

**November 2023**

**Your Central Office presents**

# *The Messenger*



**Throughout the month, please pass the basket a 2nd time because:**

## **November is Gratitude Month!**

For many decades now, we in the fellowship, have formally carved out the month of November as a time to express our collective gratitude for our individual sobriety. Central office relies on gratitude month donations for a large portion of our annual operating expenses. Through your generous donations, we will continue to provide the much needed services to the alcoholics in our community.

Getting the word out about gratitude month becomes increasingly difficult with the addition of hybrid and online meetings, so please help spread the word at all of the meetings you attend.

Donations are accepted by Venmo (see our qr code or @sbcentraloffice), mail a check or drop it off at Central Office. Please be sure to include your meeting information and "Gratitude" in the comments, memo or in the optional note field on Venmo.

**Thank you very much.** Your donations are needed and greatly appreciated.



Scan QR Code for payment

# ***Participate!***

## STORY SOLICITATION

"Do You Think You're Different?" Pamphlet Update

Deadline for submissions: April 30, 2024

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/5a77c27d179d4856b32eed86b01e3426>

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The trustees Literature Committee is seeking stories from AA members with diverse backgrounds. This is in response to the 2022 Conference Advisory Action that the trustees' Literature Committee revise the pamphlet "Do You Think You're Different?" to update the stories to represent greater diversity.

The Trustees' Literature Committee requested that consideration be given to stories from multicultural populations, stories from A.A. members whose experience reflects multiple factors, and from diverse populations not addressed in other current A.A. literature. Please

encourage members in your area to write their personal stories for possible inclusion in the revised pamphlet "Do You Think You're Different." Stories should reflect "in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now."

The suggested format for typed manuscripts is 500-800 words, double spaced, in 12-point font. Handwritten manuscripts should be approximately 5 to 6 pages.

Please include your complete name, address, and email/phone information on the first page of your manuscript. A copy of your manuscript should be retained for your files.

The anonymity of all authors will be observed whether their story is selected for publication or not.

Instructions for submitting your manuscript:

Please submit on or before

Deadline: April 30, 2024

Submit your story by following this link:

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Additional ways of sending your story:

Email: [pamphletstories@aa.org](mailto:pamphletstories@aa.org)

Subject Line: "Do You Think You're Different?"

# OCT BIRTHDAYS!



Member	YEARS
Susanne	1
Kyle T.	2
Kim D.	3
Brenda R.	3
Mark W.	3
Val P.	7
Dave W	8
Vanessa	10
Cathy H.	12
Nettie G.	15
Jocelyn	17
Joe	25
Kim Mc.	25
Kathy S.	26
Diane F.	28
Penny H.	30
Tom O'B.	32
Fran	34
Greg D.	34
Manuel R.	35
Nick C.	42

# DID YOU KNOW?

- The windows are all fixed, installed and sparkling new! Looks great! Come by and get a cup of coffee and say hi, check them out!
- GSO is looking for a Story Solicitation for a pamphlet update on "Do You Think You're Different?" See the flyer posted herein.
- Central Office Needs your Help!! Volunteers are needed for only a few hours a week! Monday, Wednesday, or Friday are available from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.. Please come by and visit or call us if you have any interest in volunteering!! It's a fun commitment!!
- November is Gratitude Month!! This is a time when AA groups often choose to make special contributions to their local service offices (and to GSO in New York). We do this because it is a very direct and spiritual way to participate in Twelfth Step work. Many of us also feel more a part of AA and a sense of fulfillment of one of our deep spiritual needs, the desire to belong.
- In the pamphlet "Where Money and Spirituality Mix," Bill Wilson asks "Now, where do AA's services - worldwide, area, local - fit into our scheme of things?" and "Why should we provide these functions with money?" He responds, "The answer is simple enough. Every single AA service is designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible, whether it be a group meeting place, a central or intergroup office...or the world service Headquarters...these service agencies are absolutely essential to our continued expansion - to our survival as a Fellowship. Their costs are a collective obligation that rests squarely upon all of us."

**S.B. Intergroup (IGR)**  
**Meets the 2nd Tues. of the month**  
**6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Zoom ID – 84736703156**  
**Password – 184289**

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**Hospitals & Institutions (H&I)**  
**Meets the 2nd Mon. of the month -**  
**Central Office**  
**5:30 Orientation for new members**  
**Business meeting as usual**  
**6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

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**SB Central Office – Office**  
**Volunteer Shifts**  
**Prerequisite – One year of**  
**sobriety. Open Office Shifts:**  
**Thursday or Friday**  
**10:00 – 2:00 p.m.**

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***1895 - Bill Wilson is born in East Dorset, Vermont on 11/26.***

***1934 - Ebby T. surrenders his life to God at the Calvary Episcopal Church Mission run by Sam Shoemaker.***

***1939 - The first West Coast AA meeting is held in San Francisco.***

***1939 - Cleveland Plain Dealer runs first of a series of articles on AA. Cleveland soon has more AA members than any other city in the country. (Note: I dare say more members than any other city in the world, since AA started in Ohio/NYC.)***

***1940 - The first AA group meeting is held in an apartment at Adams Ave. in San Diego.***

***1940 - The first AA group in Minneapolis is formed.***

***1941 - The Fresno Bee reports 28 newcomers asking for help in the local group's first week.***

***1947 - Anchorage has the first Alaskan AA group***

***1950 - Dr. Bob, AA cofounder, dies of cancer (11/16).***

***1955 - First appearance of AA on TV. One Day at a Time appeared on ABC Tuesday at 9:30 p.m. on the Cavalcade Theater, starring James Daly.***

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## **Central Office Stats**

**AA Info Calls.....54**  
**Alanon Referrals.....3**  
**12 step calls.....1**  
**Other Referrals.....0**  
**Out of Towners..... 4**  
**Office Walk Ins.....206**

## Become a Central Office Supporting Member!!

### Supporting Member Donation Coupon

I would like to become a supporting member of the Santa Barbara AA Central Office and help it to carry the message of recovery and be there for the alcoholic who still suffers.

Enclosed is my first contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_. I will continue to donate this amount on a (circle one) monthly, quarterly, or annual basis.

If you are already a supporting member, would you please be so kind and update your contact information so we may keep our records accurate?

Venmo and credit cards accepted: Venmo: @SBCentralOffice

Credit Card: Name on

Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Update my records:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

If making a donation by check, please mail to: AA Central Office; 14 W. Anapamu St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101

I would like to receive my monthly newsletter, The Messenger, via email or snail mail, or I can pick one up at my meeting. (circle one).

If making a donation by credit card, feel free to scan and email the coupon to:

[Manager@SantaBarbaraAA.com](mailto:Manager@SantaBarbaraAA.com)



Scan QR Code for payment

## Step 11:

Since the original meaning of meditation meant to “ponder”, we will leave you with this to think about for a month.

“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying ***only*** for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

- Why do you think it says “only”?
- How does that tie into the rest of the steps?
- How do you pray?
- How do you meditate?
- Does it work?

We’d love to hear about what you discover on your journey.

~Central Office

## **Step 11**

**Step Eleven:** Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

**Sought through prayer & meditation** – how simple do we need the instructions to be? It took me almost fifteen years in recovery to see how simple this is. We pray and we meditate – that’s what we do. Like the old John Denver song says, we “talk to God and listen to the casual reply.” We pray every single morning and every single night. It doesn’t need to be fancy – one old timer said that for several months all he could do was say, “please” in the morning and “thank you” at night. It was enough. Twice a day he recognized the existence of a Power greater than himself, asked that Power for help in staying away from a drink for one day, and thanked that Power for doing so. We can add more if and when we choose, but please and thank you are all we need to begin. And meditation? It’s just listening to God – if my mind is racing like a white mouse on steroids, I can’t hear anything else, can I? I have to tell my mind to shut up now and then so I can listen. It’s tough at first, but it gets easier with practice.

**... to improve our conscience contact with God, as we understood Him** – The big book says that we are never cured of alcoholism, but we get a daily reprieve based on “the maintenance of our spiritual condition.” And so if I want to remain sober, which for me means staying alive, the maintenance of my spiritual condition is absolutely essential. It’s not optional. And there is so much chatter about the meaning of “conscious contact.” I think it’s very simple – it’s a constant awareness throughout the day that there is a God, and it’s not me. It’s constantly being willing to surrender the demands of my ego. It’s staying in the present moment, because past and future are only illusions that exist in my head. God is here and now. He is in the faces and voices of the people I meet; He is in the ocean, the sky, and the rooms of AA. Can’t find God? Look around! He’s right here in front of you! If I listen, I can hear God’s voice everywhere, I can see His beauty in every face I meet and in every facet of life. I don’t even have to work that hard to find God – I only need to be willing to let go of my insistence that I am always right. Every day, as long as I continue to pray and meditate, I experience more of God and less of my ego.

**... praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.** “Wow! That is really simple!” I don’t need to pray for God to heal my friend’s Aunt Bertha of her cancer. I need to ask God to show me His will and give me strength to carry it out. I need to be willing to accept God’s will. Aunt Bertha may very well die of her cancer – but will I be there to comfort and support my friend in her grief? If I ask God to make someone well, am I playing God? But if I ask God to give me strength to help a friend who is grieving, there is no ego; there is no “using” God as if He were a genie in a lamp. When I keep my prayers this simple, I am relieved of the burden of deciding what should or should not happen. That’s God’s business. My business is to stop trying to run the show. “Your will, not mine, be done.” When I pray this simple prayer I am doing two things: First, I am submitting myself completely to God’s will, whatever that may be. And second, I am asking God to help me get my ego out of the way so I can be useful. And I have found that 99% of the time, God’s will is a thousand times better than anything I could have dreamed up.

So I think I’ll keep working step eleven. Thanks for letting me share.



# A LETTER FROM BILL W TO JACK ALEXANDER

" If you can spare me a little time, I'd like to come down to Philadelphia and see you. Eight years ago the Saturday Evening Post took A.A. out of the pioneering stage and made it a movement. Uncounted thousands owe their great good fortune, yes their very lives, to what the Post did then. We still ship reprints of your article by the carload.

Nowadays A.A. rarely asks for publicity. I suppose we still get it in enormous quantities partly for that reason. Yet the time is here when an exception should be made.

The point of this letter is what I would definitely like to ask you folks a favor. Will you print another piece about us?

The general public has only the vaguest idea what our society really looks like. I think they would be interested in an inside view.

From our standpoint, a vital job has to be done. Now that the recovery formula is above ground and working at a prodigious rate, our main problem is that of maintaining our unity as a movement until every drunk in the world has had a good look at the idea.

So then, if John Q. Public could get an inside view of what our fellowship is really like, and it could become quite clear to him what good A.A.'s do and what they don't do in their relationships with each other and with the outside world, the Saturday Evening Post would have written an insurance policy on our future, the value of which no men could ever reckon."

**CENTRAL OFFICE**  
**14 W. Anapamu Street**  
**Santa Barbara, CA 93101**  
**(805) 962-3332**

