

THE TRADITION

Monthly Newsletter of the Ventura County Central Service Office Inc.



Serving: Agoura Hills, Thousand Oaks, Newbury Park, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Camarillo, El Rio, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Ventura, Ojai, Santa Paula, Fillmore

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Our Central Office Manager

Last month I had the pleasure of interviewing our Ventura County Central Office Manager, Matthew. It was great to get to know more about him, and the important work that he does. Below is our interview.

How long have you been the office manager?

"Seven years now."

How did you get the position?

"My predecessor, Leo, who was the office manager for many years had health issues. A friend of mine knew the position was opening and thought that my skillset would be a good match. My job right before this I was the managing director of a science center. At the science center it was me, one other employee, and all volunteers. The move was actually a linear kind of move for running a non-profit with all volunteers."

Call for Contributions!

The Tradition would love your AA related:

- Cover Stories
- Writings, Poems
- Jokes, AA Quips
- Artwork
- History/Trivia
- Experience, Strength & Hope
- Events, Updates

Steps, Traditions & Concepts

Step 5

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Tradition 5 (short form)

Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Concept 5 (short form)

Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

What was it like taking on the position of office manager?

"Especially at the beginning, people have an idea what it's like, they'll joke, 'oh, the president of A.A.' I've corrected everybody. I don't like that sound. I'm simply the keeper of the flame. I'm here at this desk to help the business part of A.A. run seamlessly so hopefully other people don't even see that part of it. Our stress should never be seen by our members. What it takes to accomplish running central office, the issues and problems, should never interfere with an alcoholic coming through that door."

What's changed over the time you've held the position?

"There was a big shift when the pandemic hit. I have never seen A.A. be, unfortunately, as politicized as it has been. More controversy in A.A. right off the bat, people turned to the central office and were asking me to create policy, 'you need to tell people what to do'. I'm not the A.A. police. I'm not here to tell you what to do. I'm not here to tell you what your group needs to do. Some people don't understand that."

"I was updating things every day. It was constantly changing. All along the way people were wanting me to create policy. Other intergroup offices did. I believe it goes against the tradition of group autonomy."

"As office manager, I've got no opinion on what you do in your meeting. I feel once I show up at a meeting people want me to be the office manager. They want someone to be the mediator, the decision maker. I felt I couldn't go to meetings and just be."

(Continued on Page 8 & 9)

Districts, Area & AAWS Contacts

Ventura County Central Office serves the following Districts within Area 93

District (9 & 12) Gold Coast

P.O. Box 132
Camarillo, CA 93011

Area 93

PMB #140
606 Alamo Pintado #3, Solvang, CA 93463
<https://area93.org>
*Sign up for the Area 93 newsletter

District 13

P.O. Box 166
Ventura, CA 93002
<https://www.aad13.org>

District 24

P.O. Box 843
Simi Valley, CA 93065

District 28

P.O. Box 3432
Thousand Oaks, CA 91359

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services(AAWS)

Member Services Line (212) 870-3023
General Service Office (GSO) Address:
P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

Mail Donations to:

P. O. Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116
<https://www.aa.org>

*sign up for the G.S.O newsletter



**Let's stay
connected**

If you have any A.A. related news, events or meeting updates that you would like to be included in *The Tradition*, please contact us at Central Office: 805-389-1444, vcaaco@verizon.net

News, Events & Service Opportunities

SOCAL H&I CONFERENCE MAY 27 - 29TH

Southern California Hospitals and Institutions
Intergroup Committee is proud to announce
our 2022 Conference:

RETURN TO RECOVERY

Hiking trails, lake activities, outdoor meals, Al-Anon,
English and Spanish, Young People's dance May 28th

**MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND
MAY 27-29TH**

39707 Big Bear Blvd., Big Bear Lake, CA
92315, P.O. Box 10000

Join our ONLINE planning committee meetings:
Every Sunday @ 2pm ZOOM: 290 755 6393 PW 2021

DAVE B:
626 224
5948

SOCALHANDI@GMAIL.COM WWW.SOCALHANDI.ORG

[Visit the Event Webpage](#)

A.A. DISTRICT 24 EVENT MAY 28TH

SHARE THE MESSAGE!

AA DISTRICT 24 INVITES YOU TO LIVE MUSIC, GAMES, POTLUCK, AND FELLOWSHIP



Learn something new every day

SANTA SUSANA PARK
6503 KATHERINE RD.
SIMI VALLEY, CA 93063

SATURDAY, MAY 28, 2022
3:00 - 7:00 PM



[Visit the Event Webpage](#)

HIGH DESERT CONVENTION JUNE 3 - 5TH

36th Annual
Sunshine of the Spirit
High Desert Convention
with Al-Anon Participation

Trust God
Clean House and Be of Service



June 3rd, 4th, & 5th, 2022
Courtyard Marriott
Hesperia, California

[Visit the Event Webpage](#)

CELEBRATE FOUNDER'S DAY IN AKRON, OH JUNE 10 - 12TH



[Visit the Event Webpage](#)

WOMAN TO WOMAN WORKSHOP WEEKEND JUNE 3 - 5TH

WOMAN TO WOMAN
41ST ANNUAL SHARING & CARING WORKSHOP WEEKEND
For Alcoholic Women in Recovery
Friday June 3rd to Sunday June 5th, 2022
Mount St. Mary's University, Chalon Campus - Brentwood, CA

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Fri. June 3, 2022 Registration/Check-in: 4 - 7 p.m. Buffet Dinner: 8 - 7 p.m. Welcome Participation Meeting Evening activities | Sat. June 4, 2022 Workshops Afternoon Free Time Evening Speaker Meeting / Fun & Games Buffet Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner | Sun. June 5, 2022 Breakfast (optional) Workshops Speaker Meeting Check out: 12:00 Noon |
|--|--|--|

Price includes: TWO NIGHTS LODGING and ROBUST BUFFET MEALS! (Sunday breakfast available for purchase)
FULL PAYMENT IS REQUIRED - STRICT "NO REFUNDS" POLICY (you may have someone attend in your place)
Unfortunately, WHEELCHAIRS and SERVICE ANIMALS CANNOT be accommodated at Mount St. Mary's
Confirmations will be mailed by: MAY 10, 2022
For additional information send us an email: W2Wtreasurer@yahoo.com or call Jacquelyn 818-387-5837
To register online, visit our website www.WomanToWomanLA.org

[Visit the Event Webpage](#)

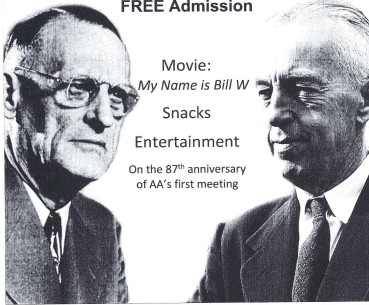
A.A. DESERT POW WOW JUNE 9 - 12TH

A.A. DESERT POW WOW
WITH AL-ANON PARTICIPATION
RENAISSANCE ESMERALDA RESORT & SPA
JUNE 09, 10, 11, 12, 2022
INDIAN WELLS, CALIFORNIA

[Visit the Event Webpage](#)

FOUNDER'S DAY SOCIAL JUNE 10TH

Founder's Day Social
Friday, June 10
6:30 - 9:30 pm
FREE Admission



Movie:
My Name is Bill W
Snacks
Entertainment
On the 87th anniversary
of AA's first meeting

Oxnard Performing Arts Center
800 Hobson Way, Oxnard
Questions? Doug (954) 629-2242 dcm@aad13.org
Presented by Alcoholics Anonymous Districts 9, 12, 13 and Area 93 Archives

[RSVP for the Event](#)

SANTA PAULA PIG ROAST JULY 15-17TH

SANTA PAULA PIG ROAST CAMPOUT
AT LAKE CASITAS



REGISTER ONLINE TODAY!

AA SPEAKERS, CAMPFIRE MEETINGS, POKER TOURNAMENT!

JULY 15-17 2022
REGISTER ONLINE AT
WWW.SANTAPAULAPIGROAST.COM

MEALS INCLUDED
SAT. BREAKFAST, LUNCH,
WHOLE HOG BAR-B-QUE DINNER
SUN. COFFEE + SUNRISE
MEETING AT 8:00 AM

24 HOUR COFFEE!

SPEAKER MEETINGS
FRIDAY & SATURDAY
AT 8:00 PM

KIDS FUN ZONE
GAMES + ACTIVITIES, SCAVENGER
HUNT, WATER FUN, KIDS HIKE
AND MORE!!

DAY USE AVAILABLE

[Visit the Event Webpage](#)

BINGO! JULY 23RD



Come Support Your Long Awaited 42nd Annual
Ventura County AA Convention

Saturday, July 23rd 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Camarillo Community Center
165 E. Burnley St
Camarillo, CA 93010
FREE ADMISSION - Must be over 18 to be admitted

Food and Social Hour starts at 5:00 p.m.
Plenty of good food, beverages and goodies available

We are looking for CASH donations from AA members and AA groups
for items to be raffled during the Bingo Fund-raiser.*

Any support is appreciated!

*VCAA is a non-profit organization and donations are tax deductible.
We will provide receipts upon request.

For questions and to donate items please contact:
Mary M. - 805.404.1496
Jenni W. - 819.339.1636




NEW PODCAST - A.A. Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour

Tune in to hear funny, poignant, and always inspiring “meeting after the meeting” conversation about getting sober and staying sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Free wherever you listen to podcast or at www.aagrapevine.org/podcast

VC Central Office - Phone Coordinator Volunteer

It's for you!



Central office is looking for a volunteer phone coordinator.
Contact Matthew at Central Office for more information.



Open Phone Shifts

One year of sobriety and completion of the steps

*exceptions made on a case-by-case basis

Mondays 9pm-9am 1st, 4th and 5th weeks
Tuesday 9pm-9am 3rd week
Wednesday 9pm-9am 2nd and 5th weeks
Thursday 9pm-9am 1st and 2nd weeks
Friday 9pm-9am 3rd and 5th weeks

**LIKE TO STAY UP LATE? CAN'T SLEEP?
ARE YOU WILLING TO SHARE YOUR
EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE?
GREAT! THEN ...**

**THE 2022 VENTURA COUNTY AA
CONVENTION (VCAAC) NEEDS YOU!**

Just a reminder – the VCAAC will be here sooner than you think and we look forward to seeing EVERYONE at the Westlake Hyatt

FOR A WEEKEND OF FUN AND SOBRIETY!

Marathon meetings ARE OPEN TO ALL WHO ATTEND, WHETHER REGISTERED FOR THE CONVENTION OR NOT AND WILL run 24/7 from Friday 09/09/22 at 12 pm to Sunday 09/11/22 at 9 am. THEY ARE 50 MINUTES LONG WITH A 10 MINUTE BREAK IN BETWEEN EACH MEETING.

Many slots are filled, AND THE TOPICS HAVE BEEN SELECTED, but we still need panel leaders (and panels!) for the ones that are not, especially during the “wee hours” of the convention.

If you are willing to serve, please call Tim, the VCAAC 2022 marathon chair at 805-428-0752 or Cynthia, the VCAAC 2022 co-chair at 818-398-3043 and we will hook you up! THANK YOU!

Historic Documents on County Website

COMING SOON! Ventura County A.A. Website will have a new section of historical documents. If you or anyone you know have documents or items pertaining to A.A. in Ventura County please submit them to Central Office.



A.A. History

This year, on June
10th, Alcoholics
Anonymous turns 87



Founder's Day

(Reprinted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.)

“A co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. The birth of our Society dates from his [Dr. Bob’s] first day of permanent sobriety, June 10, 1935.” (A.A., p. 171)

Excerpt from *Dr. Bob’s Nightmare*

That was June 10, 1935, and that was my last drink. As I write nearly four years has passed...

It is the most wonderful blessing to be relieved of the terrible curse with which I was afflicted. My health is good and I have regained my self-respect and the respect of my colleagues. My home life is ideal and my business is as good as can be expected in these uncertain times.

I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly. I do it for four reasons:

1. Sense of duty
2. It is a pleasure.
3. Because in so doing I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me.
4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip.

...if you really and truly want to quit drinking liquor for good and all, and sincerely feel that you must have some help, we know that we have an answer for you. It never fails, if you go about it with one half the zeal you have been in the habit of showing when you were getting another drink. (A.A., p. 180-181)

Interview Continued

So, what do you see your job as office manager being in that regard?

“I believe that one of the strongest things I do at the office is that when people call, I try to point them to the resources that will give them the answers, ‘that sounds like you’re talking about tradition...here’s the literature.’”

Is it hard separating yourself from the job?

“When I first took the job as office manager my sponsor told me, ‘Don’t give up your personal commitments, don’t give up your program. Too many people see a job like this as their program. So, when I go to an A.A. meeting I’m going as an alcoholic because I need to be in a meeting. One thing I love is going to online meetings, over in Europe or wherever. I can go on my time, and no one knows me as the office manager.’”

“I meet with all the central office managers across the country every Friday morning. We have an open Zoom meeting. It is a unique job with unique issues.”

What do you think makes a good office manager?

“Probably one of the biggest traits you need to have as a central office manager is patience. There are repeat callers. There is one caller who has called for years. At some point you’ve just got to say, ‘ok, how can I help you?’ I’ve been listening to you for the last half-an-hour, and we’re always there to listen to the still sick and suffering alcoholic, but when that person has called over-and-over at 2am, 4am and they’re drinking, you’ve just got to say, ‘Go to sleep. Call me in the morning’. I can’t give medical advice, but I tell someone to get medical attention, ‘Hang up the phone. Call 911. Go to a hospital.’”

“One of the things we don’t get enough of is the other side of the phone call, a previous caller saying ‘Hey, you guys were there for us.’ We don’t know if they took our advice. We don’t know if they made it to that meeting or not.”

Are all office managers also members of A.A.?

They are. In our central office bylaws, it states that the office manager has to be a sober member of alcoholics anonymous. I'm not sure if all central offices have that as part of their bylaws, but yes, all the office managers are sober.

How long have you been sober?

"15 years".

What's the best part about the job?

"When you get down to the rewarding part of helping that alcoholic. To know that the job that I do, and the effort that I put into it provides that infrastructure for that person to call in the middle of the night and get help."

What's the worst part of the job?

"People that call my personal cell on a Sunday. Call me on Monday. The toughest thing is creating boundaries and personal space in a job that, at times, requires 24-hour service. There are times that you just want to be away from it all."

What's it like managing so many volunteers?

"That's not too difficult because it's what I was doing in my previous job. It's tough when you don't have phone volunteers on the weekend. It's challenging to keep enough volunteers to keep it covered."

"Unlike a lot of central offices, I give the volunteers a lot of responsibility. A lot of other offices have another paid employee. At other offices volunteers don't sell literature. All they do is answer the phone. When I take vacations, I know the volunteers know what they are doing. I feel very confident in our volunteers."

Do you think you'll do this job for a long time to come?

"I've got no plans to stop."

Thank you for the wonderful job that you do, Matthew!

A.A. Quip of the Month

“Keep sobriety first, and everything else will be first class”

A.A. Quote of the Month

“We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for a lifetime.” (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 84)

Good Joke of the Month

A jumper cable walks into a bar.

The barman says "I'll serve you, but don't start anything."

BAD JOKE OF THE MONTH

You might be an alcoholic if,

Mosquitos catch a buzz after attacking you.



Meetings, Meetings, Meetings!

Check for weekly updates on local meetings

<https://aaventuracounty.org/meetings>

The Responsibility Statement

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,
I want the hand of Alcoholics Anonymous always to be there.

And for that; I *am Responsible*.

Oh Yes!
IT'S
FREE

Subscribe now to have The Tradition delivered to your email inbox!
vcaaco@verizon.net to subscribe.