

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

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Volume 36 — Issue 3 **MARCH 2016**

THE TRADITION

Monthly Newsletter of the Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.

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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
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E-Mail
vcaaco@verizon.net

To My Home Group - Nick

My story is a sad story. Sad because it contains very little drama, very little trauma. It is simply boring.

I drank for 50 years - initially because I thought I was supposed to; later because I liked it. At age 21 it became legal, but also seemed like a rite of passage to adulthood. I taught myself to add rum to my coke, then to drink beer at parties, then to drink wine after I moved to California, and finally to drink single malt when I became enamored with my Scottish heritage.

I rarely drank large quantities - primarily because I was a blackout drinker whose blackouts occurred after relatively few drinks. When I drank socially, the blackouts could be embarrassing - often because I didn't know how I behaved after I blacked out - only that I often stayed on my feet and was able to drive a car. However, once at a party at a friend's home, I crawled behind a sofa to sleep after blacking out and became the subject of an intense search at the end of the evening.

Once I became a daily drinker, I developed some concern about the consequences. However, such concern was focused only on my liver. I never thought about the effects on anyone else. I asked

my family for private time when I came home from work - claiming a need to unwind from the day's stress - but that was also my excuse for drinking.

I never really considered that I was an alcoholic, partly because I had a very narrow view of what an alcoholic was and partly because I passed all the self-administered tests. My liver function tests were consistently normal. I could stop drinking for 3 weeks at a time without tremors or other physical manifestations of addiction. I could pass the 'are you an alcoholic' checklists - once I had modified them by getting rid of the flawed questions.

When I retired about 10 years ago, my drinking escalated. I was lonely. My friends were still at work. The wine bottle became my best friend at the start of each day. I would get up a few hours before my wife, open a bottle, and drink while I entertained myself on my computer until I blacked out. Typically I would come to before my wife woke up - convincing me that no one else was affected by my drinking. Recently I had a conversation with my daughter-in-law, who told me that she thought I was a much nicer person now than when I was drinking.

This surprised me because I don't think that she ever saw me drunk or had any idea how much I drank. The message I got from that is that we alcoholics are under the influence even when our blood alcohol content is zero.

I did not have much of a struggle with saying "My name is Nick, and I'm an alcoholic." Initially, I said it to be inconspicuous in meetings. Later I appreciated that it really didn't matter whether I was or was not an alcoholic. I knew that I needed help because of my drinking, and I knew that I was finding it here. Some of that help came in the form of fellowship, which was a treatment for the loneliness I encountered in my retirement. However, most of the help came from the program, which provided me with tools to address my problems, both with alcohol and not, and the freedom to be honest and open, with you and, more importantly, with myself. It is no small accomplishment that we are a group of people who might never have found common ground without this program, but who are able to develop respect, and sometimes admiration, for one another in our recovery.

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 _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

LATEST
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+ Meetings
+ Recovery
+ Fellowship

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Updates
Only **\$5.**
Per Year

Mail this subscription form to:

VENTURA COUNTY CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE
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!*

From the Daily Reflections Online Meeting - by Gary M.

To me it was one of the greatest feelings in all my life to become a part of the whole. I never in life before sobering up had a feeling of belonging, was worth nothing and who believed no body cared about me. I was a victim. I was the person in the bar who sat down at the end of the bar with my head hanging over staring at my drink and just swallowing my way into oblivion. I didn't want to talk to anyone or want anything to do with anyone, just leave me alone in my misery. When the effects of alcohol wasn't working anymore I had a major problem. I was caught between a hard rock and a hard place.

I would come to AA in and out for many years and listen to all the suggestions and always felt they were asking too much of me. "They" were my watchdogs. I always felt when I went out again "they" were checking me out to see where I was going. There was no peace, no matter where I went. AA screwed up my drinking and for 30 odd years bouncing in and out it gave me no rest. I would come back to AA and was told I needed to accept that I was an alcoholic before I could get relief. What no one "seemed" to understand that I didn't like being sober, it was disgusting to me so I always went out again. I was a used yo-yo meaning no side of the equation was making me happy.

Back in my 20's (was i really that young then--lol) I went to an all night theater and was watching a Dean Martin/Jerry Lewis movie and Jerry Lewis was made out to be a brown bagger, happy to be married and very much in love. I cried during that movie as that is what I really wanted. To be loved without reservations and make my life simple but I couldn't achieve that state of mind. Back way then I wanted to be a part of something.

Even when I was a child I remember going over to my "friends" house and was at the screen door looking in while they were playing a game of chess. They looked up at me and then just ignored me. They never invited me in to join them. After ten minutes or so I finally got the hint and just walked away feeling totally rejected.

So it was hard for me to feel like i belonged in AA. In my own mind I was a piece of trash that needed to be thrown away. I think when I got to the point being drunk was worse than being sober I started to listen. I through in the towel about being an alcoholic and at that point I really felt like a part of the whole. I was like "them" and became them. I surrendered to the concept of being sober and if I wanted to stay sober, I knew i had to use the steps. There was no other way for me to stay sober

(continued page 3)



The Humor Column "We're Not a Glum Lot"

Two police officers saw this old woman staggering down the street. Stopping her, they can tell she has had far too much to drink and instead of taking her to jail they decide to just drive her home. They loaded her into the police cruiser and one of the officers gets in the back with the drunk woman. As they drove through the streets they kept asking the woman where she lived. All she would say as she stroked the officers arm is, "Your Passionate" They drove awhile longer and asked again. Again the same response as she stroked his arm "Your Passionate". The officers were getting a little upset so they stopped the car and said to the woman, "Look we have driven around this city for two hours and you still haven't told us where you live." She replied, "I keep trying to tell you: Your Passin It!"

.....

A man walked into a bar after a long day at work. As he began to drink his beer, he heard a voice say seductively "You've got great hair!" The man looked around but couldn't see where the voice was coming from, so he went back to his beer.

A minute later, he heard the same soft voice say, "You're a handsome man!" The man looked around, but still couldn't see where the voice was coming from. When he went back to his beer, the voice said again, "What a stud you are!" The man was so baffled by this that he asked the bartender what was going on. The bartender said, "Oh, it's the nuts -- they're complimentary."

.....

I went out drinking on St. Patrick's Day, so I took a bus home. That may not be a big deal to you, but I've never driven a bus before.

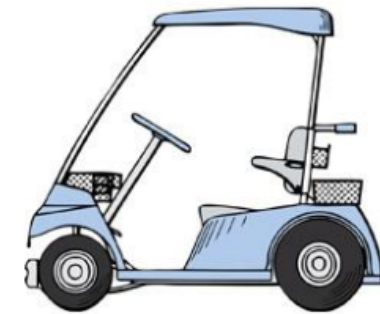
.....

McTavish is on his death bed. He calls over his friend Hamish and says, "I have a bottle of 25-year-old whisky under my pillow. When I'm dead would you do me a kindness and pour it over my grave?" "Of course I will," replies Hamish. "Though I might be passing it through my kidneys first."

.....

A guy walks into a bar with a piece of asphalt under his arm. He asks the bartender for a beer, and one for the road.

SAVE THE DATE SERENITY BY THE SEA 2016 GOLF TOURNAMENT



FRIDAY, APRIL 22ND, 2016

11:00 AM

SOULE PARK GOLF COURSE

1033 E. OJAI AVENUE, OJAI, CA 93023

Email: TonyK1945@gmail.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

www.VCAARoundUp.org



APRIL 22, 23, 24 - 2016

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

SERENITY BY THE SEA EVENTS

Texas Hold'em Fundraiser

March 19, 2016

7:00 PM

The Buck Meeting Hall
321 N. Camarillo, CA #111
More info Ediem58@gmail.com

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.
<http://www.vcaaroundup.org>

.....

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

March 2016 Calendar

Wed 2nd	6:00 pm	District 13 GSR Meeting @ Ventura Center for Spiritual Living @ 101 S. Laurel Ventura
Thu 3rd	7:00 pm	Inter-group Board Meeting @ Central Office
Fri 4th	6:00 pm	H & I Board Mtg @ Central Office
Sun 6th	12:00 pm 5.30 pm	VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office H & I Committee Mtg @ Central Office
Wed 9th	7:00 pm	Inter-group Meeting @ The Buck 321 N Aviator Suite 111, Camarillo
Sat 12th	10:00 am	Newsletter Stuff and Fold @ Central Office
Tue 15th	7:00 pm	GSR District 28 Meeting @ King of Glory Lutheran Church 2500 Borchard Road, Newbury Park
Wed 16th	7:00 pm	Gold Coast Districts General Service Mtg The Buck 321 N Aviator Ste 111 Camarillo
Thu 17th	7:00 pm	District 24 General Service Meeting United Methodist Church 2394 Erringer Rd Rm # 10, Simi Valley
Sun 20th	12:00 pm	VCYPAA Committee Mtg @ Central Office
March 21 Last day to submit items to the April Newsletter		

April 2016 Calendar

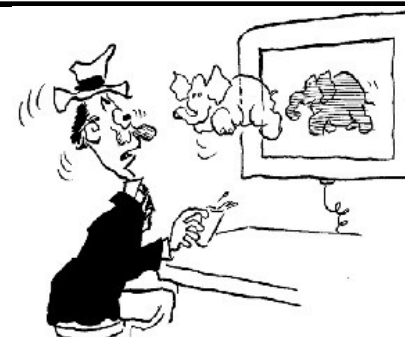
Wed 6th	6:00 pm	District 13 GSR Meeting @ Ventura Center for Spiritual Living @ 101 S. Laurel Ventura
Thu 7th	7:00 pm	Inter-group Board Meeting @ Central Office
Fri 8th	6:00 pm	H & I Board Mtg @ Central Office
Sun 10th	12:00 pm 5.30 pm	VCYPAA Committee Mtg Central Office H & I Committee Mtg @ Central 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
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		

A Review of Tradition # 3

***"The only requirement for AA
membership is a desire
to stop drinking."***

- ♦ In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
- ♦ Is there some kind of alcoholic that I privately do not want in my AA group?
- ♦ Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
- ♦ Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
- ♦ Am I over impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
- ♦ When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he has been to AA before? What his other problems are?

From the Daily Reflections (continued)
and more important to enjoy sobriety. I made coffee, I chaired meetings and for the first time in my life after all these years I started to be a part of the whole. Such an important concept to me. Such a simple thing that I wanted all my life seemed so hard to achieve. Now I had it and all I had to do is surrender. So simple and so hard. Now it makes no difference how long it took. The idea it did is what is important. I now feel like a part of AA as a whole and there is nothing better than that feeling. For many years God has been slowly but surely pushing me in this direction. God was doing His part, it was me that was holding up the train. Pride---a dirty word. Pride always goes before a fall.



"I must've gone right past the D.T.s straight to the 3-Ds...."

Living Step # 3

***"Made a decision to turn our will and
our life over to the care of God
as we understood Him."***

When we decide that we want what other recovering members have found, and are ready to go to any lengths to get it, we become ready to turn our will and our life over to a higher power. We learn that our life, prior coming to Alcoholics Anonymous was filled with our vain attempts to control people places and things in order to run things by self-will. Our best thinking got us to the point where we sought help by attending AA meetings. Our lives were filled with disappointments and un-fulfilled goals. As we began to attend meetings, we heard from other members that their turning point in recovery started with a "surrender" to the fact that God can do what we could not do by sheer will-power. Many thousands of recovering alcoholics have found that their God is ready and willing to help them. All they had to do is ask for God to come into their lives. As the Big Book explains, "God could and would if he is sought."

***Step #3 points out that our Higher
Power is one of each individuals choosing.***



"As Sharon's drinking progressed, she failed to notice the quality of her dates was diminishing at an alarming rate."—Vinnie D., Salem, Mass.





GRAPEVINE CORNER

The Meeting In Print

By Michele B. of Newbury Park

Grapevine corner by Michele B of Newbury Park.

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

3. IT IS A "THOUGHT STARTER"

Looking for ideas that will help you make more effective AA talks?

You will find them month after month, in personal stories, interpretive articles and humorous anecdotes appearing in the Grapevine magazine.

At Wit's End

Moonstruck

Two drunks in California are sitting outside on a cool, clear evening, looking at the moon, talking and knocking back shots.

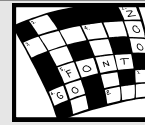
Drunk #1 leans over and says, "Which do you think is farther away... Florida or the moon?"

Drunk #2 gives him a look and rolls his eyes, "You tell me," he says "Can you see Florida from here?"

Out of time

A man walks into an antique store and buys a grandfather clock. As he carries it out of the shop, he accidentally crashes into a drunk and they both fall over, smashing the clock to bits.

The man looks at the drunk and says. "Why don't you look where



Recovery Word Search Puzzle

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

COME
COMMON
CONTRIBUTIONS
DECLINE
DEPENDS

DESIRE
DRINKING
FIRST
OUTSIDE
PERSONAL

RECOVERY
SHOULD
STOP
UNITY
WELFARE

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!*



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.

February & Previous AA Birthdays

HAPPY SOBRIETY BIRTHDAY

Bill J - 24
Skip - 35
Sol - 46



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	542
Twelve Step Calls	60
Other Twelve Steps Programs	26
Activities	12
Directions to Office	27
Other Type Calls	501
TOTAL	1168



AA TRIVIA QUESTION Of The Month

MARCH QUESTION:

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

FEBRUARY ANSWER:

In Bill's story, who was Bill's friend in Montreal and what company did he work for?

Bill's friend was Dick Johnson and he worked for Greenshields and Company.

*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.

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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