

# RECOVERY TIMES

Vol. 46, No. 4, April 2016

The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter



## Arrested

I suffered from terrible anxiety about driving. So when my father taught me how to drive he taught me after we had a few beers. I got my license and I continued to drive like this until March 16<sup>th</sup> 2007. This was the best and worst night of my life. I started it just like most of my nights during this time; I would go to karaoke and sing, drink and drive myself home. However, after an amazing night of singing and alcohol flowing freely I received an invitation to attend an after party. The hostess told me I could sleep on her couch so I didn't have to worry about driving home. I took this as an invitation to let my hair down. I drank and drank until I passed out on her couch in absolute drunken bliss; this was the best night ever! However, a tap on the shoulder interrupted my blissful sleep. I opened my eyes to find her cousin standing over me grinning that grin that said he wanted something from me that I wasn't offering. I was terrified! I grabbed my shoes and ran back to the bar where my car was parked. I didn't know if I was being followed and I didn't care.

I proceeded to drive in my drunkenness. I was so drunk I had to close one eye to stop seeing double. At some point I blacked out and traveled over three different freeways before I came to. When I came to I was at a red light waiting to make a right turn. When the light turned green I thanked God and made the right turn and then everything went black.

When I came to my airbag had been deployed and a woman was screaming on the sidewalk. I tried to stuff my airbag back in the steering wheel. I had plans the next day to drink my first green beer and this was endangering it. As I continued trying to stuff my airbag into the steering wheel a tow truck guy walked up and said, "Ma'am? I don't think you're going anywhere." He helped me out and I don't know what he saw when he helped me out the car but he hurried me into his tow truck. As I sat there waiting there was a tap on the glass. It was an officer; he wanted to talk to me. He asked me had I hit something, I told him someone had hit me. He told me I was being arrested for Driving-Under-the-Influence. I began sobbing uncontrollably when he put me in the backseat of the squad car.

He took me to jail. He told me I'd be out in 8 hours. I was there for 43. I sat there trying to think why was such a nice girl like myself in jail? For the first 30 or so hours I was there I was confident it was racial profiling. However, as I sat in that cell I watched TV praying for an answer when suddenly an ad for beer came on. The beer bottle danced to the beat of the song in the ad and as I watched that bottle dance I became angry. How dare that bottle of beer dance so freely while I was in jail? I was not the only one who committed the crime that night. Alcohol, or as I saw him "Al" was in that car right along with me, however I was the only one who was arrested.

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## **SERVICE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE:**

### **San Fernando Valley Central Office Board**

**Meeting:** May 4, 2016, 6:30 p.m., Central Office, 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91406.

### **San Fernando Valley Intergroup Meeting:**

May 9, 2016: 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): April 18, 2016: 7 p.m. Orientation, 8 p.m. Bus. Meeting, St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana.

**General Service Dist. 1:** (1<sup>st</sup> Wed.): May 4, 2016: 6:30 p.m., 7552 Remmet, Canoga Park.

**General Service Dist. 2:** (1<sup>st</sup> Tues.): May 3, 2016: 6:30 p.m., 4011 Dunsmore, La Crescenta.

**General Service District 7:** (2<sup>nd</sup> Sat.): May 14, 2016, 9 a.m., Women's Club: 33201 Agua Dulce Canyon Rd, Agua Dulce, CA.

**General Service District 11** (1<sup>st</sup> Mon.): May 2, 2016: 6 p.m. New GSRs - 6:30 p.m., 315 W. Vine Street, Glendale.

**General Service District 16** (1<sup>st</sup> Mon.): May 2, 2016: 6:00 p.m., 15950 Chatsworth, Granada Hills.

**General Service District 17** (1<sup>st</sup> Mon.): May 2, 2016: 6 p.m. Orientation for new GSRs, 6:30 p.m., Business Meeting: 7:00 p.m., 5000 Colfax, NoHo.

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## **SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY**

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**A.A. Central Office maintains 24/7 Phone Service** for AAs. Go to: [www.sfvaa.org](http://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 is located at 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA.** (SW corner of Woodley &

Sherman Way, west of the Mobil Station) and remains 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.

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](http://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 2017 Convention. The meeting is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, starting April 19, 2016, at St. Innocents.

### **San Fernando Valley Young People in AA:** 1<sup>st</sup>

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 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana. Intergroup reps provide an important service to the group. IGRs share 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 rep to the monthly Intergroup meetings the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley, Tarzana. We would love to see you!**



**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. Anonymous – 20 Years, Greg B. – 22 Years, Bonnie H. – 25 Years, Gus – 29 Years, Learning to Live Men’s Stag – 28 men/332 Years & Saturday Morning Women’s Meeting – 34 Years.

**Deaths (Things We Cannot Change): We said goodbye to the following AA members:**

Doug B. – 54 Years (W. Valley), Jean C. (Baker) – 47 Years (Burbank), John F. – 43- Years (Radford), Barbara B. – 33 Years (W. Valley), & Hank T. – 19 Years (Dunsmore).

**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](mailto:xnowisthetime@aol.com).

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**SAN FERNANDO VALLEY CENTRAL OFFICE**  
**Minutes of Intergroup Representatives Meeting, March 14, 2016**

**OPENING: Brian H.**

- Brian opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. with The Serenity Prayer
- Sam G. read “The Twelve Traditions”
- Cheryl A (for Sandy R). Accepted a motion for approval of Minutes from the February Intergroup Meeting with corrections.

**TREASURER’S REPORT: Joel S.** - MTD was \$2669 and YTD was \$3822. Groups were off compared to last year by \$1700; some improvement in H&I sales and personal contributions were up.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY’S REPORT: Bob F.** Central Office need a more volunteers, especially night help. Everything is running smoothly at Central Office. *Recovery Times*: Reminder deadline for submissions is 15<sup>th</sup> of the month; send to Pat’s email [xnowisthetime@aol.com](mailto:xnowisthetime@aol.com).

**MEETING RELATED BUSINESS: Cheryl A.** – There was one new IGR: James R., Current Solutions, Tuesday in Van Nuys

**Service Rep Reports:**

- General Service District 1: Norm stated that the GSR reps were recovering from PRAASA
- San Fernando Valley Hospital & Institutions Committee: Nancy: No official report --H&I will be electing a new IG representative; H&I: San Fernando Valley Hospitals and Institutions, Presents the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Bike-N-4-Books, at Woodley Park, Saturday June 11, 2016.
- San Fernando Valley 42<sup>nd</sup> AA Convention: Joel S: Next year Jan 27- 29, 2017. Planning meetings start April 19.
- Santa Clarita Valley AA Convention: Bernard: 2016 SCVAA Convention will be on October 21, 22, and 23 at the Valencia Hyatt.

## Heard at Meetings

"I know that I will never be sober long enough to be alcohol-proof." **Iowa City, IA, August 2012**

"I know that I am not a total loss, even when I think I am. I know that freedom and usefulness, love, outgoingness and sharing are the important things in life." **New Canaan, Conn., April 1976**

"An alcoholic can go from comatose to grandiose." **Anon**

"The program of Alcoholics Anonymous may not open the gates of heaven and let you in, but it will open the gates of hell and let you out."

### **Anonymous**

"I came to A.A. when I quit quitting." **Anon**

"When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change." **Anonymous**

"We're not suffering from separation from alcohol, we're suffering from separation from God." **Anonymous**

"Every time we burn a cake, we're raising the flag of victory over alcoholism."

### **Anonymous**

## • 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 new business.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AA GROUPS & SEVENTH TRADITION:

Ernie, the San Fernando Group: 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual 12 Steps Workshop on Saturday, April 16, 2016 from 1:00 – 6:00 pm.

Sandy R.: Woman To Woman 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Workshop Weekend for Sober Alcoholic Women, June 3 – June 5, 2016 at Mount St. Mary's College.

Brian 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").

## BIRTHDAYS FOR MARCH/FEBRUARY – 82 YEARS OF SOBRIETY!

Alexis., 2 years; Kevin, 3 years; Rick A., 20 years; James R, 27 years; & Cheryl M, 30 years

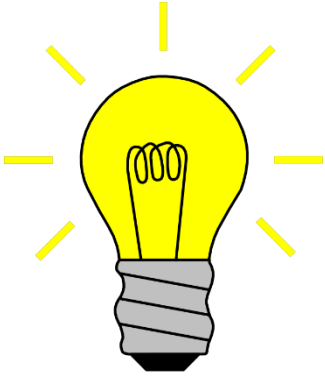
VACANCIES ON BOARD There are no vacancies on the Board.

CLOSING: Brian H. made a motion to adjourn which was recognized and seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm with *The Lord's Prayer*. Prepared and submitted by: **Cheryl A.**

Central Office maintains a free call-in line 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays. Whenever anyone reaches out for help, we want the hand of AA to always be there. Call: **(818) 988-3001.**

**CENTRAL OFFICE THANKS ALL THE VOLUNTEERS WHO ANSWER THE PHONES EACH DAY, WEEK, & MONTH! WITHOUT YOU, ALCOHOLICS WHO NEED A FRIEND MIGHT NOT KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR A MEETING. DURING FEBRUARY THERE WERE 41 DAYTIME VOLUNTEERS, 28 NIGHT-TIME VOLUNTEERS AND 9 GROUPS WITH WEEKEND SLOTS. TO BECOME A PHONE VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT CENTRAL OFFICE. ONE YEAR OF SOBRIETY IS RECOMMENDED.**





I felt so betrayed! I had sacrificed everything for Al: my job, my home, relationships, my self-esteem, everything, my freedom and Al didn't even care. With this devastating blow to the system, I then realized why I was in jail; it wasn't because of racial profiling, it was because I drank and I drove.

With that realization, I had the strength to call someone to get bailed out. I talked to the woman on the phone and she asked me basic questions: address, phone numbers, references of people to vouch for me, etc. As the woman was getting off the phone, she said she had just one more question.

She said, "Do you believe in God?" As I looked up from the phone at my many cellmates who were listening, I thought carefully about my answer and said, "Yes, I believe in God." She then said, "I'm going to get you out of here in 8 hours." She got me out in 3. I never got to meet this woman to thank her.

I was charged with a DUI so attending AA was mandatory. The first meeting I ever attended was reading 'We Agnostics,' and it was music to my ears. One of things I drank over was my concept of God. According to my concept I was damned so I didn't see the point of living. However, this God they spoke of in AA seemed like a God I could believe in. He seemed like the kind of God that was willing to love me despite my fall; the kind of God that would be by your side even when you're in jail.

So with lots of fear and reservations I attended AA. I didn't have a car or money due to my DUI and you all didn't care. When I showed up to a meeting I didn't have to be on the list, I was welcomed. I'm so grateful that I got my DUI because it not only physically arrested me but it arrested my alcoholism. Those 43 hours in jail were 43 hours without a drink after a 5-month bender of drinking every day. I had just lost my job because of my inability to stop drinking long enough to make it to work. But fortunately, my Higher Power was able to arrest the situation and give me insight into what was happening to me. For that I am extremely grateful.

Thank you AA for leaving the light on when it was so dark. ***La Toya H., Los Angeles***



**Plan Your Year With These AA Events:**

**Happy Campers:** Lake Piru Campfire Meeting, Lake Piru, CA. – 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month @ 8 p.m. (March – October)

**44<sup>th</sup> All CA Young People in AA Round-Up,** Orange County, CA, 4/21 - 4/24/16

**Tri-State Round-Up:** Laughlin, NV, 5/19 - 5/22      [www.tristate-roundup.com](http://www.tristate-roundup.com)

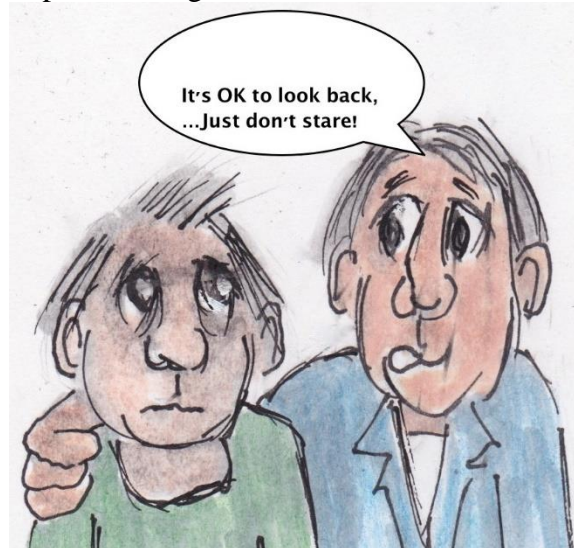
**Desert Pow Wow:** Indian Wells, CA, 6/9 – 6/12      [www.desertpowwow.com](http://www.desertpowwow.com)

**Founder's Day:** 6/10-6/12, Akron, Ohio [www.akronaa.org](http://www.akronaa.org)

**32<sup>nd</sup> annual High Desert Convention of AA,** 6/10 – 6/12/16, The Courtyard Marriott, Hesperia, CA.



<http://www.highdesertconvention.com>.



**43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Antelope Valley Roundup**, 6/24- 6/26-16, AV Fairgrounds, Lancaster, CA [www.avroundup.com](http://www.avroundup.com) or call: 661-945-5757.

**24<sup>th</sup> Annual Foothill Roundup**, La Canada, CA: TBA

**32<sup>nd</sup> Annual South Bay Roundup**, 9/2 – 9/5/16: Torrance Marriott, Torrance, CA. <http://www.southbayroundup.org>

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Ventura County A.A. Convention**, Westlake Village, CA. 9/9 – 9-11, 2016 [www.vcaac.org](http://www.vcaac.org)

**65<sup>th</sup> Annual So. CA Convention of AA**, 9-23-9/25/16: Town and Country Resort, San Diego, CA., <http://aasocal.com>.

**Santa Clarita Valley AA Conv.**, Santa Clarita: 10/21- 10/23/16.

Illustration submitted by Leslie Z.

## **RECOVERY TIMES IS LOOKING FOR YOUR “FAMILY RECOVERY” STORIES:**



Last year, my brother came out to visit me from Wisconsin and I decided to take him to an AA meeting so that he could see how important AA is to me and meet many of my AA friends. As far as I know, he has never attended an AA meeting and doesn't know any other alcoholics in recovery.

The meeting I took him to was uplifting and spiritual. It was one of my regular meetings and the topic was Gratitude. One after the other, A.A. members walked up to the podium and shared how grateful they were for the program of AA. As I sat there, I relished in the beauty of my program and was proud to have my brother in tow to see, firsthand, how much love there was in the room. I truly believed that he was hearing the same thing that I was hearing over the course of the 1.5 hour meeting.

The following evening, as he and I were having dinner, he ordered himself a beer, and then another. After the second beer started to kick in, I noticed a change in his demeanor as he began bringing up previous hurts and resentments against me that he had nursed for the past 20 years. And then the conversation changed to another family member and how that person complained to him about something I said or did in the past. Feeling somewhat attacked, I told him that I had made my amends to that person years before and I couldn't change the past, to which he replied “Isn't the 11<sup>th</sup> Step about begging people for forgiveness?”

As the words came out of his mouth, I realized that he didn't actually understand the Steps and that the beautiful messages I thought he was hearing, were actually what I was hearing, as only an AA involved in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous can. In other words, just because I brought him to a meeting doesn't mean that he was hearing the same thing that I was, but it was a beginning...

To date, my brother is the only family member of mine who has ever attended an A.A. meeting with me during the course of my 12 year journey here. None have ever given me a cake; none have ever expressed any

desire to go to a meeting with me. That's probably because they aren't alcoholics. In fact, my brother recounted to me in conversation that he could only remember being "drunk" on two occasions!

I'm not sure that I believe him but I do know that he and I are very different – both in our drinking and in our spiritual programs. His life is a world apart from mine and for the record, I would not want to change a thing about my life.

So what I'm looking for from you, dear reader, is your story about your journey with your family through addiction and recovery. Please send your story to me by April 20<sup>th</sup> (up to 500 words) via email: [xnowisthetime@aol.com](mailto:xnowisthetime@aol.com). In love and sobriety. *Editor Pat K.*

**Here are some thoughts for stories:**

- How have your kids followed in your footsteps in alcoholism and/or recovery?
- If you have alcoholism in your family, how have you changed that pattern?
- Have you had to separate yourself from your family of origin while getting sober?
- How have your family relationships changed as you've worked on your sobriety?

Please send completed stories (400 – 600 words) to: [xnowisthetime@aol.com](mailto:xnowisthetime@aol.com) by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Thank you for sharing!

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**Word Search:** Find the following AA message by looking up, down, diagonally or backwards: "I trudge the road of happy destiny" and "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

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| D | X | X | P | I | X | D | O | T | D | R | X | X | X | S |
| X | X | X | P | D | U | X | X | D | E | T | S | U | R | T |
| X | X | X | Y | R | O | N | Y | A | C | O | M | E | I | I |
| Y | E | H | T | S | E | R | V | A | N | T | S | X | C | N |
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| L | E | A | D | E | R | S | Y | A | T | X | X | X | D | X |
| X | G | O | V | E | R | N | X | X | T | A | K | E | D | X |

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**