

RECOVERY TIMES

Vol. 43, No. 10, Oct 2014

The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

An Oldie But Goodie – Written by one of our local A.A.s

Murphy's Laws of Sobriety

- 1. The more cautiously you walk with a cup of coffee in an A.A. meeting the greater your chances of somebody bumping in to you and spilling it.**
- 2. Whatever you don't want to deal with is always the topic of every A.A. meeting you go to.**
- 3. The more you resent your sponsor the happier she is to see you.**
- 4. The harder you work on a character defect the more glaring it becomes.**
- 5. Whenever a speaker says he is not going to give a long drunk-a-log, a long drunk-a-log ensues.**
- 6. The less you work the principles the greater the personalities.**
- 7. The more you want to speak the less you will be asked. The less you want to speak the more you will be asked.**
- 8. When you finish working all the steps and start to feel really good, a catastrophe always happens so that you have to start working them all over again.**
- 9. The speaker will always focus on the one person in the room who isn't listening.**
- 10. Wherever you put the cream and sugar in an A.A. meeting it's always in the wrong place.**
- 11. When your fear of financial security is finally removed so is your job.**
- 12. Whenever you keep hearing the same speaker at every meeting you go to and you go out of town to a new meeting, he will be the main speaker.**
- 13. Anything done in your home group more than once which is totally illogical will probably become a tradition.**
- 14. When you feel your worst and go to a meeting, somebody always comes up and tells you how good you look.**

By Robin F., Burbank

CALENDAR OF EVENTS: OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2014



11th Annual Santa Clarita Valley Convention, Oct. 17 - 19, 2014, Embassy Suites/Courtyard Hotels, 28508 Westinghouse Road, Valencia.

30th Annual Santa Barbara AA Convention, Oct. 17 – 19, 2014, Santa Barbara Elks Lodge, 150 N. Kellogg Ave., Santa Barbara.

SFV H & I Birthday Dinner & Fundraiser, Oct. 23, 6 p.m., St Innocent Orthodox Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana (\$10.00 ticket)

Area 93, 2014 Longtimers Event, Saturday, Oct. 25, 2014 at 2 p.m., Camarillo Community Center, 1605 E. Burnley Street, Camarillo, CA 93010

Hole in the Sky Halloween Alcañon, October 31- Nov. 2, 2014, 20144 Sherman Way, Canoga Park (at Variel).

So. CAL YPAA VI, Oct. 30- Nov. 2, 2014. Inland Empire. Sheraton Fairplex Hotel & Conference Center, Pomona, CA

Unit A. Thank-A-Thon, Nov. 26 & 27: 10641 Burbank Boulevard, North Hollywood

Burbank Group Thank-A-Thon, Nov. 27 & 28: 3217 Winona Ave., Burbank

48th Annual Las Vegas Roundup, Nov. 27–30: Riviera Hotel & Casino: lasvegasroundup.org

Service Committees Schedule

San Fernando Valley Central Office Board Meeting: November 5, 2014, 6:30 p.m., Central Office, 7417 Van Nuys Boulevard, Suite E., Van Nuys, CA 91405

San Fernando Valley Intergroup Meeting: November 10, 2014: 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): October 20, 2014: 7 p.m. Orientation/8 p.m. Bus. Meeting, St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana

General Service Dist. 1: (1st Wed.): Nov. 5, 2014: 6:30 p.m., 7552 Remmet, Canoga Park.

General Service Dist. 2: (1st Tues.): Nov. 4, 2014: 6:30 p.m., 4011 Dunsmore, La Crescenta

General Service District 7: (2nd Sat.): Nov. 8, 2014: 9 a.m., Women's Club: 33201 Agua Dulce Canyon Rd, Agua Dulce, CA

General Service District 11 (1st Monday): Nov. 3, 2014: 6 p.m. New GSRs - 6:30 p.m., 315 W. Vine Street, Glendale

General Service District 16 (1st Monday): Nov. 3, 2014: 6:15 p.m. meeting, 15950 Chatsworth, Granada Hills.

General Service District 17 (1st Monday): Nov. 3, 2014: 6 p.m. New GSRs, 6:30 p.m. Bus. Mtg., 5000 Colfax, NoHo.



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**.

-Service Opportunities, continued-

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 next page for more info under SF Valley AA Convention).

San Fernando Valley Young People in AA: 1st Sunday of the month at Unit A., 10641 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood.

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.**



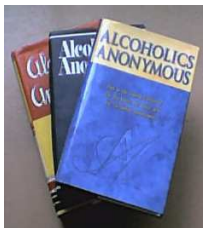
Celebrating an A.A. Anniversary? By making a \$1.00 donation for each year of your sobriety, you can support Central Office in being there for alcoholics calling our phone number from all over the country. Please send your donation in during the month of your birthday so we can acknowledge you in the correct issue of Recovery Times. **For October 2014,** we celebrate: Nancy G. – 7 years, Jorge H – 17 years & Frank K – 30 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: sfvaa.org.

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!

If you would like a copy of **Recovery Times**, please send your name, address and payment for \$7.00 to cover cost & delivery to: SFV Central Office, 7417-E. Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, CA 91405. Please tell us if it is for a new subscription, a renewal, or if you are enclosing an additional contribution, and if moving, give us your former address.



A.A. Central Office maintains 24/7 Phone Service for AAs: **(818) 988-3001.** Visit: www.sfvaa.org to find meeting info, upcoming events, service meeting info, or download a copy of Recovery Times.

Want to be of service? Why not answer phone calls and help others? **Has your meeting changed?** Please provide meeting updates in writing to: **The Valley Central Office, 7417 Van Nuys Blvd., Ste. E., Van Nuys, CA. 91405**



Minutes from Intergroup Rep Meeting, September 8, 2014

OPENING: Bill S. called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with The Serenity Prayer. Josh read The Twelve Traditions. Minutes for the August 2014 Intergroup Meeting were approved as submitted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Central Office is in the black \$975.97 MTD & in the red <-\$565.54> YTD. Group donations remain down from last year, while personal donations have increased. The groups will be encouraged to continue their generosity. A full Treasurer's Report is available in the Recovery Times.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT: Central Office is running great with a wonderful staff of new and returning volunteers. Effective Oct. 1st, there will be a \$1.00 -\$1.50 price increase on Big Books and Twelve & Twelves. An updated price sheet is available at Central Office.

Additional copies of the 75th Anniversary commemorative edition of the Big Book are available at Central Office. Price is \$13.08 (including tax). To date, we have sold 820 copies.

IG Meeting Stats: 73 groups were represented at the IGR Meeting in August. One new IGR attended the meeting: Heather from Radford. (IGR birthdays to be printed in next newsletter).

Recovery Times - Everything is fabulous with the newsletter.

Internet - Everything is fine with the Internet site at www.sfvaa.org

Operations - Volunteers are still needed to cover 9PM-midnight and 12AM-9AM phone shifts, as well as to handle in-person 12-step calls. Interested parties should contact Central Office.

Group Announcements: Valley Club Alcathon, H & I Anniversary Dinner, Unity Day, Longtimers' Meeting in Camarillo, & Santa Clarita Convention. (See calendar).

So. CA Convention: Dates for the convention are 1/30-31 and 2/1, 2015. The theme is "Attitude of Gratitude" and will be held at the Warner Center Marriott, Woodland Hills.

BOARD VACANCIES: None.

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: None.

CLOSING: Reminder that the next IGR meeting will be Monday, Oct. 13, 2014.

Motion to adjourn, and seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

FORGIVENESS...



Message

"The phrase "God as we understand him" is perhaps the most important expression to be found in our whole AA vocabulary. Within this compass of five significant words there can be included every kind and degree of faith, together with the positive assurance that each of us may choose his own."

Bill W., April 1961

Heard Around A.A.

"One day, after sitting alone, soaked in tears and feeling empty, worthless, and crippled in the smallest task, I reached out and gave my phone number to someone else - they were hurting, too. In that simplest of acts, my world changed."

**Salt Lake City,
Utah**

This word is complicated and for a long time I truly could not comprehend how it was done. Here is my journey on the humility and healing that I have come to acquire through the once powerless phrases of "I apologize" and "I forgive."

I remember when an apology never satisfied me: ever. It was thoughtless and inauthentic. I thought people used apologies as a last resort tactic rather than a sincere chance to admit wrongdoing. Clearly, my expectations for what an apology should mean were let down. Forgiving others never seemed to release me from my feelings of sadness, or disappointment. I had never heard of forgiveness reversing time loss or retracting actions. For me, an apology was just an empty word. When people would mouth an apology around me, I would cringe.

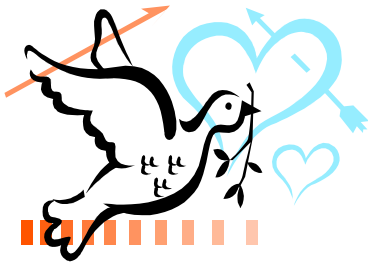
Years went by and I held on to my disbelief in forgiving. I wish I could say that it was one particular event that snapped me into clear thinking but there were too many stints to distinguish which one did me in. What I do know is this. One day I needed to be forgiven. Everything I had depended on it. I had spent years dismissing apologies and here I was begging for a clean slate. Needless to say, my point of view on forgiveness changed.

When I look at being apologetic and forgiving others, I think maybe I would have forgiven more frequently if there were an instant gratification of some sort at the end of it. Maybe if the clouds parted and God reached out and high fived me, maybe, just maybe I would have opted to forgive and ask forgiveness more often.

To say "I'm sorry" or to forgive someone is much like faith; life appears brighter when we surrender to it. Although the true works of being apologetic is unseen, the wholeness of our soul desperately depends on it. After many years of never allowing people the dignity to admit fault in their actions, I realized that I was denying them their right to be human. I was indirectly saying to them and to myself that I was above flaw; I was perfect. Over time, I have learned that forgiving others, I in turn offer forgiveness to myself for holding on to harm done to me. Listen, from an ex bag lady; believe me when I say, the more you harbor, the deeper you will sink. Forgiveness allows us to be free, light weight, and truly happy.

If you are reading this and still need something more concrete, try this: My mentor gave me a precious jewel on how she forgives. I practice it often. My Mentor says, "We learn and grow through love and forgiveness. Give people the forgiveness you may need one day. When you feel those old feelings festering in you, pray for that person. Ask God or the Universe to give this particular person everything that you have ever wanted and desired for yourself. Do it every day for a week, see if you feel any different. You do not have to believe in what you say at first. Just be consistent."

Sounds simple. Or not. Either way, I encourage you to try to it. Start by apologizing to yourself first. We have all been double crossed and shaded unnecessarily; the worst thing we can do is cause more harm to ourselves by holding on to it. No matter what, just wish them well! Happy Journey! By Brittney S., NYC



MAKING AMENDS

(We apologize for a misprint in our last issue, so are reprinting this in whole, Editor)

When describing step nine in the big book it says that *"if we are painstaking about this phase of our development we will be amazed before we are half way through"*, and then it goes on to list the promises. The information in the 12X12 is a lot more direct about the different approaches we could take and tries to encourage us to exercise caution before we rush in and make some major blunders. This suggestion, I think, can't be taken lightly. I have heard many horror stories about well-meaning people, wanting to put this step behind them, ran to their friends and loved ones and disclosed things that destroyed any trust they may have had in the alcoholic.

Good judgment, a careful sense of timing, courage, and prudence---these are the qualities we shall need when we take Step Nine. Sometimes we read the **headline** but fail to read the **entire article**. If we do this when we go through the steps we can do more damage to our already strained relationships. Making promises to my close friends and family that I'm not sure I can keep, usually fall on deaf ears. But an honest recognition of my past mistakes, without going into too many details at this time, and a sincere determination to give the program my best effort with the understanding that my behavior will be the measure of my success, is a more acceptable approach. We know that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. After we have put some time between us and our last debacles, we can revisit those amends and go into details about each event, only after we have run it by an experienced and trusted advisor.

Rushing into an amend that could bring hardship to our unsuspecting family or to other third parties, is another mistake that people sometimes make. In Step Nine in the 12X12 it says that *"WE cannot, for example, unload a detailed account of extramarital adventuring upon the shoulders of our unsuspecting wife or husband."* I would also include major financial or work-related amends that may result in losing your job or create heavy financial difficulties for the family. These should be put off until everyone involved is in agreement and then, only after talking to someone to make sure that you are not overlooking anything.

How about all those relatives and friends that we haven't seen in a while but still have an uncomfortable feeling about the way we left that relationship? These people only have a snapshot of what we used to be like. They don't see the day to day changes that we have made in our lives and they assume that we are the same as when we made our last major mistake. For this type of situations, I would consider a slow but sincere process of reestablishing contact with those involved. I once suggested that, using the opportunity on Birthdays and Holidays, of sending cards can be a nice way to reestablish contact with these people, with a simple *"been thinking about you, hope things are going well for you, Love....."*

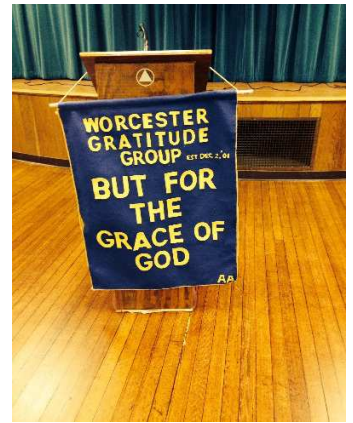
Sending these out at each opportunity for a year or two with **no return address**, and no expectations, and at some time in the future, you will have to attend a wedding, graduation, or funeral... where you will see them again, and you will be amazed at what will happen. My experience has been that the cards create curiosity and *that* sometimes causes these people to talk to each other and they find out that you are trying hard to mend your ways and it tends to disarm them. Now, that would be the time to put these things to rest. Keeping in mind that if I can't add the kicker, **"I regret what I did, and I don't do that anymore,"** then maybe I'm not ready to make that amend yet.

I hope these ideas will help you to understand that most amends can be made in a positive way and the results are so much better than we ever could have expected. We must do these things if we hope to develop the **serenity and peace** that is **promised**.

By Rick R., Poway, Ca.

YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN

A famous author was known for making that statement and in part it's true. As a member in good-standing of Alcoholics Anonymous, I can't go back to the bars that were once my "home" and expect to feel comfortable there because this program has changed me. But what I CAN do is go back to the place where my drinking began, my hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts, and take part in the program of A.A. – and that's exactly what I did on my last vacation.



The meeting was located just across the street from the elementary school where I remember sitting on the steps drinking from a brown paper bag at the age of 17. My drinking companions were older and tougher than me; I thought that by hanging around with these rough characters, I would become more experienced. They barely noticed that I was there but I'm sure anyone who was driving by saw me sitting there on the elementary school steps.

Back to the A.A. meeting: It was a large group that day for the weekly speaker meeting. I hoped that I would see someone who I remembered from 40 years ago (I drank for 30 years), but that wasn't the case. The people were nice and the speakers' stories were engaging, just as they are here. I spoke to a few people around the table and told them I was visiting from L.A. after having grown up there. We chatted about the people we knew in common and they suggested a few other good meetings. Then, at the end of the hour-long meeting, it was over and time to go.

I liked being a part of my hometown A.A. meeting – even if it was just to give everyone there a nod and a thumb's up. We're all in this together and it's nice to know, I CAN go home again.

Pat K.

A.A. Word Search: Our word search phrase today is from Lest We Become Complacent: **"It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe."** (AA. Page 85). Read up, down, sideways and diagonally to find these words.

A	L	C	O	H	O	L	W	H	U	J	T	O	G	O
C	A	D	N	K	I	A	E	T	P	U	I	D	O	F
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M	A	R	G	O	R	P	H	E	A	D	E	D	X	E

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