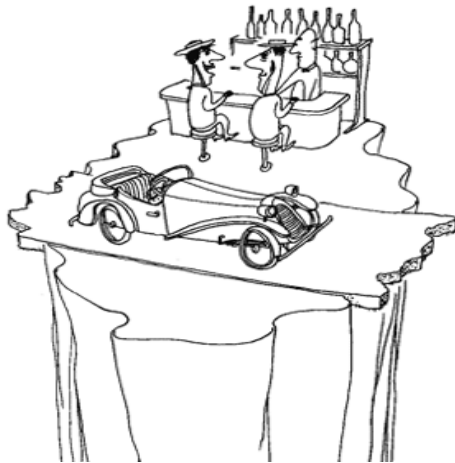
*And one more day of SERENITY!*

*Dawn H. & Di V.*



**Rule #62: Past cartoons and submissions** **Winner:** "Ever get that feeling we're on a road to nowhere?"

—Fred F. SadBadGlad Group, Albany, NY



## Joke of the Month

**From the December Grapevine:**

**Q:**What do Santa Claus and an alcoholic have in common?

**A:** Both know where the naughty people live and can never be found on Christmas.

Tim H., Windsor, Ontario

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**San Fernando Valley Central Office**

**7417-E. Van Nuys Boulevard**

**Van Nuys, CA 91405**

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