

# RECOVERY TIMES

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## The Year in Review: 2021 from your Central Office



As the end of the year 2021 approaches, we want to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season, and may next year be healthy, prosperous and pandemic-free!

As your San Fernando Valley Central Office Manager of Alcoholics Anonymous, I recently concluded my first year of service to the San Fernando Valley Intergroup Association and was amazed at how many things we have accomplished as an organization, despite contributions being down by nearly 28%.

For instance:

1. We have been able to keep our doors open throughout the past two years and continue to service our groups and members with all their literature and meeting needs.
2. We maintained, in print and on our website, a listing of AA meetings on Zoom, as well as those that have returned to inperson gatherings.
3. We upgraded our website to include many new features, including a

current and managed Calendar of Events, online contributions, and past Recovery Times issues dating back to 2003.

4. We implemented the processing of debit and credit card transactions with expanded capability to accept EBT.
5. SFVCO negotiated and executed a copier contract buyout saving thousands of dollars in fees every year.
6. We modernized our telephone system to make it easier for volunteers to Carry The Message to callers on our 24-hour hotline.
7. SFVCO made minor improvements to our Van Nuys office, including painting and flooring.
8. And finally, we established new birthday/ anniversary collection envelopes to support our local Central Office.

As we head toward 2022, we are excited to meet any new challenges that come about and we look forward to returning to a greater sense of normalcy with regular in-person meetings, conventions, conferences and the fellowship that we once enjoyed and miss dearly.

I know many of us have been impacted by Covid-19 in one way or another and we all pray for a better day coming soon!

Thank you for your support, patience, and care as we continue to help each other and, most importantly, the newcomers!

Yours in Service, David F., Executive Secretary, Central Office Manager **RT**



## 46th ANNUAL 2022 SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AA CONVENTION with Al-Anon and Alateen Participation

*The 2022 San Fernando Valley AA Convention RETURNS LIVE to the Warner Center Marriott, 21850 Oxnard Street, Woodland Hills, CA January 28 – 30, 2022*

We are extremely grateful to rocket the 2022 Convention to the fourth dimension and into the Warner Center Marriott carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the members of AA and Al-Anon. We have an exciting line-up of events and commemoratives for you this year, but there will be limited seating at tables so get your tickets early.

Get ready to blast off with us! Register now for the convention: <https://www.sfvaaconvention.org/>. Contact Marriott to reserve your room 1-800-228-9290. Use the SFVAA Hotel Discount Code. SFVSVFA. **RT**

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**SAN FERNANDO VALLEY CENTRAL OFFICE**  
**Minutes of Intergroup Representatives Meeting**  
**NOVEMBER 8, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.**

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Intergroup Meeting is being conducted on Zoom due to COVID.  
Thanks to Carla R. for hosting!

**OPENING – Chairperson, Rick A.**

- Rick called the meeting to order and led *The Serenity Prayer*.
- Mo read the *Twelve Traditions*.
- Diane accepted a motion to approve the October 2021 Intergroup Minutes.

**I TREASURER’S REPORT – Tina K.**

- Tina K. reported that October 2021 MTD was **-\$8,434.75** and YTD through 10/31/2021 was **-\$33,523.98**, as compared to last year’s YTD, which was **-\$22,967.99**.

**II EXECUTIVE SECRETARY’S REPORT – David F.**

- In October, our Literature Sales were up over last year for the same period by 76% at \$5,291.13. Our contributions were down for the same time last year by 40% at **-\$7,932.64**. We ended the month of October in the red at **-\$8,434.75**. For YTD (thru 10/31/21) we are in the RED **-\$33,523.98**, compared to last year when we were **-\$22,967.99**.
- We continue to add information to our website: [www.sfvaa.org](http://www.sfvaa.org), including In-person meetings and upcoming events. Continue to submit your events and meeting changes to: [sfvco@outlook.com](mailto:sfvco@outlook.com).
- As of October 31, 2021, we are listing over [275](#) IN-PERSON meetings and [255](#) Zoom meetings.
- PayPal and Venmo accounts are functioning well. Contributions from your group, gratitude, birthday and personal gifts can be made online via Venmo or PayPal.
- All phone shifts are being covered but we are *always* seeking new volunteers to assist with urgent/last-minute replacements.
- REMINDER: Central Office is open for literature sales during regular business hours: M – F, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. & weekends 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., except the last Friday of month and on major holidays.
- Submit any meeting changes to Central Office at [sfvco@outlook.com](mailto:sfvco@outlook.com).

- **RECOVERY TIMES – Pat K.** We are always seeking submissions on stories about your recovery. Please keep it to 650 words and submit to editor Pat K. at: [xnowisthetime@aol.com](mailto:xnowisthetime@aol.com). We reserve the right to edit any submissions. Deadline for the next issue is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month.

**V MEETING RELATED BUSINESS – Tina K.**

We had 2 new Intergroup representatives this month:

Devin L. from the Monday night Kester meeting and Mike W. from the Monday night Encino meeting.

**/ SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES**

- District 11: Steve K. Area visitation.
- District 16: No report.
- District 1: No report.
- District 17: Katie M. reported that 3 grants of \$100 each were granted for hybrid meeting set up and equipment. GS delegate Share Out is October 24. The Area 93 General Service Report Back will be October 24, both live and on Zoom.
- SFV Hospital & Institutions (H&I) Committee: No report.
- San Fernando Valley AA Convention: The dates are 1/28–1/30/22. Tables at the events will be limited in number and seats so buy your tickets early.
- Santa Clarita Valley Convention Committee: No report.

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**VI OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**VII NEW BUSINESS**

- Support to the Little Villages for the Homeless is on hold pending AA Public Information support.
- Birthday/Anniversary envelopes are available now at Central Office, which is one way individuals can give back to the fellowship and help us continue to serve the San Fernando Valley.
- Burbank Group's 31st Annual Thank-A-Thon on Zoom. See flyer at sfvaa.org on 11/25-26.
- Unit A Thanksgiving Alcahthon will be live from 11/24-26, see the flyer at sfvaa.org.
- SFV H&I Committee is returning to IN-PERSON Business meeting at St. Innocent Church on the 3rd Monday of the month.
- SALE – on Speaker CDs, Cassettes, DVDs and foreign language literature, including BIG BOOKS!
- The next Intergroup Meeting will be December 13, 2021:  
Zoom 219 343 8442  
Password 12345

**VIII ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AA GROUPS & 7<sup>TH</sup> TRADITION**

- Birthday/Anniversary envelopes are available at Central Office for all groups to distribute to their members at their meetings!
- Carla R. asked that flyers for events be emailed to her for inclusion in the IGR packet, and additionally, send flyers to: [sfvco@outlook.com](mailto:sfvco@outlook.com) for inclusion on our A.A. website.
- Flyers must be for AA-related Events (defined as an event that includes an A.A. meeting).

**IX ACKNOWLEDGE BIRTHDAYS: TWO FOR THE MONTH OF NOV. - 72 YEARS!**

Simmie C. – 35 years  
Larry S. – 37 years

**X VACANCIES ON BOARD** - No board vacancies.

**XI CLOSING**

- A motion to adjourn was recognized and seconded.
- The meeting adjourned at 7:34pm with *The Lord's Prayer*

Prepared and submitted by Diane D., Recording Secretary

If you attend a meeting without an IGR, please elect a new IGR and have them join us on the 2nd Monday of the month, at 6:30pm for new IGRs, and 7pm for the meeting.

Zoom 219 343 8442  
Password 12345

**NEXT SFV INTERGROUP MEETING:  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2021**

## AA Service Committees

**GS Area 93:** Please consult the leadership of your district for information on how to access your Zoom meeting:

**District 1:** See Zoom info on website. Meeting starts at 6 p.m. for orientation; 6:30 for general meeting.

**District 11:** See Zoom info on website. Meeting starts at 6:30 orientation; 7 p.m. general meeting..

**District 16:** Meets the 1st Monday of the month. (Central Office) at 5:30 p.m. for orientation then meeting. Please see Zoom info on website.

**District 17:** Meets the 1st Monday of the month. Please see Zoom info on website. 5:15 p.m. orientation; 5:45 p.m. general meeting.

**San Fernando Valley A.A. Intergroup:** This meeting is being held the 2nd Monday on ZOOM now and the meeting information is as follows: **(6:30 pm** Orientation for new IGR's - **7:00 pm** Business Meeting).  
Zoom Mtg ID#: 2193438442 Password: 12345.



### 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.

### 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. **RT**

## 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) [www.sfvhi.org](http://www.sfvhi.org):

H & I is carrying the message of A.A. recovery via Zoom (virtually) into hospitals, prisons and treatment facilities to those who are unable to get to meetings.

### San Fernando Valley Young People in AA: On hold for now.

### Birthday Envelopes

We have new birthday envelopes for AAs celebrating anniversaries of sobriety. **Consider making a donation** to Central Office of a dollar per year for your AA anniversary.

This month we celebrate the anniversaries of:  
**Andre- 2 years, Amy V.- 10 years, Paul- 14 years- Anonymous- 38 years, Laurel C.- 49 years & Learning to Live Men's Stag (who contributed \$155.23).**

**We remember** those AA members who have passed on to the great meeting in the sky:  
None that we know of.

### 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. **RT**

## From the Founders

“For all its usual destructiveness, we have found that fear can be the starting point for better things. Fear can be a stepping-stone to prudence and to a decent respect for others. It can point the path to justice, as well as to hate. And the more we have of respect and justice, the more we shall begin to find the love which can suffer much, and yet be freely given. So, fear need not always be destructive, because the lessons of its consequences can lead us to positive values.” **AA Co-Founder, Bill W.**, January 1962, “This Matter of Fear,” *The Language of the Heart*

“I’d like to develop Step Eleven further -- for the benefit of the complete doubter, the unlucky one who can’t believe it has any real merit at all .... As he goes along with his process of prayer, he begins to add up the results. If he persists, he will almost surely find more serenity, more tolerance, less fear, and less anger. He will acquire a quiet courage, the kind that doesn’t strain him. He can look at so-called failure and success for what they really are. Problems and calamity will begin to mean instruction, instead of destruction. He will feel freer and saner ... His sense of purpose and of direction will increase. His tensions and anxieties will commence to fade. His physical health is likely to improve. Wonderful and unaccountable things will start to happen. Twisted relations in his family and on the outside will unaccountably improve. Even if few of these things happen, he will still find himself in possession of great gifts. When he has to deal with hard circumstances, he can face them and accept them. He can now accept himself and the world around him.” **AA Co-Founder, Bill W.**, June 1958, “Take Step Eleven”, *The Language of the Heart*

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## Please buy your meeting supplies from AA Central Office of the Valley.

By doing so, you are supporting your local AA Central office. (It’s also 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 sales are closed last Fri. of every month for Inventory and on *major holidays*).

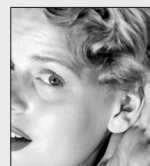
**To find an online or in-person meeting in the San Fernando Valley, call Central Office at: (818) 988-3001** or go to: **sfvaa.org**. You can also look up meeting schedules on Group websites or Facebook pages, or go to this online directory: [www.laaaonlinemeetings.org](http://www.laaaonlinemeetings.org)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

**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 most A.A. approved literature and pamphlets your group needs.

**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.

### ***Has there been a change to your meeting?***

Please email Central Office: [sfvco@outlook.com](mailto:sfvco@outlook.com). **RT**



## Heard Around A.A.:

“The greatest promise in the program is the one in the Twelfth Step. It tells me I will have a spiritual awakening as the result of the Steps. I know I need that awakening to have a chance to stay sober.” **White Rock, BC**

“I began to find ... a more centered, purposeful life, at least in the sense that my body, mind, emotions, and soul were all more or less heading in the same direction. I was riding one horse instead of four.” **La Canada, CA**

“Difficult times bring us to new degrees of acceptance and humility because we learn on a deeper level how close we really are to our next drink. If we hang on, we learn how the grace of the Fellowship and the principles of the program carry us through the tough spots as well as the times of joy.” **Providence, RI**

“To be happily sober, we must be active -- and this does not necessarily mean group activity. The Loner is part of a much larger group of people in far distant places, all members of AA with the same problems, fears, and happiness to be shared ... I may not be in face-to-face contact with other AA members, but my real friends in AA are too many to enumerate, and I find there aren’t enough hours in the day to do all I should.” **Salisbury, Rhodesia**

“I was amazed at the things I was grateful for: those painful situations that served to show me my character defects; the ability to accept and share my pain with others; the opportunities to do things I was afraid to do which gave me strength and confidence.” **State College, Pennsylvania** **RT**

## The Gift of Sharing: The words he spoke to his A. A. Group that December opened their hearts forever

**Last night**, our family traveled to our regional theater for the annual production of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." This was our fourth, or perhaps fifth, annual pilgrimage to see that play.

This year, we purchased two additional tickets for our A.A. friends, Bob and Linda. A couple of South Dakota farm kids, before meeting us, they had never experienced live theater, Broadway musicals for fine dining. Since that time, all of these things have come into their lives, and they've repeatedly expressed their gratitude for having been exposed to these finer things in life. However, we find that it's their friendship that has become the finest thing in all of our lives.

Bob has pancreatic cancer and has now begun taking morphine for the pain. But he'd have none of it this night as he wanted to remain as sharp as possible for the company and the performance to come.

We all met at our house on Idaho Avenue before setting off for the theater. We sat at the kitchen table drinking sodas and laughing with each other as one by one, family members filtered into the room to say their hellos.

I showed up wearing my Santa Claus hat, and soon, Katie, our 11-year-old, appeared behind me wearing hers. We had one extra hat left over and I offered it to anyone who was willing to be silly and festive. "Linda, do you want to wear this hat?" I asked. "Not me," she laughed. "Bob?" Linda asked. He took the hat in hand, furrowed his brow and gave it a cursory look of disdain. Sighing, he said, "Oh, man, I'd have to be dying of cancer to wear that thing." Then with a big smile, he put it on his head. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. I laughed. That's when I began to realize that everything I'd do this night would be the last time I'd do it with Bob and Linda together.

A month ago, when Bob originally told us that he had cancer, it came like a thunderclap. It was immobilizing. But soon, we learned that not all was lost. Bob showed us the way. A few weeks back, my wife and I attended a Sunday morning Big Book meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. It was there that Bob announced to our group of 30 friends what he had devastatingly told me on the telephone the day before. However, he did it in such a way as to take the sting out of death and the fear out of living.

He is normally a very shy, ... (cont. next page) **RT**

## Bringing in the New Year

With the year 2021 close to an end, many people's thoughts will turn to celebrating. Some of us may find ourselves at a New Year's Eve event where alcohol is being served or with loved ones who are drinking. If you have concerns about this, we can point you to sober events or A.A. meetings in your area on New Year's Eve or New Years Day.

Remember: You never have to go through this holiday alone.



## November Was Gratitude Month

Every year, AAs throughout our area contribute to Central Offices as an act of gratitude for getting sober. Your Central Office is to the groups, what the General Service Office is to AA as a whole. It is the support system that keeps everything running.

If you are in a position to give back, please remember your San Fernando Valley Office of A.A. for bequests and contributions. The maximum dollar amount of individual bequests by AAs 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. **RT**

## The Gift of Sharing

*Continued from page six:*

unimposing man, but on this one morning he took control of the meeting. He began by saying, “My name is Bob, and I’m an alcoholic.” “Hi Bob,” we all answered back. I looked around the room at the faces of all of our friends. Some of them were smiling and happy. They didn’t know. Others were grave and concerned. They had heard and had been talking with each other.

“We’re on page 576 this morning: Bob’s Story,” Bob continued. There are only 575 pages in the book. “Well...” he started slowly. “I went to see the doctor yesterday. He said that I’m full of cancer. It’s in my pancreas, some in my liver, and the rest has spread throughout my lymph system, whatever that is.”

The men and women sat there motionless, staring. Some were dumbfounded. Others began to quietly cry. The silence was crushing. Bob went on. “So you all know what that means. I got the same as you – 24 hours. And that’s all that it means.”

Speaking for myself, I find that when I look at a person who has cancer, I begin to see them as different from me. Their mortality becomes apparent, and mine becomes less so. It’s only later that I discover that I have, in fact, been kidding myself into believing that I’m going to be around for a very long time to come. This just ain’t so. Nevertheless, I draw a circle around the cancer victim and then see them as something other than myself.

What Bob accomplished in those two

short sentences was the same as making a bigger circle and drawing all of us into it. Suddenly, we were all in the same boat together. It was no longer Bob who was going to die. It was now all of us who were going to live. But how would we live? Bob answered that question, too.

He held the tattered blue Big Book aloft, and grasping it by one corner he gently waved it as a preacher might do. “This program works,” he said softly. His eyes glistened with the emotion of the moment. His wife sat beside him. Linda’s eyes were cast down at her hands folded before her. Her face was red, as if she were holding it all in.

**“There ain’t nothing sadder than dying alone without friends – and that was going to be me.”**

His gaze passed from man to woman seated around the table. “You people are what make the difference.”

Now Linda’s face became contorted. Her eyes, though closed tightly, could not contain her tears. Dropping her head, her shoulders shuddered, yet she made no sound as she wept bitterly.

Turning aside, Bob rested his hand on her shoulder. “I’m going to be OK,” he said. “It’s not me I worry for.” He soothed her, rubbing his roughened hand back and forth across her shoulders. “I don’t feel bad. In fact, I’m the luckiest man here. This program has given me the things that you just can’t buy with a dollar bill.”

Now others began to cry, also. We’d heard him say that thing so often. It



hurt to hear it said one more time, thinking that it might be our last.

“I stole from every one of you here. You people are what keep me sober.”

How ironic, I thought, that he would do so much stealing, and we would be the ones who got so rich. My wife, Jan, clutched my hand beneath the table. I didn’t need to turn to see if she was crying. I knew she was because I was too.

As Bob cried, he sneaked a brawny finger up behind the lens of his glasses and wiped a tear away. Then, before going on, he rearranged his glasses by nudging them gently with his knuckle and forefinger. He raised his eyebrows suddenly and let them drop, as if he could straighten his tears by doing so. Bob tapped on the book which now lay before him. “I’ve been through this book a hundred times, and I can’t find a lie in it. I’m telling you now, people, God doesn’t make no mistakes.”

When I sensed he was going to say the same thing that he had always said before, a lump rose up in my throat and choked the breath out of me. (*Cont., next page*)

## The Gift of Sharing

*Continued from previous page.*

“And I love every one of you here, and there ain’t a damn thing you can do about it. And with that, I’ll pass.”

Many things of value were said after that, but none of them exceeded the eloquence of Bob’s tears and simple, unfaltering testimony.

AAs are no strangers to death. Some of us have flirted with it, others have lived with it impending, and still others have prayed for its healing balm to be bestowed upon us when all other forms of succor have failed. And AAs tend not

to lament the passing of a fellow so much as they celebrate the additional days of recovery, bestowed by a loving God, and enjoyed by a grateful heart. But still, we cry.

Chuck, a 24-year veteran, said haltingly, “This is the most powerful testimony to the program that I’ve ever seen. It so clearly demonstrates that if it doesn’t work for this, then it doesn’t work for anything.” It does work for dying, I thought, because it works so well for living. And living well is the secret to dying well.

I drew a circle and closed Bob out. He made a bigger circle and drew me in.

That holiday, Bob showed us that it was not he who was going to die, but all of us who were going to live. But just how were we going to do that?

The answer lay before us all between the tattered covers of a simple blue book.

**Rick T., Falcon Heights, Minn.**

Editors Note: Bob died in on Jan. 31, 1996. Both he and Linda agreed to Rick’s telling of their story. **RT**



**AA Crossword Puzzle: Read up, down, diagonally and backwards to find these words:**

“I pray that I may strive to be the kind of person that God would have me be. I pray that I may try to fulfill God’s vision of what I could be.”

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