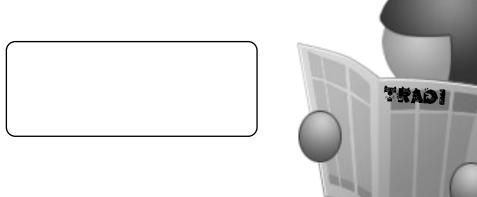
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Volume 35 — Issue 7

July 2015

Monthly Newsletter of the Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.

Features ..

PAGE -1

- **Cover Story**
- Office Information

PAGE - 2

- The Humor Column
- Puzzle Answer

PAGE - 3

- Living Step #7
- A review of Tradition #7 Poets' Corner

PAGE - 4

- The Grapevine Corner
- Puzzle

PAGE - 5

- A.A. Birthday Club
- **Trivia Question Contest** Call Log
- Staff and Contact Information

PAGE - 6

- Major Events Calendar
- **Monthly Local Event Calendars**

PAGE - 7

Districts, Area & AAWS Contacts

PAGE - 8

Subscription Order Form

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. Aviador Street, Suite 115 Camarillo, Ca. 93010

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alcoholics who had generously shared their lives and is all that counts. A thou-

minute and then said. "What the hell, why not?" and organized an anniversary party.

As I approached the end of

my first year of sobriety, I

mentioned that fact to one

of my daughters. She had

lived with me during the

four weeks of my outpa-

tient treatment and had

seen first-hand the begin-

didn't want to make a big

deal out of it, and she said,

"Why not?" I thought for a

Just a year before, I was completely alone; I had no friends and barely a job, and I was living a hopeless life. I kept scheming how I was going to commit suicide, but I couldn't even organize that. My daughters stood by me, but at a fearful distance. I was so angry and so difficult to be around. They were justifiably afraid of me. That day I made a list of all

the people who had profoundly affected my life during the year, and I came all but one showed up. up with thirty. Included were my daughters; a few give up on me, even though I had; the lawyer who bailed me out of jail the morning after my last drink; a longtime drinking buddy who preceded me into recovery; some of the powerful influences from my AA groups and after-

care: and other recovering

feelings. The list didn't begin to include everyone who had helped save my life: the cops who picked me up treated me with respect I didn't deserve: a ning of my new life. I said I wise and understanding judge who let me go to treatment instead of jail; all those men and women without last names who

What's the Big Deal?....A Longtimer Reflects on his First Celebration

Each day sober represents what was once totally impossible, so a bunch of them together is worthy of acknowledgement.

patiently sat through my whining and complaining in the jail cell: stripped of my AA meetings and aftercare belt, my shoelaces, and my sessions.

I mailed out the invites, and Thirty people in a onebedroom apartment on a long-time friends who didn't Minnesota January evening! It was a joyous celebration, a true celebration of life. There was intense mutual pride and love with my children.

It was a big deal! Still, I have mixed emotions 10,000. about celebrating sobriety anniversaries. One the one hand, all the days be-

hind us don't matter; today sand days sober does not quarantee sobriety today. On the other hand, a day sober, ten days sober, three hundred days sober are all huge victories for alcoholics. Each day sober represents what was once totally impossible, so a bunch of them together is worthy of acknowledgement.

I had been a drinker for twenty years. The skid downward started with my first drink, and it got worse every day. I lost a marriage, I lost jobs, I got arrested and, worst of all, I lost myself. The details may differ, but my life story is recounted every day in AA meetings around the world.

The morning after my arrest. I lay on the bunk in dignity, and amongst overwhelming feelings of selfpity and anger, I heard a voice saying, "This has to stop!" I didn't know it then, but that was the first day of a wonderful new life, and with the grace of God and the Fellowship of AA. I haven't had a drink since. The sober days have rolled by and now number about

Continued on Page 2

I've full-filled many dreams. I have a wonderful relationship with my children, and they have blessed my life with ten priceless grandchildren. They have generously let me be part of their families and lives. I've flown airplanes, I've sailed boats, I've traveled to places that were just words on a map for a Minnesota farm boy. I've been blessed with many friends. A wonderful woman loves me as I am, and she brings new joys to my life.

My wish list for life did not include a heart attack and cancer. Yet those incidents proved to be valued gifts. While the desire to drink left long ago, the demon of alcoholism continues to shadow me, and sometimes I let it get out in front of me. I can be angry, hostile, self-pitying –I can act as if I'm drunk again. I can wonder how a good French wine tastes, or an English pub bitters. But, because of AA, I can be content with just wondering. As of today, I've been able to chase the demon back into the shadows.

I know that all I have, including life itself, is but a loan to me. It is up to me how I use it. I try to be a worthy borrower. The biggest gift of all is a sober today.

Some mornings, wisdom rises to the surface, and as I open my eyes I ask, do I want to make a big deal out of today? You bet I do!

Bill S., Hopkins, Minnesota Reprinted with permission of AA World Services





Upon his visit to the doctor, an alcoholic says, "Boy, ya know Doc, I haven't been feeling well lately."

"Really? Well, let's give you an exam," says the doctor.

So, after a rather long and thorough exam, the doctor tells the alkie, "I'm so sorry Mr. Smith, but I'm afraid that you only have ten days to live."

"TEN DAYS!" cried Mr. Smith. "Ten days. My God Doc, isn't there anything I can do?" "What if I stop drinking?"

"Well there is one thing you could try..." says the Doctor.

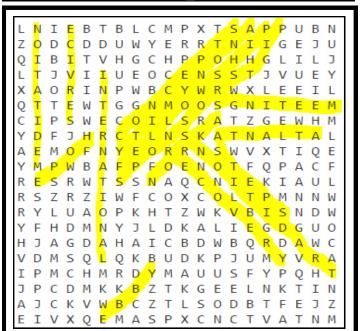
"Anything! Anything - what is it?" pleads the drunk.

"Well, you could go down to the beauty parlor and get a mud pack every day."

Somewhat surprised by the answer, he replies, "Really Doc, will that really help?"

"Well no, not really," says the doctor. "But, it may get you used to dirt."







July 2015





District 13

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 166 Ventura, CA 93002

Gold Coast Districts (9 & 12)

PLEASE NOT E 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 AVA EVENTS Around America

Santa Paula Pig Roast

July 17-19, 2015 Lake Casitas, CA Santapaulapigroast.com

12 Concepts Workshop

July 18, 2015 10-2

Center for Spiritual Living 101 S. Laurel St Ventura

Ventura County AA Convention

BINGO Fundraiser

July 25th 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM NEW LOCATION

Camarillo Community Center 1605 E. Burnley St Camarillo, CA 93010

Delegate Day

August 1, 2015

College Methodist Church 4300 Telegraph Rd. Ventura, CA Danny G - 805-443-4031 DannyG71083@gmail.com

MAAD Dog Daze

August 7-9
Hyatt Regency
Indian Wells Resort and Spa
www.maaddogdaze.org

Ventura County AA Convention

September 11-13 Westlake Village Hyatt VCAAC.org

Southern California AA Convention

October 2-4

Westin Mission Hills Resort & Spa Rancho Mirage (Palm Springs) www.aasocal.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



Wed 1st	6:00 pm District 13 GSR Meeting @ Ventura Center
	for Spiritual Living @ 101 S. Laurel, Ventura

Thu 2nd 7:00 pm Inter-group Board Meeting @ Central Office

ri 3rd 6:00 pm H & I Board Mtg @ Central Office

Wed 8th 7:00 pm Inter-group Meeting @ The Buck 321 N Aviador Suite 111, Camarillo

Sat 11th 10:00 am Newsletter Stuff and Fold @ Central Office

n 12th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office 4 pm VCAA Convention Planning Mtg Central Office 5.30 pm H & I Committee Mtg @ Central Office

Wed 15th 7:00 pm Gold Coast Districts General Service Mtg
The Buck 321 N Aviador Ste 111 Camarillo

Tue 21st 7:00 pm GSR District 28 Meeting @
King of Glory Lutheran Church
2500 Borchard Road, Newbury Park

Thu 23rd 7:00 pm District 24 General Service Meeting
United Methodist Church 2394 Erringer Rd
Rm # 10, Simi Valley

Sun 26th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg @ Central Office

July 24th Last day to submit items to the August Newsletter

August 2015 Calendar

	for Spiritual Living @ 101 S. Laurel, Ventura
Thu 6th	7:00 pm Inter-group Board Meeting @ Central Office
Fri 7th	6:00 pm H & I Board Mtg @ Central Office
Sat 8th Sun 9th	10:00 am Newsletter Stuff and Fold @ Central Office 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office

12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office 2:00 pm Al-Anon VCAAC Committee @ Central Office 4:00 pm VCAAC Committee Mtg @ Central Office 5.30 pm H & I Committee Mtg @ Central Office

6:00 pm District 13 GSR Meeting @ Ventura Center

Wed 12th 7:00 pm Inter-group Meeting @ The Buck 321 N Aviador Suite 111, Camarillo

Tue 18th 7:00 pm GSR District 28 Meeting @ King of Glory Lutheran Church 2500 Borchard Road, Newbury Park

Wed 19th 7:00 pm Gold Coast Districts General Service Mtg
The Buck 321 N Aviador Ste 111 Camarillo

Thu 20th 7:00 pm District 24 General Service Meeting
United Methodist Church 2394 Erringer Rd
Rm # 10, Simi Valley

Sun 30th 12:00 pm VCYPAA Committee Mtg @ Central Office

Aug 24th Last day to submit items to the Sept Newsletter

A Review of Tradition #7

July 2015

Living Step # 7

"Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

- Honesty now, do I do all I can to help AA (my group, my central office, my GSO) remain self-supporting? Could I put a little more into the basket on behalf of the new guy who can't afford it yet?
- 2. Should the Grapevine sell advertising space to book publishers and drug companies?
- 3. If GSO runs out of funds, wouldn't it be okay to let the government subsidize AA groups in hospitals and prisons?
- 4. Is it more important to get a big AA collection from a few people or a smaller collection in which more members participate?
- . Is a group treasurer's report unimportant AA business?
- 6. How important in my recovery is the feeling of selfrespect, rather than the feeling of being al ways under obligation for charity received?

"Humbly Asked Him To Remove Our Shortcomings."

Now that we have completed step six, we are ready to move on to step seven where we strive for a foundation of humility in our life. We do this by admitting our shortcomings and asking our God to remove them. Making humility one of the key actions in our recovery is a main element in moving forward in our new sober life.

The self centeredness in the alcoholic's life needs to be dealt with if we are to proceed with a life of living in the present, without resentments, envy or misgivings about the past.

Most of us are born with a drive and need to achieve personal goals, property and acclaim, but our program tells us that striving to be the center of the universe and in managing results, will be a stumbling block in our recovery.

As our reading points out, "our crippling handicap had been a lack of humility." By asking our Higher Power to remove our shortcomings, we have taken a big step towards putting humility in our life and opening our heart to God's infinite power as part of daily living.



Rancho Mirage, Ca (Palm Springs)

Meetings, Events & Exhibits Will Include AA Marathon Meetings

AA Marathon Meetings

AA Opening Meeting AA Spanish Meetings

AA Host City Meeting

AA Banquet Speaker Meeting/Show/Dance

Al-Anon Marathon Meetings

Al-Anon Spanish Marathon Meetings

Al-Anon Opening Meeting Al-Anon Host City Meeting

Al-Anon Luncheon Speaker Meeting

Alateen Pizza Party

Long timers Meeting Opening Ceremonies

Central Office Meeting

General Service Meeting

Young Peoples Speaker Meeting

H & I Speaker Meeting
Friday & Saturday Night Dances

Amazing Archives Exhibit

Golf Tournament

5K/10K Fun Run/Walk

Game Room

Sobriety Countdown AA Closing Meeting 64th Southern California

AA Convention

Acceptance Is The Key

Register at:

www.aasocal.com

We hope to See You There!

Recovery Word Puzzle

By Michele B. of Newbury Park

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

7. AS AN AID TO PRODUCTIVE CLOSED MEETINGS

Groups throughout the world are using Grapevine articles as the basic theme of "closed meetings with a plan." With the Grapevine, members are better-prepared for such meetings, able to contribute more constructively to group discussions on a given topic.

At Wit's End.

Picking lemons

A new member of Al-Anon was applying for a job in a Florida lemon grove, even though she seemed way too qualified for the job. "Look miss," said the foreman, "Do you have any experience in picking lemons?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, yes she replied, "I've been divorced from three alcoholics."

Bad patch job

A drunk decided to take off early from work and go bar hopping. When he finally got home, he tiptoed up the stairs Halfway up, he fell backward and the pint bottle in his back

pocket broke and cut his rear end.

A few minutes later as he was undressing, he noticed blood, so he checked himself out in the mirror and saw he injury. He repaired the damage as well as he could under the circumstances and went to bed.

The next morning, his head and his rear were hurting badly, but he stayed under the covers trying to think a good story for his

"Well, you really tied one on last night," she said. "Where'd you go?"

"I worked late," he said. "I stopped off for a couple of beers." "A couple of beers? That's a laugh," she replied, "You got plas-

"What lakes you so sure I got drunk?" he asked.

"Well," she replied, "my first big clue was when I got up this morning and found a bunch of band-aids stuck to the mirror."

Recycle Your Copies of the

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 iails. 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.

NIEBTBLCMPXTSAPPUBN ODCDDUWYERRTNIIGEJU TJVIIUEOCENSSTJVUEY OTTEWTGGNMOOSGNITEEM SWECOILSRATZGEWH EMOFNYEORRNSWVXTIOE PWBAFPFOENOTFOPACF RESRWTSSNAOCNIEKIAUL ZIWFCOXCOLTPMNNW H D M N Y J L D K A L I E G D G U O H J A G D A H A I C B D W B Q R D A W C V D M S O L O K B U D K P J U M Y V R A IPMCHMRDYMAUUSFYPQHT J P C D M K K B Z T K G E E L N K T I N AJCKVWBCZTLSODBTFEJZ EIVXQEMASPXCNCTVATNM

> AKRON **ANONIMITY ATLANTA CONCEPTS EBBY FELLOWSHIP** HOPE INTERNATIONAL **MEDITATION MEETINGS** RECOVERY **SERVICE SPONSORSHIP STEPS TRADITIONS**

Answer on page 2



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.

July & Previous AA Birthdays

HAPPY SOBRIETY BIRTHDAY —

July 2015

John D - Port Hueneme 31 Years



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

Birthday Club Listing For:

City Sobriety Date ____ Years ■ Voluntary Donation Amount \$ Please mail to: **Ventura County Central Service Office** 321 N. Aviador Street, Suite 115



Camarillo, CA 93010

Meeting Info	410
Twelve Step Calls	61
Other Twelve Steps Programs	52
Activities	85
Directions to Office	22
Other Type Calls	<u>512</u>
TOTAL	1142





JULY QUESTION:

Who was presented with the 35 Millionth copy of the Big Book?



JUNE ANSWER

How did Lois and Bill Meet?

They met through Lois's brother.

Answers will be published the following month. Mail your answer to: Ventura County Central Service Office Inc., 321 N. Aviador 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

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