

# 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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## Website

<https://aaventuracounty.org>

## Our Tradition of Gratitude

For many decades now, we in the Fellowship have formally carved out November as a time to express our collective gratitude for our individual sobriety. Interestingly, no one is exactly sure why that month was originally chosen, though its connection with Thanksgiving seems obvious. A.A. co-founder, Bill W. thought, for a while, that his sobriety had begun in November, but later calculations established the date of his new beginnings as December 11.

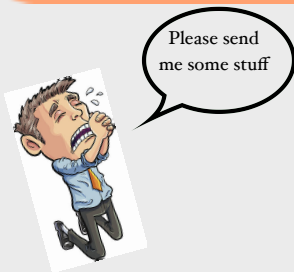
Misty origins notwithstanding, Gratitude Month has, since the 1940s, been November and our shared thankfulness over the years has taken many forms and will continue to do so as our membership widens.

The General Service Board began giving small gratitude dinners in the 1940s. These were precursors to the much larger Gratitude Luncheons that were orchestrated during the 1960s as a Public Information effort of G.S.O.

## Call for Contributions!

*The Tradition* would love your AA related:

- Stories, Writings
- Poems, Artwork
- Jokes, AA Quips
- History, Trivia
- News, Events



## Steps, Traditions & Concepts

### ***Step 10***

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

### ***Tradition 10 (short form)***

Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

### ***Concept 10 (short form)***

Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.

A.A. Traditions were the undeniable anchor of our new sober life, Bill W. thought when he wrote, “What then could be more appropriate than to set aside Thanksgiving week for discussion of the practical and spiritual values to be discovered in our Traditions?” The Tradition, he wrote in November 1949, “are a distillate of our experience of living and working together. They apply the spirit of the Twelve recovery Steps to our group life and security.” (The Language of the Heart, p.96)

The first sealed and approved, official recognition of A.A. “Gratitude Week.” to be specifically designated to coincide with Thanksgiving week, dates back to 1956. That year, at the Sixth General Service Conference, delegates approved a motion to that affect, stipulating that “this action be noted in the annual pre-Thanksgiving appeals to the groups for funds to help support A.A.’s worldwide services.”

Carrying the message, expressing gratitude, as well as wanting to make a gesture of appreciation for the numerous published articles, books, and radio and TV interviews to A.A. that year, were what motivated a number of Gratitude Luncheons. These were held, always in November, during the 1960s at New York City’s Roosevelt Hotel—where, incidentally, members of the media might care to have a drink, were assured, in the invitation by General Service Board chairman (nonalcoholic) Dr. John I. Norris, that “cocktails will be served at 12:15 p.m. in the Library, and the luncheon will end promptly at 2:00 p.m.

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## 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

## News, Events & Service Opportunities

**Let's stay  
connected**

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



### OLD TIMER'S MEETING

Organized by Area 93  
October 30th 11:30am - 3pm

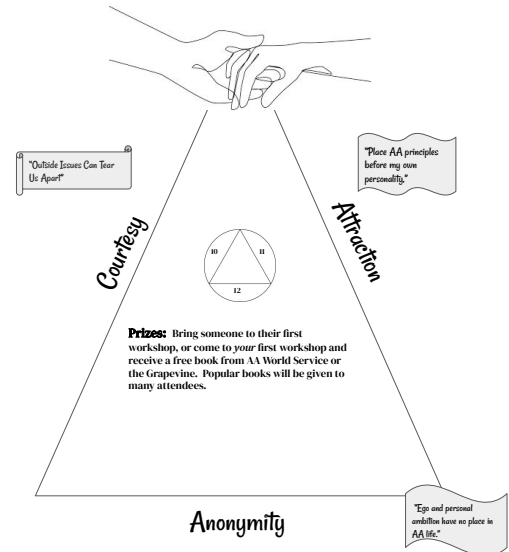
One Generation Senior Enrichment Center  
18251 Friar Street, Tarzana, CA 91335

District 28 Workshop - in Person!

### Restoring Unity:

### Traditions 10, 11 & 12

St. Patrick's Church, One Church Road, in Thousand Oaks  
Saturday, October 22, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

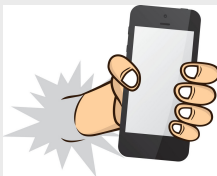


For more information: Laura S. (805)630 7001, Katy E. (818)512 7507 or Robert B. (310)773 7122

### VC Central Office - Phone Coordinator Volunteer

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

**It's for you!**



### Open Phone Shifts

Mondays 9pm-9am 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> weeks

Wednesdays 9pm-9am 5<sup>th</sup> weeks

Thursdays 9pm-9am 1<sup>st</sup> week

Fridays 9pm-9am 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> weeks

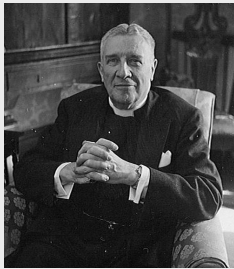
Mon & Weds 6pm-9pm 5<sup>th</sup> week

Prerequisite - One year of sobriety and completion of the steps.

\*exceptions made on a case-by-case basis



# A.A. History



## Sam Shoemaker - Friend of A.A.

Bill W. once wrote in the AA Grapevine that “Dr. Sam Shoemaker was one of A.A.’s indispensables. Had it not been for his ministry to us in our early time, our Fellowship would not be in existence today.” His help for A.A. was tangible even before the Fellowship began to exist. As the head of Calvary Church, Sam built Calvary House, which served as a hostel where Ebby T. stayed for a time. Sam also ran Calvary Mission, a place for “the down-and-out,” which Bill W. visited in 1934 near the end of his drinking.

Sam was also an early member of the Oxford Group, having met founder Frank Buchman in 1918 in China. The close association of early A.A. to the Oxford Group ensured Sam's connection with Bill W. and other members.

At first, Sam was unhappy with the alcoholics' decision to hold independent meetings. Later, after Sam left that Group in 1941, he apologized to Bill W. for the disapproval and lack of encouragement from the Oxford Group.

Bill W. made it clear that Sam “passed on the spiritual keys by which we were liberated.” The first three Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous were inspired in part by Sam. He also influenced many other Steps.

To read a short biography of Sam Shoemaker and to learn more about how he helped shape our fellowship, visit the Online Archives - [HERE](#)

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## Our Tradition of Gratitude *Cont.*

Well-attended functions, these luncheons drew a sizeable, wide-range representation from the media, and served a double purpose: to thank the writers and commentators who attended for their contributions to A.A. in the preceding year and to, in the words of a G.S.O. memo written at the time, “advance A.A.’s public relations by bringing editors, publishers, writers and broadcasters in personal contact with sources of reliable information on the movement.” A typical list of invitees to the 1965 luncheon, who had published articles and books on the Fellowship were from The New York Times, Medical World News, McCall’s Magazine, Macmillan Publishing Company, The Christian Science Monitor, and many other news and publishing organizations.

Bill W. always addressed the gatherings, as did Dr. Norris, and, in addition to a question and answer period at the end of the proceedings, there was always plenty of A.A. literature available for the guests to take along. In 1965, Bill sent an autographed copy of the newly-released A.A. Comes of Age to each guest.

Although those who came to the luncheons found them helpful and informative, the board thought they were too expensive a way to say thank you, when a letter from Bill, after an article or TV production was completed, would have been enough. Other voiced the opinion that more cooperation offered on articles or TV spots might have been more helpful. In any event, the luncheons were discontinued in 1968.

In many cases, the local A.A. Central Service Office is the first place our new members contact when seeking help. We pass the basket a second time during the month of November in celebration of Gratitude month. 100% of these donations go directly to Central Office to provide much-needed services to the alcoholics in our community. The Ventura County Central Office does not hold fundraisers throughout the year, but rather we rely on our member’s generous Gratitude Month donations for a large portion of our operating expenses.

Individuals can donate directly to Central Office by check, Venmo (@VCAACO) or PayPal (Ventura County Central Service Office). Thanks in advance for helping to support the essential services provided by your local Central Office.

# OUR FIRST CONTRIBUTION!!



- Anonymous

## A.A. Quip of the Month

It works if you work it.

## A.A. Quote of the Month

“It works - it really does”  
(A.A., p. 88)



## Good Joke of the Month

What happens when ghosts drink boos?

They get sheet-faced!

## BAD JOKE OF THE MONTH

Alcoholism is a three-fold disease.

Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years



### **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](mailto:vcaaco@verizon.net) to subscribe.