

# RECOVERY TIMES

Vol. 66, No. 9, Sept. 2018

The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

## YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN

The author Thomas Wolfe is known for his novel, "You Can't Go Home Again," but this AA says you CAN!



Last year, while traveling through my former home state of Massachusetts, I attended a meeting of the Bass River Morning Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, which meets from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. in West Dennis on Cape Cod. The last time I had attended that meeting, I fell in love with the people there, as well as the format, where everyone shares on the reading of the day.

I immediately felt at home there hearing the hard "a's" in my compadres' Mass. accent but it was the laughter in the room and the down home hospitality that kept me coming back.

Earlier this year, when the airfare rates dropped, I pounced on the opportunity to book a flight back without knowing where I was going to stay. Trusting in God's plan is where faith comes in, and my Higher Power saw to it that I was provided for. A woman AA, who I had been in touch with since that first meeting, offered me a comfortable bed to sleep in, a refrigerator full of food, and rides to that meeting every morning that I was in town. L. was a wonderful friend to me and I was delighted to be able to spend more time with her and get to know her better.

The meeting, itself, was as I remembered it: warm, friendly and right on time. During my three days there, I was asked to lead a meeting where the reading was about making amends (page 77 in the Twelve and Twelve). How appropriate, I thought. When I left here 30 years ago, still deep in my cups, I thought I was leaving all of my problems behind. Life was going to be better in Los Angeles where no one knew me. However, I recreated what I knew in my new home as soon as I could – drinking with new people in new bars and creating more of the same problems in my new location. The saying that comes to mind is, "you can run, but you can't hide!" That was certainly true for me, even though it took 16 more years for me to realize that in the rooms of AA.

When I did finally come to AA, I was given a mirror to look into my soul and a firm sponsor who lovingly helped me do my inventory. As it says on page 70 of the Big Book, "In this book you will read again and again that faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves."

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**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  
August 13, 2018**

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**OPENING: Larry S.**

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

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

MTD is \$2,284 and YTD is \$481, as compared with last year's YTD which was <2.68>. We received a contribution from the San Fernando Valley AA Convention! Financial Statements and Group Contributions are available.

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

Central Office: New volunteers are needed for all five time slots. One year of sobriety is required. Please contact Central Office.

*Recovery Times*: Please send your personal story of recovery to Editor Pat K. at: [xnowisthetime@aol.com](mailto:xnowisthetime@aol.com).

**MEETING RELATED BUSINESS: Josh S.**

- 2 new Intergroup Representative this month:
  - Brian S., "Toluca Lake Speaker Group," Sundays at 7pm in Burbank; and,
  - Jack O., "Sunrise Group," Saturdays at 8:14 am in Burbank.

**SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES:**

- General Service District 11: Ernie: Need more GSO Representatives. Meet 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month in Glendale. Right now, focusing on the 2018 Pacific Regional Forum next month in San Jose, hosted by Area 6.
- General Service District 16: Daniel: "Home Sweet Home 'Home Group' Workshop," Sunday, Oct. 7, 2018, 1:30-5:30pm at San Fernando Group Hall, 220 Brand Ave., San Fernando (above the barber shop).
- San Fernando Valley Hospital & Institutions Committee: Nick C.: Join us on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 44<sup>rd</sup> 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.
- Santa Clarita Valley 15<sup>th</sup> Annual AA Convention: Bernard B.: September 14, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the Valencia Hyatt. The theme is "Miraculous Demonstrations." Online registration is open at [www.scvaaconvention.org](http://www.scvaaconvention.org) and registration flyers are available.

**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:

- Lee, the San Fernando Group:
  - Housewarming for the new location (220 S. Brand Blvd., 2nd floor): Sept. 1, 2018. Potluck at 6pm, Speaker/Participation Meeting at 8pm, Dance at 10pm.
  - San Fernando Breakfast: Every Sunday 9am beginning Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup>, followed by Speaker Meeting at 11am. All you can eat for \$5 (adults), \$2.50 (kids under 12).
- Dan, The Burbank Group:
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Poker Tournament: Sept. 8, 2018, 2pm to 6pm. Come for the noon meeting first!
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Chili & Cornbread Cook-Off: Sept. 22, 2018, 3-5pm. Stay for our Saturday night lineup of meetings, beginning at 8pm!
- Terri, International Women's Conference:
  - Rock Bottom Comedy Show: Sept. 16, 2018, at the Comedy Store on Sunset Blvd. Doors open at 6pm and tickets are \$25. Proceeds benefit the 55<sup>th</sup> International Women's Conference, which will be held February 7-10, 2019 at the Westin Bonaventure. See [internationalwomensconference.org](http://internationalwomensconference.org) for more info!
- Diana, H&I:
  - 37<sup>th</sup> Annual H&I Birthday Dinner & Fundraiser: Tues. Oct. 23, 2018, 6-10pm at St. Innocents in Tarzana.
- Brian H., SFV Central Office:
  - Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast, fundraiser for Central Office: Oct. 27, 2018 at the Disabled American Veterans Hall in Woodland Hills. Breakfast at 8am, followed by a speaker meeting. Tickets will be available at September's Intergroup Meeting.
- The Wake-Up Group:
  - 6:45-7:45am daily at the Reseda Meeting Hall, 17751 Sherman Way #3, west of White Oak. Also, "new" Friday evening discussion meeting, 6-7pm, pot luck dinner at 5:30pm.

## REMINDERS:

Larry S.: Groups should bring at least 350 flyers on upcoming events to the IGR meeting. 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 AUGUST – 29 YEARS OF SOBRIETY!

- Cindy, 5 years, BJ, 6 years and Brian H., 18 years.

BIRTHDAY CORRECTION: Maryann, 30 years on 7/25. Apologies for the error!

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

## 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

"If all I have is a dollar in my pocket and I'm at a meeting, logic tells me to save it for myself for later. If I give it to AA, and have faith in the process, it will come back to me in ways I can't even imagine."  
Sacramento, California

"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, Florida

"Forgiveness seems to depend more on the love of the one who does the forgiving than on the lovability of the one being forgiven."  
West Henrietta, New York

"I learned that if I had the capacity to be honest, I would get better."  
Cornwall, Ontario

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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](http://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.

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS:

**40<sup>th</sup> Annual Ventura County AA Convention**, Sept. 7 – 9, 2018, Westlake Hyatt Resort, 880 S. Westlake Blvd., Westlake Village, CA. [www.vcaac.org](http://www.vcaac.org).

**15<sup>th</sup> Santa Clarita Valley Annual AA Convention**, Sept. 14 -16<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Valencia Hyatt, Valencia, CA.

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

**Central Coast Roundup**, Oct. 5 – 7, 2018, Santa Maria, CA, [www.centralcoastroundup.org](http://www.centralcoastroundup.org)

**30<sup>th</sup> Annual Vancouver Roundup**, Oct. 19 – 20, 2018, [www.vanroundup.com](http://www.vanroundup.com).

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

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## **AA SERVICE COMMITTEES General Service Area 93:**

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

**District 16:** Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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. 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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:** 1<sup>st</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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: Reza B. – 18 Years, Brian H. – 18 years, Anonymous – 21 Years, Lyn – 29 Years and Thea J. – 41 Years. Thank you all for supporting Central Office!**



**Deaths:** None that we are aware of.

**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](mailto:sfvco@la.twcbc.com).**

**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](mailto: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!

## You Can Go Home Again, cont. page one



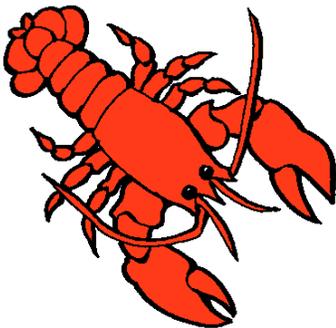
were so much a part of who I was. It was hard to give them up.

With that willingness, I recited the Seventh Step Prayer to prepare for the road ahead and then began reading Steps 8 and 9 for my amends steps. My sponsor held my hand though most of this as I was terrified of facing the people with whom I had strong resentments. Those resentments were like a cancer, poisoning my air and my soul but I didn't want to let them go because they

With my sponsor, I created a plan of action for those on my 8<sup>th</sup> Step list:

Who was I willing to make amends to now? Who was I willing to make amends to later? And who was I not willing to make amends to? My sponsor explained that this was my choice but that by holding onto resentments, I might end up getting drunk again.

We then discussed how I would make these amends. We practiced what I would say until I felt comfortable. Most of the amends I did were over the phone as I wanted to get rid of them right away so I could experience some peace in my life. Again, this was based on my belief that things would get better – and they did. It was a terrifying prospect at first - facing my character defects, then recognizing my part, and finally, having to face the people who I had blamed for all of my problems. I was shaken to my very core. Had it not been for the guiding, loving hand of AA, I could not have gotten through this alone. Throughout this process, my AA friends and my sponsor were there to guide me along and reassure me that I was doing the right thing.



Sharing this story with others at the Bass River Morning Group was one of the highlights of my vacation, as I got to contribute to others what my experience had been. As always, I am grateful that AA has meetings everywhere I go. I always am able to find others who are sober and who want to spend an hour or so helping another former drunk like me. No matter where I go or how busy I am when I travel, I ALWAYS make time for AA meetings, and I advise my sponsees to do the same. Here is just a partial list of the benefits that come from this experience:

- We hear the message carried by others.
- We get to carry someone else's burden for that day – and they do the same for us.
- We meet sober people and get to fellowship with them after the meeting.
- We get to be 'part of' the community of AA's when we attend meetings.
- We meet people who we normally would never have a chance to meet.

I've been to meetings in from Florence, Italy and the financial district of Boston and San Francisco, to the Tenderloin district there. I've attended meetings in Nashville, Tennessee, in four cities in New Mexico: Los Alamos, Santa Fe, and Taos; on the Navajo reservation in Arizona, at a convent in Wisconsin, and in many states and cities along the way.

If you are like me and you liked to drink with others, you'll love the meetings, roundups, alcathons and conventions in other places you visit. At the beginning of each meeting, visitors are usually asked to introduce themselves, which is a great way to meet people.

I'll end with this: You can go home again – if you work the steps of AA. AA is the softer, easier way to live life and the beginning of what could be the best years of yours. Editor, Pat K.

# YOUNG AND FULL OF FEAR



When I came to AA at age 22, I was depressed, socially anxious and terrified. I was just beginning to understand how powerless I was over alcohol and the consequences that it had in my life. Too scared to go to Young People's meetings with my peers, I went to meetings where the crowd was much older than me.

One of the first suggestions I received was to go up to women after the meeting and ask them for their phone numbers. That was the last thing I ever wanted to do, but I also didn't want to drink anymore and was open to trying something different.

After the prayer at the end of a meeting, people would cluster together in groups to talk and I didn't know how to approach them. I would find a woman who had shared something I liked, but she was already speaking to another person. I'd stand near her, terrified, waiting for her to finish her conversation and notice me. Seconds felt like hours. When she turned to me to speak, I'd ask her for her phone number, write it down and then make a beeline for the door. I hated it. But it didn't kill me and I was following the directions someone gave me.

The act of facing my fears became the cornerstone on which my foundation in AA was built. I didn't always have to enjoy or feel good about things. I learned that my feelings wouldn't kill me. I also got the well-worn advice: "There are two times when you ought to go to meetings: 1) when you want to go; and 2) when you don't want to go."

The older crowd looked out for me. I got a home group, a service commitment, and a sponsor. I began working the Steps. I became more comfortable in AA and my anxiety lessened. But the people in the older crowd were at different life stages than I was at the time and I needed to be around people in my age group. I eventually began to attend Young People's meetings.

Now my social anxiety, fear and awkwardness came back full throttle. What will everyone think of me? How do I act? What do I say to people? But I knew that I couldn't let fear dictate my life. I knew that my self-centeredness was the cause of my fear. I prayed to my Higher Power for strength and I did the footwork by continuing to show up to meetings with other young people. I even went out to fellowship with them afterward.

Over time, I learned to navigate meetings better. I became less scared, embraced the awkward moments and became confident in my ability to socialize. I'm now able to join in fun activities and some great friendships have developed.

Today, when I'm at a meeting, I keep an eye out for the person who is all by herself, who leaves too quickly or who just seems scared and uncomfortable. I let her know we've all been nervous in the beginning and then introduce her to other friendly AAs. My hope is that over time she will find a Fellowship as rich as I have.

-- Jessi S., St. Petersburg, Florida

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