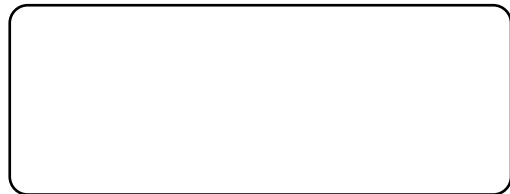


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Volume 36 — Issue 4

APRIL 2016

THE TRADITION

Monthly Newsletter of the Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.

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Plus
Flyers Inside

Info Lines ..

Visit Our Website.
*Just want a meeting or
other A.A. information?
Check out the expanded
Ventura County website.
www.aaventuracounty.org*

Ventura County Central
Service Office Inc.
321 N. Aviator Street,
Suite 115
Camarillo, Ca. 93010

24 Hour Telephones
(805) 389-1444
(800) 990-7550
Fax (805) 389-2912
E-Mail
vcaaco@verizon.net

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR GROUP? - Jim M., Camarillo

An AA group is the principal vehicle for administering our program to help newcomers achieve sobriety and assist others to maintain their sobriety. This responsibility is discharged through approximately 400 meetings per week in Ventura County and, given the diversity and plurality of the program, there are just about as many different types and kinds of meetings/groups involved in this process of recovery. How can we measure the success or effectiveness of the meetings we attend? Can we create a group 'inventory' which might point us toward greater 'health' for the group, or enable us to discover shortcomings which might substantially restrict our success? The following questions and observations are presented to initiate a process for determining the health of meetings/groups which can be applied at all levels of participation in the process. There are no right or wrong answers; simply a state of the health of the group for each person to consider and respond to.

As a starting point, does the group secretary have a minimum requirement for sobriety time? What is it? What is the length of time the secretary serves? Does the group have a separate treasurer? GSR? IGR? Grapevine rep? Are there sobriety requirements associated with these positions? If there are not individuals designated for each of these positions, is there a reason why not? Does the group generally understand the reasons for a GSR? IGR? Grapevine rep? Do these representatives regularly report to the group on the status of their areas of responsibility? Does the treasurer report at each meeting on the status of funds? Are 7th tradition funds distributed regularly? What percentage of funds are sent to Central Office? GSO? Area 93 (the new Area)? The appropriate District (24, 28, Gold Coast)? Are funds distributed at all? Does your group always have candy, cakes, doughnuts, coffee, etc., but can't find funds for Central Office, GSO, Area, and District? Does your group budget for large annual expenses like insurance?

Is there a literature person designated? Is literature available to all members? Newcomers? Are Meeting Directories readily

available? Are they provided free for newcomers? Others?

Do meetings start and end on time? Does the leader have control of the meeting? Are there any restrictions placed on sharing? Time limits? Topic restrictions? How are dual addictions handled? Is a directory with phone numbers handed to newcomers? Is there a list of available temporary sponsors maintained?

Does the meeting have regular greeters with a commitment? Does the membership freely participate in greeting newcomers? Is the sharing done in such a manner to include all or is it restricted to certain people? Are the leaders for meetings picked in such a way that all get a chance to participate?

Each group or meeting can have far different answers to these questions, based on the time of the meeting, the location, the number of participants, etc. A small group may have one person to handle several functions because of the small size; the important first consideration is to have each of the jobs handled, and to spread the responsibilities amongst as many people as people as possible so that participation is maximized. How does your group or meeting stack up. You may send the results of your poll to Central Office, Attn: The Tradition, or you may simply discuss it amongst yourselves - the important thing is to talk about it in the hopes of examining the health or robustness of your group. We need always be alert to improvement in carrying the message.

Keep Coming Back.....

For more information about taking a group inventory or how an AA group/meeting functions please consult pamphlet P-16 **THE AA GROUP**, available at Central Office or can be read online At:
http://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p16_theaagroup.pdf



NOTE: Members in service positions qualify for a FREE Newsletter*

Mail Subscription Order Form

The TRADITION

☐ Yes! Enclosed is my \$5.00 check for 12 Monthly Mailed Issues

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Name _____

Service Position _____ Phone _____

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City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

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321 No. Aviator St. Suite 115, Camarillo, CA 93010



***NOTE—FREE SUBSCRIPTION: TO ALL MEMBERS IN SERVICE POSITIONS:** Meeting Secretaries, Intergroup Representatives and GSR's who register with Central Office, will automatically receive *The Tradition* each month at no charge. If you'd like to receive a free copy in the mail, please submit this subscription form and note the service position you are now filling. *Stay informed, order now!*

MY VISIT TO AKRON - Erik N.

Like all faithful that make their pilgrimage to Mecca for Muslims and Jerusalem for Jews and Christians, it was only appropriate for this faithful recovering Alcoholic to make his to the home of AA in Akron, Ohio. Akron can be a pretty ho hum city but not for an AA member. It was Mother's Day weekend, which is the occasion of Bill and Dr. Bob's first meeting at Henrietta Seiberling's gate house. My son had loaned me his SUV for the trip from Virginia; with the AC cranking and the seat warmer on for my back, I was able to make Akron in time for an evening meeting. Approaching the meeting a gentleman was outside having a cigarette, I introduced myself saying I was from Ventura, CA. He said great, you are my speaker tonight. I said "Whoa, don't you want a resume?" He said that his speaker was in jail and "You are here so you are my speaker." What a way to start, Bill D (#3) was the first speaker there 65 years before. After my pitch Jim, the chairman of the group, handed me a signed certificate that I had spoken at the Dreaden group in Akron Ohio, which had also had been signed on the back by the group -definitely a great souvenir. The meeting chairman, Jim, also informed me that he had just taken over Akron Archives and insisted I drop by on Saturday for a complete tour.

Saturday morning started with the 6AM meeting at the St. Thomas Hospital where so many alcoholics had been treated by Dr. Bob and Sister Ignacia. I was the only one raising my hand as a visitor so I figured I had the town to myself. I also learned it is important to say "I'm a friend of Dr. Bob" when in Akron. At the hospital I visited the Chapel dedicated to Sister Ignacia for her service, which is rare that a nun gets recognition. At 9AM, I was at Central Office which also includes Archives. Here I was provided with a map with historical points of interest regarding AA from its beginning. With GPS in my phone, it was easy to find my way around including local AA meetings. No one was available at Archives except one gentleman who was to go to an Archives business/breakfast meeting which I asked to join him. What a treat because at that meeting Gale, who ran Archives for 30 years, was present. Gale was also responsible for purchasing Dr. Bob's house. I mentioned I was a Taoist/Buddhist, and when we got to archives she gave me a pre-conference pamphlet of Dr. Bob's making that mentioned Buddhism as a great substitute for the 12 steps. By then Jim had arrived and I spent the early afternoon getting a personal tour of Akron AA history. My favorite room was the Flying Blind Room which depicted AA at its beginning. No one knew what was going on and that was me when I first arrived at AA.

Next was Dr. Bob's house, highlighting my pilgrimage. I had previously called numerous AA friends and mentioned to them that I was going to speak to Dr. Bob on my visit to Akron. I asked if there was any message they would like for me to give, everyone in unison said that I should thank him. Arriving at Dr. Bob's and getting the nickel tour was awesome, to say the least, especially where he used to keep his stash and hiding his empties. They sure make you feel welcome. Now, how was I going to thank Dr. Bob? I noticed visitors were going upstairs to Bob's daughter Susan's room. On her

Continued on page 3



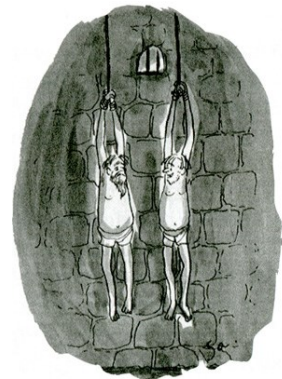
The Humor Column

"We're Not a Glum Lot"

An old man stood up in a meeting and said that he hadn't FOUND IT NECESSARY to take a drink since July 1, 1956. Another man stood up and said you old liar, I saw you last night and you were as drunk as Cooter Brown. The first old man said your right I was drunk last night but IT WASN'T NECESSARY.

Wife sent me out shopping and said I should buy something to make her look pretty. So I got 2 fifths of scotch and a case of beer - divorce is final tomorrow.

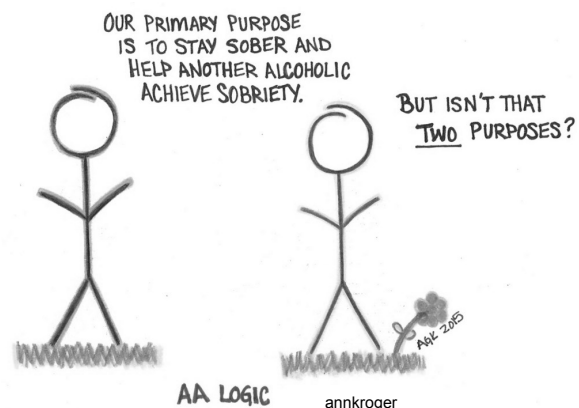
When it came to Step 9, making direct amends to people I'd offended. I asked my sponsor if I couldn't just take the easy way out and send these people a letter? He replied 'did you offend them by letter?'



Hey, on the bright side, I am 24 hours sober.
AA Grapevine

An alcoholic was looking for a parking space and he was late for a meeting. He circled and circled but there were no parking spaces to be found. Finally he cried out, "God, please, please help me find a parking space!" Just then a car pulled out of a space right in front of him. "Never mind," said the alcoholic, "One just opened up."

How many Al-Anons does it take to screw in a lightbulb? None. They just detach and let it screw itself.



THE 2016 BINGO FUNDRAISER FOR THE 38TH ANNUAL VCAAC NEEDS YOUR HELP. WE ARE LOOKING FOR DONATIONS FROM AA MEMBERS AND AA GROUPS FOR ITEMS TO BE RAFFLED OFF DURING THE BINGO FUNDRAISER, TO BE HELD ON JULY 30, 2016.

WHAT WE NEED ARE ITEMS TO BE RAFFLED IN BASKETS OR TO BE RAFFLED INDIVIDUALLY (DEPENDING ON VALUE) SUCH AS:

- TICKETS FOR ENTERTAINMENT OR SPORTING EVENTS
- GIFT CERTIFICATES
- ITEMS FOR CHILDREN OR BABIES
- CANDY OR OTHER FOOD ITEMS
- AA RELATED MATERIALS
- GARDENING ITEMS
- BBQ ITEMS
- SERVICES PROVIDED BY PROFESSIONALS SUCH AS HAIR STYLISTS, MASSAGE, LAWN SERVICES, ETC.
- ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE IN A GIFT BASKET
- ETC, ETC, ETC.

IN ADDITION, YOU OR YOUR GROUP CAN MAKE YOUR OWN GIFT BASKET FOR DONATION TO THIS FUN FILLED FUNDRAISING EVENT!!!

ANY SUPPORT IS APPRECIATED, EVEN JUST EMPTY BASKETS. FOR QUESTIONS, AND TO DONATE ITEMS, PLEASE CONTACT:

MARY M. - FUNDRAISING CHAIR 805 404-1496
or email marymyersphotography@mac.com

KARENA. - RAFFLE CO-CHAIR 805 558-6480



MEETING INFO

New

Tuesday

11th Step Prayer & Meditation 7:00AM

3639 Los Posas Rd. Bldg E. Room 124

Changed

Monday

Women In the Solution [W] 7:30PM

King of Glory Lutheran Church

2500 Borchard Rd

Time changed to 7:30PM

Wednesday

Attitude Adjustment [C] 6:45AM

Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

588 Camino Manzanitas (Room 6)

This meeting now uses Daily Reflections

Closed

The Tuesday night Fillmore Big Book Study at 7:00pm has gone dark.



Districts, Area & AAWS CONTACTS

District 13

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 166

Ventura, CA 93002

Gold Coast Districts (9 & 12)

PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 132

Camarillo, Ca. 93011

District 24

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 843

Simi Valley, CA 93065

District 28

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 3432

Thousand Oaks, CA 91359

Area 93

Mailing Address:

PMB #140

606 Alamo Pintado #3

Solvang, CA 93463

AAWS

P.O. Box 459

Grand Central Station

New York, NY 10163

(212)870-3400


**MAJOR AA EVENTS
Around America**
Golf Tournament

April 22, 2016
Soule Park Golf Course
Ojai, California
More info:
TonyK1945@gmail.com

31st Annual Round Up

April 22-24, 2016
Oxnard Performing Arts Center
800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, California.
www.vcaaroundup.org

28th Annual Big Island Bash

May 6-8 2016
Kailua-Kona Hawaii
www.bigislandbash.com

32nd Tri-State Round-Up

May 19-22
Riverside Hotel, Laughlin NV
www.tristate-roundup.com

37th Women to Women Workshop

June 3-5
Mount St. Mary College, LA
www.womantowomanla.org

Desert Pow-Wow

June 9-11
Indian Wells, CA
www.desertpowwow.com

The Ventura County Central Office

has listings and flyers of many other
AA related events in Southern
California and throughout the
United States.
Call 805-389-1444 or drop by to see us even if it's only for a
cup of coffee.
www.aaventuracounty.org


April 2016 Calendar

Wed 6th 6:00 pm District 13 GSR Meeting @ Ventura Center
for Spiritual Living @ 101 S. Laurel Ventura

Thu 7th 7:00 pm Inter-group Board Meeting @ Central Office

Fri 8th 6:00 pm H&I Board Mtg @ Central Office

Sat 9th 10:00 am Newsletter Stuff and Fold @ Central Office

Sun 10th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office
5.30 pm H & I Committee Mtg @ Central Office

Wed 13th 7:00 pm Inter-group Meeting @ The Buck
321 N Aviator Suite 111, Camarillo

Tue 19th 7:00 pm GSR District 28 Meeting @
King of Glory Lutheran Church
2500 Borchard Road, Newbury Park

Wed 20th 7:00 pm Gold Coast Districts General Service Mtg
The Buck 321 N Aviator Ste 111 Camarillo

Thu 21st 7:00 pm District 24 General Service Meeting
United Methodist Church 2394 Erringer Rd
Rm # 10, Simi Valley

Sun 24th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg @ Central Office

April 25th Last day to submit items to the May Newsletter


May 2016 Calendar

Wed 4th 6:00 pm District 13 GSR Meeting @ Ventura Center
for Spiritual Living @ 101 S. Laurel Ventura

Thu 5th 7:00 pm Inter-group Board Meeting @ Central Office

Fri 6th 6:00 pm H&I Board Mtg @ Central Office

Sun 8th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office
5.30 pm H & I Committee Mtg @ Central Office

Wed 11th 7:00 pm Inter-group Meeting @ The Buck
321 N Aviator Suite 111, Camarillo

Sat 14th 10:00 am Newsletter Stuff and Fold @ Central Office

Tue 17th 7:00 pm GSR District 28 Meeting @
King of Glory Lutheran Church
2500 Borchard Road, Newbury Park

Wed 18th 7:00 pm Gold Coast Districts General Service Mtg
The Buck 321 N Aviator Ste 111 Camarillo

Thu 19th 7:00 pm District 24 General Service Meeting
United Methodist Church 2394 Erringer Rd
Rm # 10, Simi Valley

Sun 22nd 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg @ Central Office

May 23rd Last day to submit items to the June Newsletter

A Review of Tradition # 4

**Each group should be autonomous
except in matters affecting other
groups or AA as a whole.**

1. Do I insist that there are only a few right ways of doing things in AA?
2. Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of AA? Of nearby groups? Of Loners in Alaska? Of Internationalists miles from port? Of a group in Rome or El Salvador?
3. Do I put down other members' behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?
4. Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
5. Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths—his lengths, not mine—to stay sober?
6. Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?

Living Step # 4**Made a searching and fearless moral
inventory of ourselves**

When we decide that we want what other recovering members have found, and are ready to face our oversized egos, we become ready to start on our personal moral housecleaning. Step #4 is one of the action steps that can help set us free from the wreckage of our past which binds us to resentments, fear, envy and the thoughts that we can somehow escape the emotions of our past negative actions. In direct terms, Step #4 allows us to become ready to totally "come clean and face our past as it really is." The freedom that recovering members gain from meeting those old buried secrets head-on, in many cases is a life changing and a freeing experience as we then move on to step #5 and share our inventory with our Higher Power and our sponsor or another human being. Ask your God for guidance, work with your sponsor or a step study group and don't procrastinate. Step four can be emotionally challenging, but the results and the freedom we gain in God's time are often awesome.

Step #4 requires that we put our pen to paper as suggested in the Big Book of AA, on pg. 64.

My Visit to Akron continued ...

bed was a Big Book opened to page 62, a newcomer and sponsor would come into the room and kneel at the bed side and do the third step prayer together, just like Dr. Bob would do with newcomers. Now I had found my meeting place as I knelt at the bed and said "THANK YOU DR. BOB" as I had promised myself and others. A great spiritual feeling overwhelmed me. What a day! Sunday was a morning AA breakfast meeting before hitting the road, which included lots of smiles, handshakes, gratitude and a great breakfast. I was just glowing with joy leaving town, a great weekend. To be continued, on my second pilgrimage I brought 3 AA pilgrims with me. LOL
- Erik N. 2/9/77

To admit you are wrong today --
is simply saying you are wiser than yesterday.

Seven days without a meeting makes one weak

I don't thank God for opening the gates of
Heaven and letting me in, I thank God for
opening the gates of Hell and letting me out.

Remember: It's OK to look back, but don't stare.

I am the black sheep of the family. I came to Alcoholics Anonymous and found the rest of the herd.

Just because the monkey is off your back,
doesn't mean the circus has left town.

God does what is Impossible --
After I've done what is Possible.

You could always count on me doing
the one thing you didn't count on me
doing!

Life is 10% what you make it
and 90% how you take it.

We are only as big as the
smallest thing that make us
angry.

High bottoms have trap doors.

If you want what you never had, you
have to do what you've never done.



GRAPEVINE CORNER The Meeting In Print

By Michele B. of Newbury Park

Twelve ways to use the AA Grapevine to strengthen and insure your sobriety

4. IT IS YOUR PERSONAL REPORTER.

How is AA developing in prisons and hospitals? What is the General Service Conference and what does it mean to the individual member? How about AA overseas? The Grapevine brings worldwide AA to your living room, keeps you up-to-date all the time.

At Wit's End

Early Bird Prayer

Dear Higher Power, so far today I've done all right. I haven't gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish or overindulgent. I'm very thankful for the kind of day you have given me. But in a few minutes, Higher Power I'm going to get out of bed, and from then on I'm going to need a lot more help! Amen.

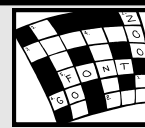
Oldie but goodie

"I really want to thank you for sticking with me for all the years of drinking and the first five years of my sobriety" said the AA member to her spouse on her fifth-year anniversary. "But I'm curious. If I started drinking again, would you still love me?" After pondering the question for about a tenth of a second, her husband said, "Of course I'd still love you, I'd miss you, but I'd still love you!"

Recycle Your
Copies of
**The
Grapevine
Magazine**



The Grapevine is timeless! Articles written ten or twenty years ago are still fresh and inspiring. Central Office provides a box for collecting back issues of The Grapevine. These issues are picked up by H & I and re-circulated in institutions and jails. So . . . before discarding your back issues, bring them in for use by another recovering alcoholic! *Recycle and help spread recovery!*



Recovery Word Search Puzzle

R	Q	C	N	Y	W	B	C	B	A	V	P	K	M	V
U	O	E	R	O	B	R	M	L	V	V	L	C	P	L
M	F	C	H	O	N	B	E	V	Q	X	S	I	H	B
T	R	Z	K	F	W	X	E	V	A	L	I	D	O	R
W	Z	B	B	E	A	L	E	G	J	D	L	S	I	K
I	O	N	P	N	F	W	A	C	Z	G	K	O	K	S
I	F	B	D	Y	J	E	D	N	N	M	W	F	N	I
S	P	E	N	C	E	R	L	U	D	E	O	O	Q	Y
R	R	S	N	J	D	N	J	L	W	F	R	J	P	A
A	T	T	E	I	R	N	E	H	E	M	T	A	I	D
Q	B	H	N	A	F	X	N	T	N	R	H	T	L	G
N	Z	A	Q	U	K	W	O	U	H	F	A	F	U	C
Y	Z	N	B	B	D	S	X	R	I	N	S	I	O	L
E	Y	K	H	O	N	L	L	T	G	J	J	E	R	U
B	M	Y	T	J	F	T	Z	I	K	K	P	P	E	H

Alexander	Hank	Rockefeller
Clarence	Henrietta	Rowland
Ebby	Ignatia	Ruth
Fitz	Jung	Silkworth
Fosdick	Lois	Spencer



RESPONSIBILITY DECLARATION

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA to always to be there. And for that; I am Responsible.



AA BIRTHDAY CLUB Celebrate Sobriety

CELEBRATE YOUR AA BIRTHDAY HERE!

Celebrate your annual sobriety anniversary with us. To participate in this tradition, just send in the form provided in this column or submit it to vcaaco@verizon.net with your Birthday information. *Member's birthdays submitted will be published in this section the following month.* Join the winners and celebrate your recovery.

March & Previous AA Birthdays

HAPPY SOBRIETY BIRTHDAY

Last month Bill J was listed as having celebrated 24 years - our apologies he has 34 years!!



Verlon M - 34 Years

Keep On Sharing Your Recovery From
Alcoholism With
Other Alcoholics Who Still Suffer.
CONGRATULATIONS!

Birthday Club Listing For:

Name _____

City _____

Sobriety Date _____ Years _____

Voluntary Donation Amount \$ _____

Please mail to:

Ventura County Central Service Office
321 N. Aviator Street, Suite 115
Camarillo, CA 93010



CENTRAL OFFICE Phone Call Activity

Meeting Info	526
Twelve Step Calls	62
Other Twelve Steps Programs	24
Activities	38
Directions to Office	23
Other Type Calls	493
TOTAL	1166



AA TRIVIA QUESTION Of The Month

APRIL QUESTION:

In the chapter *We Agnostics* who is the Celebrated American statesman who said "Let look at the record."?

MARCH ANSWER:

What was the name of William James' book that Ebby gave to Bill?

The Varieties of Religious Experience

Congratulations to: Mary DJ, Michele B., Steven H., and David B. who submitted the correct answer. Michelle and David also answered last month's question

Answers will be published the following month. Mail your answer to:
Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.,
321 N. Aviator Street, Suite 115, Camarillo, Ca. 93010.
The correct answer will win a free one-year subscription to this publication. If the winner already has a subscription, a gift subscription will be awarded to another member — winner's choice.

NEWSLETTER STUFF-N-FOLD GROUP

Friends of Bill W., Paul H, Rosalie, Don, Allison, Linda, Bill C, Jessie and Visitors

INTERGROUP BOARD:

Chairperson	Wayne W. Ventura
Vice Chairperson	Scott W. Simi Valley
Secretary	Jan K. Ventura
Treasurer	Mike B. Simi Valley
Member at large # 1	Joe N.
Member at large # 2	Craig S
Member at large # 3	Michelle C.

SPECIAL PAID WORKERS

Matthew C., Dick M.

OFFICE VOLUNTEER STAFF:

Don B., Skip, Peter M., Mike A., Azusa S., Dale S., S., Robin S., Steve F. Ron. G.

Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.

321 N. Aviator Street, Suite 115
Camarillo, Ca. 93010
24 Hour Telephones
(805) 389-1444 - (800) 990-7550 Fax (805) 389-2912
E-Mail vcaaco@verizon.net
Website: www.aaventuracounty.org
Office Hours:
Monday thru Friday 9:30 am - 6 pm
Saturday 10:00 am - 2 pm
CLOSED SUNDAY