

Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.
321 No. Aviator Street, Suite # 115
Camarillo, CA. 93010

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Volume 36 — Issue 1 **JANUARY 2016**

THE TRADITION

Monthly Newsletter of the Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.

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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

2016 starts without a man that I, and many others loved very much; a man who served the Ventura County Intergroup for many years and was the Chair of the Board on multiple occasions. In his memory I would like to reprint a memo he wrote in 2004, as one of his terms as Chair had just concluded.

INTERGROUP MEMO by Marty M.

This month marks the end of my tenure as Chair of Intergroup for the Ventura County area. I feel compelled to share a bit of how much this has meant to me and how much I've learned – both from this position and from my fellow Board Members. There is no way a Chairperson can hold this office without good Board Members and I am most grateful to them for their participation.

One of the first thoughts about this that comes to mind is the word “commitment.” This simple word is sometimes so overstated and most misunderstood in the rooms of AA. The Board has held me accountable, and in that, has made me grow up. This is as it should be, I think, in our home groups. The individual takes on the commitment and the group holds the individual accountable and helps them grow up. If the Board had “covered” for me, my chances of growth would have been diminished. When the Board held me accountable to do the things I told them I'd do, they treated me like an adult – a role I hadn't learned how to play in 34 years of growing physically and 15 years of drinking. So, they held me accountable. And I love them for that.

A second thought that comes to mind is the Concepts. These are located in the beloved Service Manual of Alcoholics Anonymous and are seldom seen by members of AA. Heck! I used to tell people to read the Service Manual when the Big Book couldn't put them to sleep! I should've read it myself before making such rash and unreasonable statements! What the Board taught me about the Concepts is that they are as alive as the Traditions – another body of work that is seldom referred to in AA, except to state “principles before personalities” at the end of the reading of Traditions, as if that held some magic spell over all who uttered the incantation! But the Concepts, I learned is how AA works. I once stated I never wanted to get back into the politics of AA. I think I'd just walked out of a GSR meeting – something I think I'd like to re-visit someday. Anyway, the Board, again, was coerced into doing an inventory of itself, and the Board threw itself into this task with a diligence I can only be proud of. Out of this inventory, they taught me the value of three Rights: the Right of Decision – which we give to our trusted servants and which

is not really understood until you read it in Concept III, the Right of Participation – which insures that each member of AA is duly represented and that no one is superior to anyone else in the voting process of AA, and, last, the Right of Appeal, which includes the Right of Petition. This last one, for me, has become the most important. The Board, thru this Right, has taught me the value of the minority opinion. It has taught me to keep my mouth shut so that my mind can open up so that my own biased or misguided opinions will not interfere with the truth coming through. This Right of Appeal and Petition insures that each member of AA not only has a voice but has a built in forum to express that voice. This Right, along with the others, carries with it a responsibility.

How many times have I come into meetings, and shouted out “that's against Traditions!” when I see something that doesn't appeal to the way I think AA should be run? This Right of Appeal, provided I inform my own conscience through reading the Traditions and the Concepts, has given each of us the voice we so desperately

Continued on page 2

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 _____

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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!*

INTERGROUP MEMO by Marty M. continued

wanted when we were out there drinking and didn't have the soapbox to stand on. This Right of Petition means that, even though I may be the only one in the room who thinks a certain way, I can, without recrimination, without rebuttal, without any resentment building on my part, can express what I got out of the Tradition or Concept or group conscience and I have the RESPONSIBILITY to express it. It means the good of the whole rests one each and every one of us. It means that though the whole world believes the world is flat, that one voiced opinion might speak up and help others see that the world is indeed not flat and not necessarily a perfect ball but a shape that helps each part operate within its sphere of existence. It means there are principles out there that I've yet to discover – and I won't discover them unless I listen to the minority opinion. It means, once again, to set my will aside to listen to the thinking of other people. It means listening and uncovering what the principles of our beloved and life-saving program really are! It means AA is alive and well in our community!

And, lastly, I've been taught and, hopefully, learned the Spirit of Co-operation. This Intergroup Board has taught me that my opinion is useless unless I listen to the opinions

the good of the whole comes before what I think is good and, in that, I will be taken care of. It means, for me, another beginning to an end of more isolation.

My fellow Soberians, Ventura County is the heartland of sobriety. Ventura County is where I got sober and where I learned the Traditions, where I did my Steps, and where I finally started learning how to be just another Bozo on a bus full of fellow Bozos, each of us helping the other make it through the tough times with a smile, a loving pat on the back, a hug when appropriate, and a linking of arms and giving to each other what it is we have. This is where I learned I cannot keep what I have until I give it away.

Intergroup, for me, was an area I could give it back. The Intergroup Board has taken a special place in my heart and taken a hold of me and helped me move on when I wanted to stay put and stagnant. I love each and every one of them for that. So, again, I've gotten through the "politics of AA." And, if this is the way the politics of AA is run, I want to be a part of it every time.

Thank you for letting me be of some small service, for I've gotten more out of this than I could ever have put into it.

With love, Marty M – outgoing Intergroup Chair



The Humor Column

"We're Not a Glum Lot"

A drunk was proudly showing off his new apartment to a couple of his friends from the bar late one night, and led the way to his bedroom where there was a big brass gong and a mallet. "What's that big brass gong?" one of the guests asked. "It's not a gong. It's a talking clock," the drunk replied. "A talking clock? Seriously?" asked his astonished friend. "Yup," replied the drunk. "How's it work?" the friend asked, squinting at it. "Watch," the drunk replied. He picked up the mallet, gave the gong an ear-shattering pound, and stepped back. The three stood looking at one another for a moment. Suddenly, someone on the other side of the wall screamed, "You idiot...it's three-fifteen in the morning!"

.....

A man left for work one Friday afternoon. But, being payday, instead of going home after his shift ended, he stayed out the entire weekend partying with the boys and spending his entire pay-check. When he finally appeared at home, Sunday night, he was confronted by a very angry wife and was barraged for nearly two hours with a tirade befitting his actions. Finally his wife stopped the nagging and simply said to him. How would you like it if you didn't see me for two or three days?" To which he replied. "That would be just fine with me." Monday went by and he didn't see his wife. Tuesday and Wednesday came and went with the same results. Come Thursday, the swelling went down just enough where he could finally see her a little out of the corner of his swollen eyes.

.....

Joe died, leaving a will that provided \$30,000 for an elaborate funeral, which his widow Helen planned. As the last of the visitors departed the service, his widow, Helen, turned to her long time friend Jody and said, "Well, I'm sure Joe would be pleased with his send off." "I'm sure you're right," replied Jody, who then lowered her voice and leaned in close, "How much did this really cost?" "All of it," said Helen. "Thirty thousand dollars." "No!" Jody exclaimed. "I mean, it was very nice, but \$30,000?" Helen replied, "The funeral was \$6,500. I donated \$500 to the church in Joe's name. The wake, food and drinks were another \$500. The rest went for the Memorial Stone." Jody computed quickly. "\$22,500 for a Memorial Stone? My God, how big is it?" Answered Helen "Two and a half carats."

Belonging to the Best Home Group in AA - Bob W.

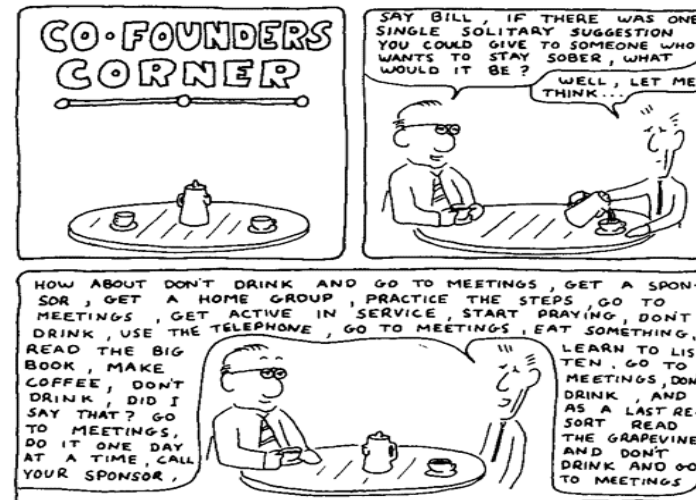
I was two years sober and going to meetings in New Jersey. They taught me about sobriety in many different ways. They taught me about love and service. They taught me about commitment and responsibility. They taught me about "home groups." Don't misunderstand! I got sober here and truly missed the people and the fellowship of AA in Southern California. What I had never seen before were the commitment and the love for a home group.

When these people went to share at another meeting, they would state unequivocally that they were from "the best home group in Alcoholics Anonymous!". According to them, if you could not state the same, then you ought to find yourself a new home group!

They were not telling anybody to leave the home group that they belonged to. They were challenging everybody to make their group the best. They were stating that if they could do it, so could we! We would all work diligently at having the best-behaved group, being the best host group and, of course, bringing the best meetings to other groups. Bringing two speakers and a leader from our group to another did this. We actually brought an entire meeting to another group.

This was done throughout New Jersey and we were always able to hear different speakers tell us about their experience, strength and hope. When we would go to these other meetings, we would always show up with several cars loaded with our group members. We were there to support the speakers from our group and, of course, we had a wonderful time at dinner, listening to "our guys" share at the meeting, and at coffee on the way home. Newcomers always seemed to profit the most from these evenings and were the first to volunteer to go. It was a magical experience.

Today, with the same vigor, I continually commit myself to my "home group." I show up at my group no matter what! I am resolved to attend these meetings as if my sobriety depended on it (and it probably does). I dress appropriately, show proper manners during the meeting, and act as if I might be the only representative of Alcoholics Anonymous that the newcomer might see. I want everyone to know that I belong to "the best group" in AA!



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**

San Fernando Valley AA Convention
January 29-31, 2016
Warner Center Marriot Hotel
Woodland Hills
www.sfvaaconvention.org/

Imperial Valley Roundup
January 29-31, 2016
Lions Recreation Center
225 A St
Brawley, CA 92227
www.area8aa.org/event/2016-valley-imperial-roundup/

**H&I Conference Fundraiser
Speaker & Dinner**
March 12, 2016
5:00 - 7:00 PM
First Christian Church
109 E. Wilshire Ave, Fullerton

Living Serene 2016
March 24-27, 2016
Town & Country Resort
San Diego
www.sandiegospringroundup.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


January 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 Meeting @ Central Office

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

Sat 16th 10:00 am Newsletter Stuff and Fold @ Central Office

Sun 17th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office
5:30 pm H & I Committee Mtg @ Central Office

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

Jan 25th Last day to submit items to the February Newsletter


February 2016 Calendar

Wed 3rd 6:00 pm District 13 GSR Meeting @ Ventura Center
for Spiritual Living @ 101 S. Laurel Ventura

Thu 4th 7:00 pm Inter-group Board Meeting @ Central Office

Fri 5th 6:00 pm H&I Board Mtg @ Central Office

Sun 7th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office
5:30 pm H & I Committee Mtg @ Central Office

Wed 10th 7:00 pm Inter-group Meeting @ The Buck
321 N Aviator Suite 111, Camarillo

Sat 13th 10:00 am Newsletter Stuff and Fold @ Central Office

Tue 16th 7:00 pm GSR District 28 Meeting @
King of Glory Lutheran Church
2500 Borchard Road, Newbury Park

Wed 17th 7:00 pm Gold Coast Districts General Service Mtg
The Buck 321 N Aviator Ste 111 Camarillo

Thu 18th 7:00 pm District 24 General Service Meeting
United Methodist Church 2394 Erringer Rd
Rm # 10, Simi Valley

Sun 21st 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg @ Central Office

Feb 22 Last day to submit items to the March Newsletter

A Review of Tradition # 1

**Our Common welfare should come first;
Personal recovery depends upon AA unity.**

1. Am I in my group, a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other members' inventories?
2. Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with pious preludes such as "just for the sake of discussion," plunge into argument?
3. Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?
4. Do I make competitive AA remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting AA in one place with AA in another?
5. Do I put down some AA activities as if I were superior for not participating in this or that aspect of AA?
6. Am I informed about AA as a whole? Do I support, in every way I can, AA as a whole, or just the parts I understand and approve of?
7. Am I as considerate of AA members as I want them to be of me?
8. Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging and secretly justifying behavior that bristles with hostility?
9. Do I go to enough AA meetings or read enough AA literature to really keep in touch?

Living Step # 1

***"We admitted we were powerless over
alcohol—that our lives had
become unmanageable."***

Who cares to admit complete defeat? Practically no one, of course. Every natural instinct cries out against the idea of personal powerlessness. It is truly awful to admit that, glass in hand, we have warped our minds into such an obsession for destructive drinking that only an act of Providence can remove it from us. No other kind of bankruptcy is like this one. Alcohol, now become the rapacious creditor, bleeds us of all self sufficiency and all will to resist its demands. Once this stark fact is accepted, our bankruptcy as going human concerns is complete.

But upon entering A.A. we soon take quite another view of this absolute humiliation. We perceive that only through utter defeat are we able to take our first steps toward liberation and strength. Our admissions of personal powerlessness finally turn out to be firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built.



Poets' Corner


Thirty Days

From one extreme to the other
Constantly up and down again,
Clear thoughts I try to hold on to
But insane ones usually win.

There is a war going on inside my head
I want to run, I want to hide,
But you told me if I stick it out
Maybe I don't have to die.

I hope these craving's go away
I want to believe what you tell me is true,
I want to lose the obsessions that control my mind
I want the freedom that has been given to you.

Rick L.

Dreams

Look around and you will see
The beauty of your life today,
Give thanks to the God who helped you out
Of that hell where you used to pray.

Stick out your hand to the newcomer's
Greet them with a smile and a gentle hug,
Don't ever forget that fear you felt
When you peeked out of that hole you dug.

Live every minute to the fullest
You have a life now go and find,
All the dreams you ever dreamed about
Before that disease controlled your mind.

Rick L.

GRAPEVINE CORNER
The Meeting In Print

By Michele B. of Newbury Park

Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

IT'S A MEETING IN PRINT.

The Grapevine is the ideal solution for the member who cannot get to meetings regularly, or who would like the benefits of MORE meetings. Compact easy to read, each month the magazine captures the essence of the "best" meeting you could hope to attend.

AT WIT'S END

Overheard at a meeting

Sponsor screaming to sponsee: "How can you be so stupid? Haven't I taught you everything I know?"

The fine print

Pharmaceutical commercials have very long disclaimers. But alcoholic beverage ads just say: "Please drink responsibly." If alcohol ads had to follow the same guidelines as pharmaceutical ads, this might be their disclaimer:

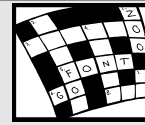
Caution: Drinking alcohol may result in vomiting, nausea, indigestion, slurred speech, frequent urination (with pants up or down), memory loss, brain damage, impaired vision, headaches, delusions of grandeur, lying, divorce, unemployment, evictions, bankruptcy, black eyes, broken bones, concussions, bleeding ulcers, cirrhosis of the liver or death!

Do not consume if you are allergic to alcohol. If these symptoms persist, call the AA hotline immediately!

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

Find the following words in the puzzle below. There are also 12 'AA's. Can you find them all?

Unmanageable	Must	Lonely
Circumstance	Regret	Heal
Endless	Descended	Help
Beaten	Denial	Undergo
Collapse	Ready	Recover
Occurrence	Binge	Plead

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



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.

December & Previous AA Birthdays

HAPPY SOBRIETY BIRTHDAY



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	530
Twelve Step Calls	61
Other Twelve Steps Programs	16
Activities	125
Directions to Office	17
Other Type Calls	480
TOTAL	1229



AA TRIVIA QUESTION
Of The Month

Q

JANUARY QUESTION:

To whom did Sue Smith sell Dr. Bob's Big Book and metal coffee pot to?

A

DECEMBER ANSWER:

Who was Sue Smith's (Dr. Bob's daughter) first husband and what was memorable about the wedding?

Sue's first husband was Ernie G. (AA #4) and one memorable thing about their wedding was that Ernie was DRUNK.

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	Lynn S. Simi Valley
Secretary	Jan K. Ventura
Treasurer	Mike B. Simi Valley
Member at large # 1	Scott W. Simi Valley
Member at large # 2	Joe N.
Member at large # 3	Craig S.

SPECIAL PAID WORKERS

Matthew C., Dick M.

OFFICE VOLUNTEER STAFF:

Don B., Skip, Rebecca, Peter M., Mike A., Mary H., Dora E., Azusa S., Dale S., Malia S., Robin S. Latoya

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