

RECOVERY TIMES Vol. 45, No. 11, Nov. 2020

The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Newsletter

November is Gratitude Month What are you grateful for?



The San Fernando Valley AA Central Office has been operating for more than 55 Years!

Thanks to the contributions and continued support of our groups and members, we are still going strong! Here are some of our day-to-day functions:

- Central Office has a **24 hour-a-day, 365 days-a-year** telephone hotline with up-to-date meeting information.
- Your contributions make it possible for Central Office to keep a full stock of AA literature available **7 DAYS A WEEK!**
- The Meeting Directory and online meeting information is generated out of our Central Office, as well as the monthly newsletter, **Recovery Times**.
- Our website, www.sfvaa.org, has A.A. meeting information available and is updated regularly.
- The Public Information Group is always ready to assist the General Public with information on our organization through schools, health fairs, hospitals, etc.
- Convention flyers, upcoming events for the groups, and information regarding the passing of our members are all available at Central Office.

Gratitude Month is the Main Fundraiser for Central Office

We gratefully accept any donations to: San Fernando Valley AA Central
Office

16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91406 Contribute online via: **PayPal:**

sfvaaco@gmail.com or **Venmo:** @sfvaaco



SAN FERNANDO VALLEY CENTRAL OFFICE
Minutes of Intergroup Representatives Meeting

October 12, 2020

The Intergroup meeting was conducted by Zoom due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Thanks to Carla R. for hosting!

OPENING: Lyn W.

- Lyn opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with The Serenity Prayer.
- Ryan C. read "The Twelve Traditions."
- Sandy R. accepted a motion for approval of the September 2020 Intergroup Minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Tina K.

- MTD is (\$2,327) and YTD is \$820, as compared to last year's YTD, which was \$1,526. Personal and group contributions are higher than last year, but sales continue to decline.
- Financials and Recovery Times are available at Central Office. Please call ahead. We will even bring them out to your car.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT: David F.

Central Office:

Special thanks to Bob F. for training me and taking the time to help during the transition!

We participated in the online LA County Covid-19 Office Reopening Certification Program. We are adhering to County guidelines by temperature-taking all visitors to Central Office. Also, masks are required.

We are open for literature, chips and supply sales Mon – Fri, 9am to 6pm, and weekends, 9am to 5pm. However, we are closed the last Friday of the month for inventory.

We are seeking bi-lingual Spanish speaking volunteers to work with our Spanish speaking community and for a special project we're working on.

All phone shifts are currently being covered, but we're always looking for new volunteers, especially to fill in on short notice. If you're interested, please contact Central Office.

Please submit all meeting changes and Zoom information to Central Office at sfvco@outlook.com .

Recovery Times (David F. for Pat K.):

The Recovery Times is available on the Central Office website: sfvaa.org. Snail-mail subscriptions to the Recovery Times are available. See sfvaa.org subscription form. Stories of recovery are welcome; approximately 500-650 words. Deadline for submissions is 15th of the month. Send to Pat K. at xnowisthetime@aol.com.

MEETING RELATED BUSINESS: Rick A.

There were 2 new Intergroup Representatives this month:

- Ryan C., Moorpark (upstairs), Daily, at 9am in Studio City; and,
- Peter N., "Sunrise Big Book Workshop," Saturdays at 8:15 am in Burbank.

SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES:

General Service District 11: Ernie: (1) The next ACM is Oct. 18th. Zoom information can be found at Area93.org. (2) The Area 93 delegate Report Back from the General Service Conference is available at area93.org. (3) District 11 will be electing a new DCM at the next business meeting.

General Service District 1: Norm for Cece: (1) Area Elections will be held online on Nov. 15. (2) Area 93 will be hosting the 2021 PRAASA on March 5-7. Looking more and more like it will be held online, but no final decision yet.

San Fernando Valley Hospital & Institutions Committee: Marianna: Seeking suggestions on how to conduct Board Committee elections that would be Guideline compliant. If you are familiar with the process or H&I guidelines, please reach out to Todd G. at ToddG2021Chair@gmail.com. Also, in need of Zoom Masters to facilitate panels. Contact Marianna or Todd G.

- Continued-

San Fernando Valley 46th Annual AA Convention: The 2021 “Unconventional,” will be held entirely online January 29-31, 2021. The theme is “Not My Plan.” More to follow!

OLD BUSINESS

Literature Sales are CLOSED on holidays and the last Friday of each month, but OPEN on weekends. Central Office doors remain open; phones are still answered. Continue to send meeting changes IN WRITING to Central Office.

NEW BUSINESS - Announcement regarding “Can’t Take Your Sponsor...”

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AA GROUPS & SEVENTH TRADITION:

- Ernie C., Burbank Group: 30th Annual Thankathon will be held online on November 26 and 27. Flyers are available at Central Office.
- Diane D., Hole in the Sky: 2020 Alcathon will be held on Oct. 31 – Nov. 1 by Zoom. Flyers were emailed to Intergroup Reps and are available at Central Office.
- David F., Central Office: Flyers for Gratitude Month are going out the last week of October.

REMINDERS: Lyn W.: Reminder that: Flyers must be for “AA-related events” (defined as “an event that includes an AA Meeting as part of the event”).

ACKNOWLEDGE BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTHS OF OCTOBER: NONE.

VACANCIES ON BOARD: There was one vacancy on the Board. Diane D. was elected to the board. Congratulations and welcome, Diane!

CLOSING:

- Carla R. will email Zoom information and Intergroup flyers for next month’s meeting.
- A motion to adjourn was recognized and seconded.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm with *The Lord’s Prayer*.

Prepared and submitted by: *Sandy R., Recording Secretary*

A.A. Central Office of the San Fernando Valley is a legitimate non-profit. Personal donations cannot exceed \$5,000 per year and must be from members of AA, not from outsiders. **AA Central Office maintains a 24 hour phone line** for alcoholics in need, hosted by volunteers. **Call: 818 988-3001** anytime to speak to a “live” person on the phones. After hours we still answer phones for those in need, so don’t be afraid to refer people to our phone lines.

SFV Central Office is located at 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys on the SW corner of Woodley & Sherman Way, west of the Mobil Station. Our large warehouse has chips, medallions and all the A.A. approved literature and pamphlets your group needs.

To find an online meeting in the San Fernando Valley, call Central Office at: **(818) 988-3001** or go to: **sfvaa.org**. You can also look up meeting schedules on Group websites or Facebook pages, or go to this online directory: www.LAAOnlineMeetings.org and <http://aa-intergroup.org>.

The 7th Tradition States That We Are Self Supporting

Consider setting up a mailbox or Venmo (or other app) system to collect the 7th Tradition. Your group will still need to purchase supplies and you may still be obligated to pay rent. If you are able to make a contribution to the different entities that comprise Alcoholics Anonymous, please do so.

FROM THE FOUNDERS

"We don't have to go to Akron, Ohio, to see Dr. Bob's memorial. Dr. Bob's real monument is visible throughout the length and breadth of AA. Let us look again at its true inscription - one word only, which we AAs have written. That word is sacrifice."

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., January 1955, "Why Alcoholics Anonymous Is Anonymous," The Language of the Heart

"I'm learning the freedom that comes with facing my problems fearlessly and without resistance. They are not all resolved, but I've done my part. God will take it from there." Laguna Bch, California, March 1975

"A friend of mine told me about going to see the Statue of Liberty on a field trip with his grammar school class. He said that as they walked up the long spiral staircase, they all held hands in a line. He couldn't see the person at the beginning or the end of the line but he felt safe. He knew he was connected to the rest of his schoolmates. That's the way it is in AA. We can't see the people at the beginning of the line or the end of the line. But we know they're there --

Tujunga, California,
December 1997

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Want to be of service? We are always in need of volunteers to answer phones, especially on weekends and holidays. If you have a year or more of continuous sobriety, please call to volunteer. (818) 988-3001, or ask your group to volunteer for a shift every month.

Please buy your meeting supplies from AA Central Office of the Valley. By doing so, you are supporting our office. (It's always more expensive to buy them from a retail store). We're open Monday – Friday: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. and weekends: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Literature closed last Fri. of every month for Inventory and on major holidays).



Update us with your meeting information via email:

sfvco@outlook.com, or stop by and pick up your medallions and literature at SFVCO, 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91406.

Visit our website: www.sfvaa.org for meeting information and copies of Recovery Times.

Do you have a story about sobriety to share? Please send it to Editor Pat K. at xnowisthetime@aol.com. All submissions will be reviewed and if it meets our guidelines, we will contact you and let you know when your story will run.

AA SERVICE COMMITTEES CALENDAR: GS Area 93

All or some of the following meetings are temporarily on hold during the pandemic. Please consult the leadership of your district for further information.

District 1: Meets 1st Wednesday of the month at 7552 Remmet Street, Canoga Park, CA at 6 p.m. orientation; 6:30 for general meeting.

District 11: Meets the 1st Monday of the month at 123 W. Windsor Road, Glendale, CA at 6:30 orientation; 7 p.m. general meeting.

District 16: Meets the 1st Monday of the month at 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA. (Central Office) at 6 p.m. for orientation then meeting.

District 17: Meets the 1st Monday of the month at 5000 Colfax Ave., North Hollywood at 6 p.m. orientation; 6:30 p.m. general meeting.

OTHER AA COMMITTEES:

Public Information Committee provides info to the public about what A.A. does & doesn't do. We need volunteers, especially young people and Spanish-speaking AAs, for health fairs & to speak at schools & businesses. To volunteer call Central Office: **(818) 988-3001**.

SF Valley Hospitals and Institutions Committee (H & I): On hold for now. Temporary contacts are needed to pair the alcoholic leaving rehabilitation, treatment or jail with A.A. in their home community. Contact Central Office for info. H & I also needs volunteers to carry the message of A.A. into hospitals, prisons and treatment facilities to those who are unable to get to meetings. Meets 3rd Monday of the month at 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana (St. Innocent) at 7 p.m. for orientation and 8 p.m. for the general business meeting.

San Fernando Valley Young People in AA: On hold for now. 1st Sunday of the month @ 1 p.m. at Unit A., 10641 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood. Regular weekly meeting Monday nights at 8 pm.

San Fernando Valley Intergroup: This meeting is being held on Zoom now. Central Office holds a monthly meeting for all Intergroup reps on the 2nd Monday at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana. (6:30 p.m. for orientation; 7 p.m. for business meeting).

Celebrating an A.A. Anniversary: ☆ ♡ . [H][A][P][P][Y][B][I][R][T][H][D][A][Y]! Jim P. - 31 Years, Andre - 1 Year, Anonymous - 13 Years, Anonymous - 37 Years and Anonymous - \$100 donation. Consider making a \$1.00 donation to Central Office for each year of your sobriety during your birthday month.

Bequests/Contributions: The maximum dollar amount of individual bequests by A.A.s is reviewed every two years at the General Service Conference. In 2019, at the 69th General Service Conference, the maximum amount of an individual bequest by members to A.A. was raised from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This is a one-time contribution and is not in perpetuity.



We remember: A.A. Deaths: Bob Lemke – 56 Years and Gary Atkinson – 30 Years.

Can't Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast

The first virtual "Can't" Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast was held on Zoom on Saturday, October 17th, 2020. This was the 11th annual fundraiser for Central Office and it was attended by over 100 AAs. Karl M. of Covina, CA was the speaker. In addition, it marked the transition of longtime office manager Bob F. to retirement and the welcoming of our new AA Central Office Manager David F. SFV Central Office has limited edition, commemorative T-shirts for sale at Central Office for \$24.00 + tax.

The first "Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast" breakfast took place at the Disabled Veterans' Hall in Canoga Park in 2010. Earlier that year, my husband, Doug, had spoken at an event we'd attended with the same name, hosted by the Santa Barbara Intergroup. It was pouring rain up there that Saturday morning, yet the room was so full and the enthusiasm so great that we made a beeline to see Bob F. the following Monday about hosting one of our own here for SFVAA.

He liked the idea, the board said yes, and we started planning. Everything fell into place, the way things do when God shows up. Our friend Sean and his partner Jin, who own a local restaurant, generously gave their time and labor ordering and cooking delicious food for the whole crowd and continue to do so every year. That year we printed 175 tickets and sold almost 300 meals. We held a 50/50 raffle that became so popular it had to be converted to a 50/25/25 prize! Charlie C. launched the event as our first speaker and every year since we've enjoyed terrific speakers and joyous fellowship while raising a little money for our Central Office.

Even last year, when the fires were burning in local areas, people who could turned out anyway. Of course, this year, we made the best of the COVID-19 situation and held our "non-breakfast" on Zoom with just over 100 attendees. Board member Ernie C. had an idea to sell T-shirts so we got that going and will likely continue selling them at future breakfasts.

Donald and Michelle will chair the event next year, when we will hopefully be able to meet face to face and continue to support the office that so enthusiastically provides so much to our AA groups and individuals every day across the valley. Watch next fall for the announcement of the 2021 "Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast" breakfast! **Carla R.**

MY JOURNEY TO ALCOHOLISM



It seems like with the right mixture of ingredients, I was destined to become an alcoholic sooner or later. Addiction runs high on both sides of my family. Molestation affected my ability to form healthy romantic relationships. In the end, I had literally hit rock bottom, hitting my face so hard on a rock that I cut an artery on my chin, knocked out both my front teeth, along with other cuts on my face. And I continued to drink!

Before alcohol I displayed the same obsession with other activities of my life. There was a time when I got frostbite while skiing. Similar to my

characteristics when drinking, I kept wanting one more thrill despite the freezing temperatures. In high school I played sports, I was very good at them; they were my outlet. At that time, sports did for me what alcohol would later do for me. In college, I was very depressed. I hadn't discovered alcohol and still needed something to fill the void inside me so I turned to food and bulimia. It seemed that whatever I did, I did it hard and to the max.

A late bloomer, I was 25 when I first discovered the magic of alcohol. I moved to Arizona and this is where I first enjoyed the effects of alcohol. I felt free! I felt good! Drinking was magical. The party had started and continued for a long time. I moved to California and fell in love for the first time. I started to drink and as a sensitive person, I drank for every feeling. Drinking was the formula that turned me into a real Jekyll and Hyde. After one fight, I cut my wrists. I just wanted to feel some pain. I wasn't looking for death. I believe my higher power was there for I missed every vein!

When my boyfriend and I broke up I started drinking in the morning, throughout the day, at work, and all night long. I was almost never sober. When my friend came over for a "fun" time, little did we know what would happen. Adding to the drinks I had already consumed we continued to drink throughout the day and night. Leaving a bar on a mountain and having no luck with an Uber, we decided to walk home. Feeling great, forgetting my heartbreak, I was stumbling down the trail. That is when I fell and fell hard on a large rock that caused me to split an artery in my chin and break my two front teeth.

Despite that, my drinking continued to progress! I would wake up with anxiety around 3 a.m. and reach for the wine. I went to work drunk and drank throughout the day. This didn't go unnoticed by my co-workers. A co-worker noticing my state had a wife in A.A. who offered to take me to a meeting. I went, I went to another meeting, and I got a sponsor. My sponsor once told me that you learn who you are through the A.A. steps. Those words stuck with me and now I am able to see just how true those words are as that has been my experience.

By doing the steps I have learned the good and bad in me. I continue to work on my character deficits and drinking is not my solution anymore. As for the promises I was lucky to see them manifest fairly quickly. Almost immediately upon getting sober I was offered a new job with better income. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, I am learning to apply the tools of A.A. to my daily life. As time goes on, I continue to see all the positives that A.A. has granted me. I am grateful for A.A. as it has brought me back to a spirituality that I had lost through my drinking.

Brooke B., Burbank, CA

THEN AND NOW

I am six years sober and was recently talking with my sponsor about what I am like now, versus what I was like 6 years ago. It's a simple question, but it's not necessarily simple to answer. Six years

ago I was perpetually tired and perpetually on edge, but I also was a woman with (apparent) confidence and the trappings of a lovely life. I had a good job and managed people and spoke publicly. I could gut my way through almost anything if I could have a drink at the end – crushing workloads, punishing physical workouts I undertook largely to prove to myself I didn't have a drinking problem (drunks can't run Ironmans, can they?), you name it. And when the drink went away, a lot of that came crashing down.

The social anxiety that had tormented me as a child and adolescent returned with a vengeance. It turns out I had not outgrown that anxiety as I had thought; I had simply drowned it in alcohol. I stopped compulsively going to social events, and have definitely drifted away from some erstwhile friends. Some I don't miss, but some I do. My ability to work excessive hours, week in and week out evaporated with no "reward" at the end of each day, and I ended up demoted – twice.

There were good changes, too, though, – it turns out that the hair trigger temper I thought I had inherited from my (alcoholic) mother was really just a side effect of being perpetually drunk or hungover, and I have greater reservoirs of patience than I would have ever believed. That demoted-twice level job I currently hold brings me more satisfaction and happiness every day than I got in months of my supposedly snazzier managerial position.

Most importantly, I have learned I can trust my own mind. Yes, I really do enjoy endurance sports, but I don't have to constantly go longer or harder for that enjoyment to kick in. I enjoy small gatherings with friends, even without alcohol (who would have thought?!), and if I don't like large groups of casual acquaintances all that much, that's okay. And I learned that my life, while quieter and less outwardly impressive, can bring me true joy, and can look entirely like myself.

Six years ago, if you had asked me who I was, I would have said I was my job, my sports, and a social butterfly. Now, six years in, I would say I am actually finally myself.

Amy H., Sunland, CA

CALENDAR OF EVENTS: Call Central Office for details

November 26 - 27, 2020: Burbank Group's Thankathon (Zoom)

January 29 - 31, 2021: San Fernando Valley A.A. Convention (Zoom)



March 5 – 7, 2021: Area 93: PRAASA (Zoom)



Central Office of SFV

**16132 Sherman Way
Van Nuys, CA 91406**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED