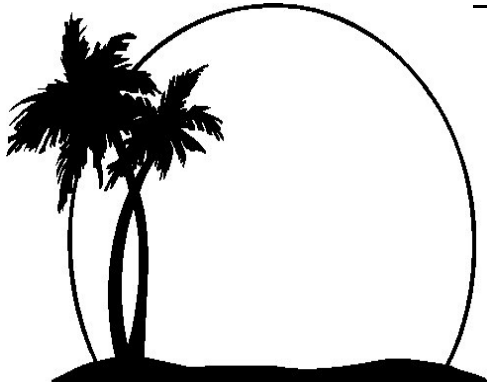


August, 2021



Your Santa Barbara Central Office

Presents

The Messenger

14 W. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 962-3332 www.santabarbaraaa.com

PRE-REGISTER NOW!

SWACYPAA VII

WITH AL-ANON PARTICIPATION!



SEPTEMBER 16-19, 2021
CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL
VENTURA, CA

To register online & get more
info, visit swacypaa7.org



The Manager's Corner

BY TIM W.

The size of the list has shrunk, but I find I still need to make one. Sometimes it is because an old memory has resurfaced, and sometimes it's because I've opened my mouth and inserted my foot again. Whatever the cause, it is somehow different when I see it put down on paper. Probably the scariest part of it is that I know that once I see it in my own handwriting, I'm going to have to acknowledge the truth of it, and I'm going to have to clean up the latest mess I've made.

True, with time, it has become easier to eat that crow, but it still doesn't taste that good. So, sometimes, I'll tell myself that even though I'm putting it on paper that doesn't necessarily mean that I'll actually continue on and make the amends. One Step at a time and all that

business.

The beauty of our Steps is that they will lead us (sometimes slowly) in the direction we need to go. After all, just because I have the list it doesn't mean I have to continue on. Right? However, I've found that having made the list, and knowing the truth of it, will make me uncomfortable enough that I'll swallow that pride and proceed in the direction I have to go. Because that's the only way I'll get the relief I'm seeking, and experience has shown me that not proceeding is more painful than doing what I need to do to clean up the mess.

Don't let me scare you. It does get easier. Try it. You'll find out.

—Tim W.

[illegible]

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IMPORTANT: Please indicate what Group is making the donation or what individual member is making the donation



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About SWACYPAA



The idea for a Southwest Area Conference for Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous was originally conceived by regular attendees of annual YPAA Conferences between 2006 and 2010, a nearly five year stretch of time during which there was only one year with a regional Young People's Conference inside of a day's drive for residents of the Continental American Southwest. The simultaneous growth occurring in the population of YPAAs in states like Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada and Arizona led to the creation of the Four Corners Summit in 2010, an annual Campout aimed at promoting participation, enthusiasm, unity and excitement about Alcoholics Anonymous and sobriety for young people in the Southwest who didn't have another annual gathering in their immediate vicinity that they could attend or host. Many YPAAs within the region of the Four Corners Summit had made a regular habit of traveling to nearby

states to attend their annual conferences, however found themselves frustrated by the fact they could never bring those Round-Ups to their area. There was a desire to participate in the kind of spiritual growth they heard was experienced by those involved in hosting large conferences.

During the three years after the Four Corners Summit was created, it became apparent to those involved that its attendees desired to keep that event small and intimate. The idea for creating an additional, larger conference for the Southwest region was born. After the unanimous blessing of the WACYPAA Advisory Council, YPAAs from Utah, Colorado, Arizona and Nevada planned an informal gathering at the 2013 WACYPAA in Tucson, AZ, where an Advisory Council to lead the idea from concept to actualization was formed. From there the work to make SWACYPAA a reality began as the elected Advisory Council began to hold monthly video conference calls.

The Southwest Area Conference for Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous has been established as an annual gathering to promote participation, unity, and enthusiasm about recovery among young AAs in the region. All across the Southwest there are young people achieving long-term, lasting recovery from alcoholism, but until now there has been no consistent vehicle for newcomers to be introduced to this reality. To fill this void, SWACYPAA has been designed to enable smaller, sometimes less populated cities with growing YPAA communities to experience attending, bidding, and hosting a local area conference.

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On the Eighth Step

"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."

DESERT STORM

BY RUTH B. (SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK)

The first time I got drunk was at my sister's wedding. I was 8 years old. My first blackout came when I was in third grade. By the time I quit high school and joined the Air Force at 17, I was well on my way to being a full-fledged alcoholic.

I was 18 when the Air Force sent me to my first permanent duty station, which happened to be Las Vegas, Nevada. In the late '70s, Las Vegas was probably the best or the worst place for me to be stationed, depending on your point of view.

I was tough and strong and knew how to fight. I quickly established a routine in my favorite bar. I would watch for the men who came in to harass women in the bar. I would humiliate these men, toss them out and then drink for free for the rest of the night as the "unofficial bouncer." It felt like a win-win situation—until one Saturday night.

I followed my old routine. This time however, when I left the bar at about 4 a.m., the guy I had tossed out earlier was waiting for me outside with four of his friends. I distinctly remember thinking that this was the first time that alcohol was a problem for me. I knew how to fight, but my body didn't do the things I wanted it to. So I lost. I wound up beaten, raped, stabbed in the back and left for dead in the desert, not far from the bar.

But God had other plans for me. I came to Sunday afternoon, staring up at a construction truck that I'd been left under. I made my way back to the bar, got into my truck and drove myself home. I remember lying down in the bathtub so I wouldn't bleed all over the apartment and lose my security deposit.

At that same moment, 3,000 miles away, my mother, the Al-Anon of the family, "knew" that something wasn't right. She started making calls to Las Vegas. Eventually she got my landlord on the phone and convinced him to check on me. He found me and got me to a hospital.

The experience of being beaten and left for dead did not sober me up. In fact it made me a meaner, nastier drunk than I ever imagined I'd become. And now, I had no fear. I had been dead. Being dead didn't hurt; living hurt. I left the Air Force and Las Vegas and headed for Florida. After all, I reasoned, nothing good ever happens west of the Mississippi. And I proceeded to cut a swath of destruction across my life for the next several years. Eventually, I found my way to AA, thanks to another Al-Anon member who also saved my life.

My last drink was in 1986 and I attended meetings on and off for the next dozen years. One of the things I did was to be of service. It helped me feel better. I would go to "Take Back The Night" events where I would teach simple

self-defense skills as a practicing black belt. I would then share my story of nearly being beaten to death.

The message I tried to teach was that no matter how tough or fast or smart you think you are, if you're in the wrong place at the wrong time, chances are bad things will happen. My hope was that I could make a difference for some young college kid, and perhaps I did.

At almost 20 years sober, I was working on my Eighth Step. My Big Book sponsor said we should put everyone from our Fourth Step onto our amends list. The guys back in Las Vegas were still on my list. There was no way on earth I could see that I owed an amends to them but I followed directions and put them down.

Soon after, I started having memory flashbacks. I would see myself back in the desert fighting for my life, and I knew how that story ended. The last thing I would see was someone kicking me in the head before the lights went out. I would wake up in a cold sweat.

But one night something different happened. I woke up and clearly heard myself say, "The guy who kicked me in the head saved my life." If I had kept fighting, they would have killed me for sure. But by knocking me out, the man had saved my life. And how can you hate someone who saved your life? I didn't know the man who had kicked me. I didn't know any of them. So how could I hate any of them? And if that was true, how could I hate myself?

Now, for me, the opposite of anger is not love. The opposite of anger is peace. That night, God showed up—again—and did something I had never imagined.

I played a part in my own beating. I was alone. I was outnumbered. I was unarmed. I was drunk. But I was there fighting anyway. I placed huge value in the idea that I was someone who would rather fight and die than lose and live.

But God had other plans. And I did live. But if I couldn't hate the guys who beat me, I couldn't hate myself, either.

Now, for me, the opposite of anger is not love. The opposite of anger is peace. That night, God showed up—again—and did something that I had never imagined. God brought me peace. In that one night, the process of making a list and being willing to make amends healed a chapter of my life that I had never expected to see closed. God did for me what I could not do for myself.

A few weeks ago, while sharing my story in a Big Book workshop, I realized that there's a good chance that some of those men from so long ago may have made it to the rooms of AA also. And if so, I would actually like the chance to meet them. Because somewhere, for almost 40 years, someone may be living with the thought that he left a dead body in the desert of Las Vegas that night. And I would like to let him know that God had other plans.

—From the August 2016 Grapevine



July Birthdays

<u>Member</u>	<u>Years</u>
Carol B.	4
BJ	4
Ashlee I.	6
Kim H.	6
Sosanna I.	10
Richard W.	13
Anthony B.	16
Arno J.	20
Jay	26
Andy G.	28
Richard K.	33
Starr W.	36
Roger M.	38
Sheila B.	49

The Messenger is published by
YOUR Central Office.

Please send submissions to:
manager@santabarbaraAA.com

***Have an AA birthday? Please let
your Central Office know so that we
can print it in The Messenger.***

Central Office Statistics

During July, your Central Office had:

AA Info Calls	124
Alanon Referrals	2
Other Referrals	0
12 Step Calls	0
12 Step Office	0
Out of Town Visitors	8
Office Walk Ins	172
Website Pageviews	7,654

"But if a willing start is made, then the great advantages of doing this will so quickly reveal themselves that the pain will be lessened as one obstacle after another melts away."

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, page 78

On Tradition Eight

"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers."

NO ONE'S THE BOSS

*Oh, no! What will these AAs make him do?
What does he owe? This newcomer's first
encounter with the Traditions was a pleas-
ant surprise*

STEVE S. (BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY)

At my very first AA meeting, two large vinyl posters were hanging on the wall. The Twelve Steps were on one poster and the Twelve Traditions were on another.

With a suspicion-filled mind, I read the words on them. What I gathered from the Traditions was that it sounded like no one in particular was in charge, and the only goal was to help. I figured this was like most organizations; its ideals were posted on the walls. I sat in meetings a long time waiting to spot who actually was going to presume they could boss me around and what they would claim I owed.

Turns out I was wrong. As a dear AA friend likes to share at meetings, "When it comes to carrying AA's message, we do it for fun and for free."

My suspicion, which today I consider a fermented form of fear, has never played out. Here and there, AAs might act bossy, but not one is the boss of another. We are each left to our own path of recovery. We are each subject to our own devices, our own consciences.

And we owe nothing. Matters of money, time and talents are also left to each member to decide whether or not, and how much to contribute. Each member is their own boss and chooses if and how to contribute to AA's collective effort to carry the AA message to alcoholics who still suffer. This approach is best.

There's a line in the Tradition Eight essay from our book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* which says, "Alcoholics simply will not listen to a paid Twelfth-Stepper." I identify. This principle of "non-professionalism" when it comes to carrying AA's message saved me from my fearful, suspicion-driven mind.

As I sat reading those Traditions on the poster that day, I decided that if someone attempted to boss me, I wasn't coming to another meeting. I would take my alcohol-soaked resentments home and not come back!

Thankfully no one bossed me. Rather, many helped, and the Steps provided a path to freedom from alcohol and the resentments that I have continued to enjoy for more than 20 years now.

Another influence, more subtle but as great in importance, also stemmed from Tradition Eight as I look back. The first meeting I attended included about six or seven regulars. I took quick measure of them, as I had to spot who the boss really was among them. The suspicion in my keen alcoholic mind was dulled and ultimately outdone by openness. Not one of the six or seven took on being "the boss" and not one of them was getting paid. The real kicker though, what kicked down my sus-

picion and made room for some open-mindedness, was the fact that they were there in our meeting every week just to be helpful—and they were having fun.

I wasn't having much fun in those days. Being afraid and resentful of everyone and everything is serious stuff. Also, I wasn't interested in doing anything without getting paid, even though I was a lousy employee and hardly employed.

When it came to AA's message being carried, non-professionalism was in effect at that first AA meeting I attended—

no bosses and no one getting paid. There's more to Tradition Eight, including the whole bit about service centers and employment and support of AA members' Twelfth Step efforts. But this article is short, so I hope you review for yourself, in full, the Tradition Eight essay in the "Twelve and Twelve."

Tradition Eight, and all Twelve Traditions on the one poster, were all in effect and a part of the AA group I was so fortunate to find. I am grateful because I know today that those Traditions fostered the group's environment of love and tolerance as well as singleness of purpose. All of which were essential so I would stick around long enough to experience the amazing gifts along the path described on that other poster, the one with the Twelve Steps.

—From the August 2020 Grapevine

*"I am grateful because I
know today that those
Traditions fostered the
group's environment of
love and tolerance."*

Central Office Group Contributions Q2 2021

GROUP	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	TOTAL
83-87 Group (pages)	0.00	0.00	400.00	400.00
9 Palms Meeting	186.00	82.00	146.95	414.95
Aloha Moving	200.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
Armed with Facts	0.00	0.00	134.08	134.08
Bed Head Ladies	270.00	270.00	450.00	990.00
Big Book Comes Alive Women's Meeting	21.00	0.00	49.00	70.00
Came to Believe Candlelight	0.00	0.00	48.00	48.00
Carpinteria Homeboys	3.00	114.00	0.00	117.00
Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	150.00	0.00	150.00
Casa Serena Wednesday-Women's Serenity Grp	60.00	0.00	50.00	110.00
Conscious Contact	0.00	15.00	0.00	15.00
Counter Sale	18.00	0.00	0.00	18.00
Dubious Luxury	0.00	73.00	0.00	73.00
Foundation Group	45.00	143.00	145.00	333.00
Grateful Group	0.00	55.20	0.00	55.20
Harbor Group	347.00	504.00	706.00	1,557.00
Junkyard Dogs	49.00	370.00	224.00	643.00
Just the Black Print	214.00	40.00	125.00	379.00
KCB-Keep Coming Back-ALL	227.00	300.00	0.00	527.00
Keeping it Real	0.00	5.00	0.00	5.00
Key Group-ALL #177	10.00	10.00	60.00	80.00
LGBTQ Sunday Morning Alano	0.00	0.00	60.00	60.00
Men Who Have Lost Their Legs #164	70.00	0.00	208.00	278.00
Mother Group #028	0.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
Noon Step Study-Goleta #005	0.00	200.00	0.00	200.00
On Awakening	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Onward & Upward #019	0.00	0.00	60.00	60.00
Rigorous Honesty #067	120.00	159.00	120.00	399.00
Saturday Morning Home Boys #120	0.00	0.00	127.00	127.00
Schooner Group #114	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
Sisters In Solutions #043	5.00	0.00	0.00	5.00
Speak Easy Summerland	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
Spiritual Principles	25.00	0.00	0.00	25.00
Start Your Day Right #156	1,310.00	595.00	2,315.00	4,220.00
Staying Alive-Women's SS #055	0.00	0.00	25.00	25.00
Stepping Stones Women's Mtg #068	0.00	0.00	92.00	92.00
Summerland/Montecito Thursday #183	2.00	0.00	0.00	2.00
Sundowner - Zoom	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Sundowner Group #011	300.00	0.00	25.00	325.00
The Loft-Sunday	25.00	0.00	10.00	35.00
Thursday Ladies Nite #180	0.00	0.00	36.00	36.00
Upper Village People	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
Voices of Women	0.00	20.00	0.00	20.00
TOTAL	3,657.00	3,105.20	6,826.03	13,588.23

CENTRAL OFFICE

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