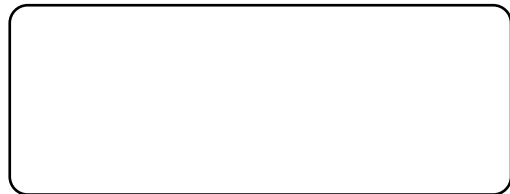


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Volume 35 — Issue 2 **February 2015**

THE TRADITION

Monthly Newsletter of the Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.

Features ..

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Plus

Flyers Inside

INSANITY

Monday morning and the alarm goes off – time to go to work. Rolling out of bed a wave of nausea passes through your body. You rush to the bathroom, turn on the shower and try to throw-up quietly so your wife and kids won't hear you. You start to shake and sweat runs down your cheek. All you can think about is taking a drink. Not again! Not today! Tears swell in your eyes.

Struggling to put down a few pieces of toast you don't know if it's going to stay down. Trying to remember what you did the night before, all you can think about is taking a drink. Concentrate damn it! It's time to be a dad – your son needs to go to preschool. You struggle to get him in his car seat and you tell yourself you can make it until the end of the day, but there you are locking him in the car as you run into the liquor store. The thoughts run through your mind **"He's too young, he won't notice, he won't remember, it's just an airplane bottle, can't be caught driving drunk with your child in the car, child endangerment, I can't do it, I won't do it, I HAVE TO DO IT..."** and then you do it. As the combination of 100 proof vodka and orange juice flows down your throat you try not to throw it back up. Waiting until it settles, you continue you on and drop him off – hoping the teacher once again doesn't smell the booze on your breath.

Before slipping into work you pull over and throw-up on the side of the road – so much for your relief. You repeat to yourself **"NO MORE ALCOHOL!"** You see your friends that you partied with the night before and they all seem fine. You wonder why you're different. How could they drink like you did and not feel like you feel? By lunch you're planning on how to skip out of work early so you can find the relief you need.

Racing out of work you head straight to the liquor store. No need for a mixer you raise the bottle to your lips. Relief comes instantly. You drink to relieve the pain. You drink to relieve the cravings. You promised yourself you wouldn't drink and here you are again. Day after day you face this battle. The alcohol always wins. In light of all of the negative consequences; in light of the physical discomfort and the sincere desire to stop – you drink.

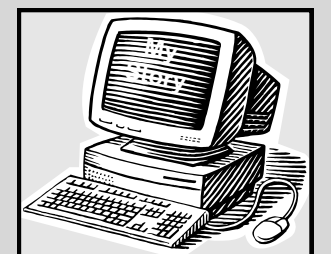
This is the insanity of alcoholism. This the insanity that the steps relieve.

**Send Us
Your Story!**

**What it was like!
What Happened!
What it is like Now!**

We encourage our Tradition readers to share their own experiences and recovery with other members with your personal 500 to 600 word story. Maybe something that's happened in recovery that may be helpful to others. Or an experience that happened that shows how the program has worked for you. It's an effective way to help other members who may be inspired by your story. Use your name in the by-line or be anonymous, it's up to you. It's one-to-one sharing in print, any time you want to read it. So start writing today, **AND SHARE YOUR RECOVERY STORY!**

E-MAIL Your recovery story to:
VCAACO@VERIZON.NET



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**

☐ **RENEWAL** ☐ **NEW FREE SUBSCRIPTION** Date _____

Name _____

Service Position _____ Phone _____

Address _____

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**LATEST
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+ Events
+ Meetings
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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!**

Info Lines ..

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

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Service Office Inc.
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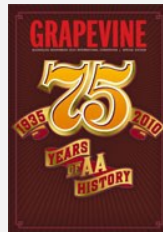
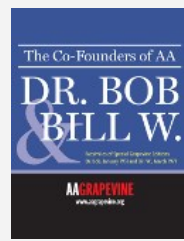
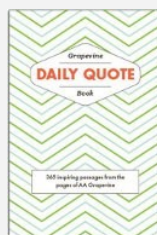
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(800) 990-7550
Fax (805) 389-2912
E-Mail
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"Wake up! The four horsemen are here."



NEW ITEMS AVAILABLE AT CENTRAL OFFICE



The Humor Column

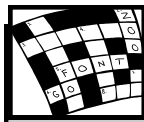
"We're Not a Glum Lot"

The speaker was going on and on—A man in the fifth row stood up and walked out. AS the speaker was winding up, the man returned. After the meeting, the speaker asked the man where he went. "I went for a haircut," he said. "A haircut? Why didn't you get a haircut before the meeting started?" The man replied "I didn't need a haircut before the meeting started."

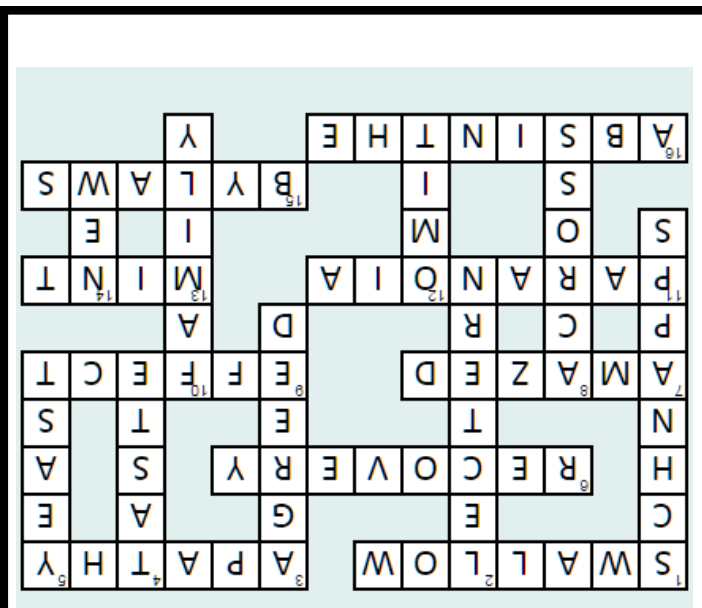
Q: How many sponsors does it take to screw in a lightbulb?

A: Sponsors can't change lightbulbs. The most they can do is offer guidance based on their own experience, strength and hope. If the lightbulb wants to change and is willing to go to any lengths, then a higher power can change the lightbulb.

"I really want to thank you for staying with me through all my years of drinking and these first 5 years of sobriety" said a man to his wife. He then asked "Would you still love me if I started to drink again?" After she thought about it she said "Yes I would love you. I would miss you, but I would still love you"



Crossword Puzzle ANSWER





MAJOR AA EVENTS Around America

**Ventura County
AA CONVENTION**
Planning Committee
2nd Sunday of the Month
4:00 PM
Central Office
321 N. Aviator St. #115
Camarillo, CA 93010

Santa Barbara
Traditions Breakfast
March 21, 2015
9:30 AM - Noon
Goleta Community Center
5679 Hollister Ave
Goleta, CA 93117

Yuma Roundup
February 20-22, 2015
Yuma, AZ
www.yumaroundup.org

2015 International AA Convention
July 2-5, 2015
Atlanta Georgia
www.aa.org

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



Feb. 2015 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
4:00 pm VCAAC Planning Meeting
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 22th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg @ Central Office

Feb 23rd Last day to submit items to the March Newsletter



Mar. 2015 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
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Sun 22nd 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg @ Central Office

Mar 23 Last day to submit items to the April Newsletter

A Review of Tradition #2

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees, and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers?
2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with the AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibilities?
3. Do I look for credit in my AA jobs? Praise for my AA ideas?
4. Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
5. Although I have been sober for a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
6. In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?

◆ Poets' Corner ◆

A Thousand Steps in Hell

Nothing could stop the fire inside
It burnt rampant through my soul,
It seared or melted everything I touched
And it scorched everyone I knew.

At times the heat was unbearable
I came so close to that final goodbye,
But a thousand steps in the depths of hell
Was better then my option to die.

Eventually I could no longer stand the heat
There was a choice I had to make,
Keep fanning the flames that were burning me
Or do the action you suggested I take.

Finally I learned not to feed the fire
And it no longer has control over me,
Though I walked a thousand steps in hell
It only took twelve steps for me to get free.

Rick L.

Living Step # 2

“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

The moment they read Step two, most A.A. newcomers are confronted with a dilemma, sometimes a serious one. How often have we heard them cry out, “Look what you people have done to us! You have convinced us that we are alcoholics and that our lives are unmanageable. Having reduced us to a state of absolute helplessness, you now declare that none but a Higher Power can remove our obsession. Some of us won’t believe in God, others can’t, and still others who do believe that God exists have no faith whatever He will perform this miracle. Yes, you have us over the barrel, all right ... but where do we go from here.

Therefore, Step two is the rallying point for all of us. Whether agnostic, atheist, or former believer, we can stand together on this Step. True humility and an open mind can lead us to faith, and every A.A. meeting is an assurance that God will restore us to sanity if we rightly relate ourselves to Him.

Step Two

At times I thought I was superman
Arrows and bullets would bounce off my chest,
My thinking was completely indestructible
But my mind was in cardiac arrest.
I thought I was the alpha omega
I wasn't lacking any vanity,
But my disease was more cunning and baffling
And I was losing my sanity.
I had to find a Higher Power
That could help restore my life for me,
I had to put my cape in the closet
If I really wanted to be free.

Rick L.



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.

2 - IT IS AN IDEAL GIFT

For a member or friend, few gifts could be more appropriate or helpful than a subscription to the monthly AA Grapevine magazine.

As a gift, the Grapevine is a continuing reminder of your thoughtfulness, a continuing source of pleasure and inspiration to the recipient.

At Wit's End

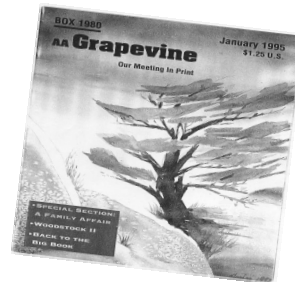
An **AI-Anon** and an **AA member** went on a camping trip together. Each had been active members of their programs for twenty-three years and were enjoying themselves tremendously. Then night came, and they went to sleep in their tent. About three in the morning, the AI-Anon woke the alcoholic and asked, "What do you see?" "Why, I see a sky full of brilliant stars and gorgeous moonlight," the alcoholic replied. "How great is our Higher Power for creating such a beautiful night. What do you see?: The AI-Anon answered, "I see that somebody has stolen our tent."

Heard at Meetings

You know you're a recovering alcoholic if:

- ♦ Emails from your friends say HALT in the subject header.
- ♦ Your idea of a smooth opening line is "I really liked what you shared."
- ♦ You don't know the last names of most of your friends.

Recycle Your Copies of The Grapevine Magazine

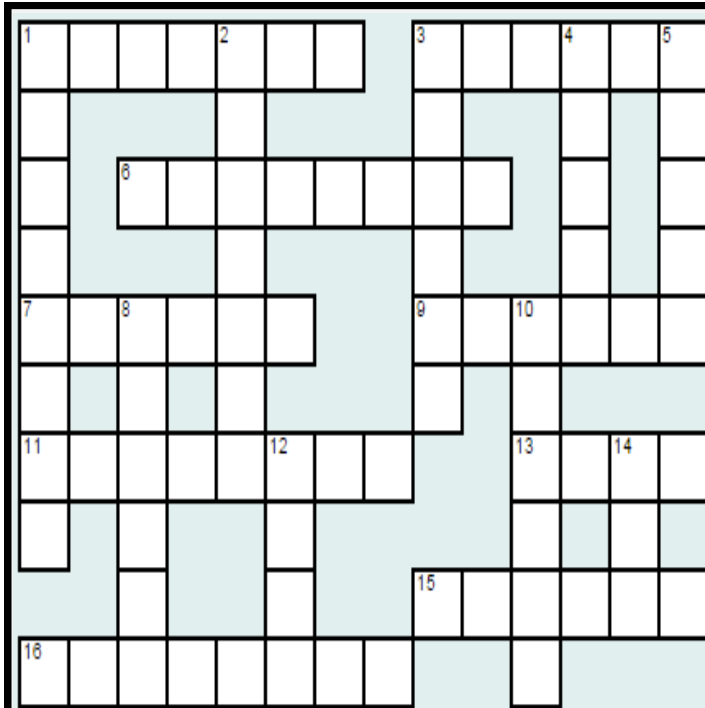


The Grapevine is timeless! Articles written ten or twenty years ago are still fresh and inspiring. Central Office provides a box for collecting back issues of The Grapevine. These issues are picked up by H & I and re-circulated in institutions and jails. So . . .before discarding your back issues, bring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



Crossword Puzzle

Recovery Word Puzzle



ACROSS

- 1 Hard to ____
- 3 Lack of interest
- 6 ____, Unity and Service
- 7 ____ before we are half way
- 9 Like the ____
- 11 Irrational fear
- 13 ____ Julep
- 15 Rules adopted by an organization
- 16 Strong green liqueur

DOWN

- 1 Peppermint ____
- 2 Often found at a speaker meeting
- 3 He ____ he was a real alcoholic
- 4 Bad ____
- 5 Needed to ferment
- 8 I pushed a drink ____ the table.
- 10 The ____ Afterward
- 12 Leave out
- 14 We had a ____ Employer

Answer on page 2



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.

February and Previous AA Birthdays

HAPPY SOBRIETY BIRTHDAY —

Linda T. - 1
Ventura

Lolanda B - 3
Oxnard

SKIP H - 33
Moorpark



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	297
Twelve Step Calls	59
Other Twelve Steps Programs	27
Activities	51
Directions to Office	26
Other Type Calls	305
TOTAL	765



AA TRIVIA QUESTION

Of The Month

FEBRUARY QUESTION:

Q Who received the 25,000,000th copy of the Big Book?

JANUARY ANSWER:

A What solemn occasion occurred on Bill & Lois' wedding anniversary?

Bill died on their 53rd wedding anniversary

Congratulations to Steve H. and Michele B. for submitting the correct answer.

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, Eddie and Visitors

INTERGROUP BOARD:

Chairperson	Martin F. Oxnard
Vice Chairperson	Bob S. Thousand Oaks
Secretary	Scott W. Simi Valley
Treasurer	Lynn S. Simi Valley
Member at large # 1	Wayne W. Ventura
Member at large # 2	Jan K. Ventura
Member at large # 3	Vickie L. Camarillo

SPECIAL PAID WORKERS

Matthew C., Dick M.

OFFICE VOLUNTEER STAFF:

Don B., Robert S., Peter M., Robin S., Dora E., Linda T., Azusa S., Mary H., Eric K., Dale S., Dan M., Malia S.

Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.

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Camarillo, Ca. 93010
24 Hour Telephones
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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