



The Santa Barbara

February 2007

MESSENGER

Convention News

Did you have fun at the 2006 convention? I sure did, and hope you did too. We got a lot of positive feedback during and after the event, so it seems that we alcoholics kept well to our tradition that “We absolutely insist on enjoying life.” As always, the speakers, the food and the fellowship were all outstanding. Many thanks to all who participated – by working on the committee, by volunteering, and, most importantly, by attending. Without all of you, we wouldn’t have a convention at all, much less the successful one we had this year.

Speaking of which, because of all of you who registered we were able to make significant contributions toward helping carry the AA message. In case you didn’t know, the Convention Committee maintains a prudent reserve as “seed money” to get the next year’s convention started, then donates all other proceeds beyond expenses to AA. This year, (again, thanks to you), we were able to donate over \$3,000 to Central Office, and more than \$1,000, total, to H&I, our local GSR, and to GSO in New York.

Hard as it is to believe, it’s time to start to work on the 2007 convention. Keeping last year’s schedule, committee meetings will be at 6 PM on the 2nd Thursday of each month at Maggie’s preschool. We will hold our kick-off meeting on February 8th. See the convention web site (www.sbaaconvention.org) and click the “participate” button for directions to the meeting place if you would like to be part of the fun, planning the next convention and making it happen. There are plenty of committee positions to be filled, as well as other opportunities to help out.

In particular, if you are artistically inclined and computer literate, you would be welcome on the Graphics Committee. Graphics takes the convention logo to camera-ready artwork for transfer to memorabilia (clothing and coffee cups), as well as laying out the flyers and programs. Come give us a hand!

For the entire Santa Barbara community, the theme for the 2007 convention will be chosen at the February meeting. Themes must be a direct quote from AA hard cover literature (as opposed to pamphlets). As an example, the theme for 2006 was “A Simple Kit of Spiritual Tools” (Big Book, pg. 25). A paragraph or two containing the theme quotation is read at every meeting during the convention. If you have suggestions for a theme, pass it on to any committee member, email to webmaster@sbaaconvention.com, or come to the February meeting.

We look forward to another great convention this year, and hope to see you along the way and at the event itself.

~ Bob D.

THE GREAT UNSUNG SECOND STEP



My dear friend Billy B. always referred to the Second Step that way. He claimed its value was sometimes almost unnoticed, or unmentioned. He would say that any fool could beat themselves up with alcohol, if they tried long enough and hard enough. So Step One, for him, was just getting to that place where you absolutely just could not do it anymore. But then, what do you do about it? Step Two, that is what success or failure hinged upon. He said that many people sort of rushed by the fact that they had come to believe in their hurry to turn it over to the Higher Power they had come to understand. Think about it. The fact that we alcoholics, an undisciplined lot for sure, have had enough stuffing knocked out of us by John Barleycorn that sometimes we, just for a second, are willing to concede that we may not be the alpha and omega of existence after all.

For me, it had to do with having no place left to turn, or any people left to use. Then, and only then, could I look at the truth of my failure to succeed by force of will. So I crawled into Alcoholics Anonymous, because there was no place else to go.

Here you introduced me to the mental obsession and the physical allergy. I began to see the truth of what you said, but what was I supposed to do about it? My friend Billy talked to me about Step Two. He said I should try to see 'the synchronicity we used to call coincidence' in the events taking place in my life. When I began to attempt to do that, I began to see how, if I was open-minded and willing enough, just exactly the right person would come along, at just exactly the right time, with just exactly the right help I needed to get through the day.

So for me the Group, and the members of the Group, became my first inkling of Higher Power. I started to run into people in stores and on the street that would help me just by being there. We would stop and exchange words about recovery, or just about life. I started to see that if I was willing to listen there was help for me. I started to trust the process. That was enough for me to make a start.

I have always thought that Billy's point was that some of us fail to realize just what a monumental event it is that we have been beaten up enough, and demoralized enough, that we were able to open our minds and hearts to a Power greater than ourselves. That we could come to believe.

Tim

Supporting Member Donation Coupon

I would like to become a supporting member of the Santa Barbara AA Central Office, and help it continue to carry the message and be there for the alcoholic who still suffers. I look forward to finding my monthly newsletter in the mail each month! Enclosed is my first contribution of \$ _____. I will continue to donate this amount on a (circle one) monthly, quarterly, annual, other _____ basis.

I am already a supporting member. This is my regular contribution of \$ _____.

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please make check payable to: AA Central Office, S.M.C.
1213 State Street, Suite H
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Every AA group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions. —Seventh Tradition (short form), reprinted by permission of AA World Services, Inc.

Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. - Big Book, p.89

This quote pretty much says it for me. My practical experience with doing H&I work is this: one Friday afternoon about 8 1/2 years ago I called my sponsor and started whining about something or other that wasn't going how I thought it should. I don't really remember, but it might have been that I was underpaid for my hard work or my fear of failure or someone mistreating me (those were my common complaints—still are in my less spiritual moments!). I was told to go to the local detox center meeting that night and call back if I was still upset after the meeting. They asked me to join the panel that night and I spent my Friday evenings there for the next 4 years. Each Friday night, whatever I thought was wrong with you, me, or my situation, I was reminded as I shared my experience, strength, and hope with the individuals who were going through withdrawals that my sober life as the result of this program of action was a miracle. Left to my own devices, I had come to in strange places and wreaked havoc on those who cared about or trusted me. When I got sober I didn't have a key that opened anything, and one Friday night I set my keys on the table in front of me and realized that I had 5 or 6 keys on the chain. It was at that meeting that I most noticed how my life was changing—how I was changing. A fellowship was growing around me, including the other panel members. I began to feel a calmness from time to time—that maybe I didn't have to crawl out of my own skin. Even as I continued to create chaos in my life around romances and finances, that H&I meeting was always the start to my weekend, and it reminded me on a weekly basis that no matter how far down the scale I had gone, my experience could benefit others. Doing H&I work, some of my biggest alcoholic mistakes and most crazy alcoholic thinking have been what people could relate to, and I was able to offer the solution that had been offered to me.

Over the years I have attended a lot of H&I meetings including everything from rehabs to prisons and everything in between. I was taught to remember that I am just like everyone in these institutions. Many of us have experience with being in places where there aren't handles on our side of the doors or sharp objects (my experience is with the psych ward), but we have all been isolated and imprisoned by the disease of alcoholism. And the solution is the same for all of us. We take the 12 steps as they are outlined in the book with a sponsor who has taken them with a sponsor before her/him. This is what we offer, and whether or not our “prospects” accept the solution, our lives change. I am infinitely grateful that my life has changed, and I continue to attempt to repay the debt I owe for the miracle that has happened in my life. Although I sometimes grumble (whether aloud or quietly to myself) when called upon to do this type of service work, I am always glad I do it. It really is “an honor and a privilege to be of service.”

Zoe

New Men's Stag Meeting
The Santa Barbara Rescue Mission.
535 East Yanonali St.
(Old Bethel House) Fireside Room.
“Men on a Mission”
Sunday evenings
7:30pm until 8:30pm

Meeting Changes:

NEW LIFE
Thursday
8:00pm - 9:00pm
American Red Cross
2707 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Tuesday Questions and Answers
NOW 8:15-9:15 PM
(was 8:00 – 9:00 p.m.)
1st Congressional Church
2101 State Street (State and Padre)
Bradford Room
entrance off Padre Street
(was at Cottage Hospital)

Central Office Fundraiser Breakfast
Saturday March 24th 2007 @ Goleta Valley Community Center
5679 Hollister Ave.
Breakfast at 9:00 am - Speaker Meeting at 9:30 am
Tickets \$5 each - Call 962-3332 for information

HOW THE MESSAGE CAME TO BILL

In 1932 and 1933, a man named Rowland Hazard, son of wealthy Rhode Island mill owners and a State Senator, had become a hopeless alcoholic, and in his quest for help had sought out the world famous psychiatrist, Carl Jung. Jung told him there was no hope for him there, and to go home and possibly find a conversion through some religious group. He did this in the Oxford Group in the United States and became sober. They taught him certain principles that he applied to his life. This story is documented in our Big Book.

In 1934, Ebby Thatcher, childhood friend of Bill Wilson's, was about to be locked up as a chronic drunk in Bennington, Vermont. He was visited by three men from an Oxford Group; Shep Cornell, Rowland Hazard, and Cebra Graves. (A precursor to our Twelve Step work!) They later sent Rowland Hazard back alone to see Ebby. He acted as a sort of sponsor and told his story. He taught Ebby the precepts he had learned from the Oxford Group. Later, as we know, in December of that year, Ebby had his chance to relay these precepts to Bill Wilson. Here they are, transcribed from a tape of one of Bill's AA talks:

- * We admitted we were licked.
- * We got honest with ourselves.
- * We talked it over with another person.
- * We made amends to those we had harmed.
- * We tried to carry this message to others with no thought of reward.
- * We prayed to whatever God we thought there was.

Now we begin to see the emerging pattern of events in Akron and in the New York area in the ten year period before the start of AA. We see how, through the machinery of the Oxford Group and its key leaders, Frank Buchman and Sam Shoemaker, events conspired to make possible this meeting between Bob and Bill in Akron in 1935. Shep, Cebra, and Rowland were all three Oxford Group members. They were part of the business teams which were working around the country in various cities. In November of 1934, Ebby surrendered his life to God at the Calvary Episcopal Church mission run by Sam Shoemaker. (Sam had met Frank Buchman in China in 1918, and by 1934 was regarded as a major leader of the Oxford Group movement in the United States and was hosting their headquarters.) Ebby is staying at his mission. Bill W. shows up there drunk looking for Ebby, can't find him, and goes to Towns Hospital.

Bill Duval recalls in a letter, "Bill W. told us at the mission that he had heard that Ebby, on the previous Sunday at the Calvary Church, had witnessed that with the help of God he had been sober a number of months." Bill said that if Ebby could get help here, then he (Bill) needed help, and he could get it at the mission, also. Bill looked prosperous compared to our usual mission customers, (actually, he was wearing a Brooks Brother's suit purchased at a rummage sale for \$5.00!), so we agreed that he go to Towns Hospital where Ebby and others of the group could talk to him.

After his spiritual experience at Towns, Bill immediately made a decision to become very active in Oxford Group work, and to try to bring other alcoholics from Towns to the group. He visited the mission Oxford Group meetings and the hospital daily for four or five months, right up to the time of the Akron trip. No one stayed sober.

BILL W. AND THE OXFORD GROUP WORK

Rowland Hazard, who rescued Ebby in August 1934, had a thorough indoctrination in Oxford Group teachings and he passed many of these along to Ebby and Bill W. Soon after his release from Towns Hospital at the end of 1934, Bill and the rest of the alcoholic contingent of the Oxford Group began gathering at Stewart's Cafeteria in New York following their regular meeting. Shep Cornell, then a member of the Oxford Group business team that included Rowland, Sam Shoemaker, and Hanford Twitchell, was also a recovering alkie. Lois Wilson talked of regular attendance at the Oxford Group meetings with Bill, Shep, and Ebby. James Houck, a nonalcoholic Oxford Group member in Frederick, Maryland, stated that Bill W. went to many Oxford Group meetings at the Francis Scott Key Hotel in Frederick and always

centered on alcohol. He was obsessed with the idea of carrying the message. The conclusion is that Bill had a wide acquaintance in Oxford Group circles, not just confined to Sam and Calvary House. Bill told Hou ck that he worked on 50 drunks in the first 6 months with no success. Calvary House was Sam's residence and contained an Oxford Group bookstore. Calvary Mission was at another location in the "gas house" district. Thousands of people passed through the mission where they offered lodging, free meals, and Oxford Group meetings every night. Tex Francisco was its superintendent in 1934 when Bill showed up there.

Now enters the man most certainly responsible for the fateful Akron meetings between Bill and Dr. Bob. Jim Newton was surely the sole catalyst that ordained the Oxford Group would be in place in Akron, Ohio when Bill showed up there in 1935. This ama zing string of circumstances plays out as follows:

Jim, at age 20, was a luggage salesman in New York who had come upon an Oxford Group meeting by accident (actually, he was looking for fun and games that night!) in Massachusetts in 1923 when he was 18 years old. He was converted at the party, got on his knees and gave the direction of his life to God at that time. He met a lady named Eleanor Forde who greatly influenced his thinking about the movement. (He and Eleanor were to meet and marry 20 years later in 1943.

Several twists and turns of fate placed Jim Newton in Akron, Ohio and installed our next cast of characters. These were both Oxford Group members and regular attendees at Oxford Group meetings. We will be talking about the intertwined relations of He nrietta Seiberling, Dr. Walter Tunks, Harvey and Russell Firestone, Sam Shoemaker, Frank Buchman, T. Henry and Clarace Williams, and Anne and Dr. Bob Smith.

Jim Newton went to Ft. Myers, Florida in 1926, at age 21, to visit his father, and they bought a 35 acre tract of land across the road from the Thomas Edison estate(6). Jim Newton became as an adopted son to Mr. and Mrs. Edison, and often acted as host and toastmaster at Edison's famous birthday parties which were attended by Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, and many world renowned business leaders and public figures.

Here begins another key circumstance to set the stage in Akron, Ohio. Harvey Firestone, Sr., offered Jim a job as secretary to the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company in 1926, and moved him to Akron, Ohio putting him in residence at the Portage Country Club adjacent to the Firestone Estate(7) Jim worked for Firestone eleven years and was being groomed as president of the company when he resigned and went full time with the Oxford Groups. Firestone's clergyman was Rev. Walter Tunks. Jim joined Tunks' church and became active in raising funds for their birthday committee.

Jim had been in New York for the Jack Dempsey vs Gene Tunney fight. While there he confessed to Frank Buchman that his life was in turmoil and he was about to take a "geographical cure". Buchman sent him to meet Sam Shoemaker at the Calvary Church and he made an Oxford Group confession to Sam and was led to join one of the Oxford Group business teams.

These were groups of important men who made attempts to convert others to the Oxford Group method of spirituality. Jim frequently met with the aforementioned Shep Cornell and Rowland Hazard. He met T. Henry and Clarace Williams, husband and wife Oxfo rd Group members from Akron and members of Walter Tunks' church. The business team put on house parties in various cities at the finest hotels and clubs. In January of 1933, Frank Buchman, leading a team of thirty men and women, descended on Akron for t he first time to give testimonials at the Mayflower Hotel and in Akron churches, and initiate the townspeople in the experiences of the Oxford Group. Here we can clearly see input from Jim Newton's parties with Firestone and Tunks' Episcopal Church group to influence the choice of Akron as the site of this endeavor, rather than some other city. Had Jim not already been a business team member and in place in Akron, it is very unlikely that Buchman would ever have chosen this small, rather unknown city as a place to pursue his evangelistic efforts. Jim was the spokesman who introduced Buchman at all the affairs that week in Akron.

Now our cast of characters is nearly complete and in place. Still to appear on the scene, however, are Henrietta Seiberling, Anne and Bob Smith, and T. Henry and Clarace Williams.

See March Messenger for the rest of the Oxford Story...



January Birthdays

Chris R.....	2 yrs
Augie.....	2 yrs
Amy L.....	2 yrs
Ian B.....	2 yrs
Barb B.....	3 yrs
Robbin B.....	4 yrs
Steve R.....	6 yrs
Heather C.....	6 yrs
Tom W.....	8 yrs
Dawn.....	10 yrs
Steve P.....	11 yrs
Linda P.....	13 yrs
Rudy S.....	15 yrs
Don H.....	18 yrs
Joe S.....	18 yrs
Bob T.....	19 yrs
Susan P.....	19 yrs
Bob T.....	19 yrs
Shannon A.....	20 yrs
Arnold L.....	20 yrs
Mary Pat O.....	20 yrs
Chris M.....	21 yrs
Nancy K.....	21 yrs
Chris M.....	21 yrs
Tim W.....	24 yrs
Bob B.....	24 yrs
Nettie.....	25 yrs
Luwana K.....	27 yrs
Kathy H.....	28 yrs
Bill S.....	28 yrs
Doris W.....	29 yrs
Sally A.....	44 yrs
Carlton P.....	37 yrs
Jim F.....	46 yrs

December Birthdays

Left out of last month's Messenger

Robby C.....	1 yr
Jim N.....	1 yr
Wes P.....	1 yr
Anna.....	1 yr
Susan O.....	1 yr
Chelsea V.....	2 yrs
Kelly B.....	3 yrs
Mike C.....	4 yrs
John P.....	5 yrs
Roxanne S.....	5 yrs
Clay.....	6 yrs
Chris D.....	7 yrs
Natalie B.....	15 yrs
Nick C.....	25 yrs
Joe R.....	28 yrs
Baby O.....	33 yrs

The Messenger is published monthly by:

23rd District Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
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Santa Barbara, California 93101

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sbaa@santabarbaraAA.com

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. We especially seek submissions on the step or tradition associated with the month of the same number. For the third month, March, we need writing on Step 3 and Tradition 3. Send submissions to DinahMason@aol.com

Central Office Statistics

During January your Central Office had:

AA information calls.....	803
Al-Anon.....	44
Referrals to other programs.....	49
12-step via answering service.....	61
Out-of-town visitors.....	9
12-step via office.....	8
Office walk-ins.....	906
Hits on our Web site.....	977

Service Meetings

GSRs (Group Service Representatives) Meeting Change:

General Service Representatives (GSR) 1st Monday at 6:00pm meet at:
Holy Cross Church Hall 1740 Cliff Dr. Behind the Church

IGRs (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 P.M. the second Tuesday each month at First Presbyterian Church, 21 E Constance, in Santa Barbara.

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) meets at 6:00 P.M. the second Monday each month at the Central Office.

PI (Public Information) meets the fourth Saturday of each month.

Call 687-7673 for more information.

22nd ANNUAL Santa Barbara Convention Committee -2nd Thursday of Month, 6:00 PM @ 3523 Modoc Rd. Commitments Available!

Recovery Trivia

Q. Who was the first manager of New House-now known as New House I?
A. See next month's Messenger

Answer to last month's question:

Q. What AA General Service District is Santa Barbara in?

A. 23

Donations by Group January 2007

	Jan 07	Dec 06	YTD
001 Sunrisers	0.00	93.00	0.00
003 Eye Opener	190.00	275.00	190.00
008 Beginner's Group	20.00	0.00	20.00
010 Foundation Group	56.00	39.00	56.00
011 Sundowner Group	556.00	0.00	556.00
013 New Pair Of Glasses	30.00	0.00	30.00
014 El Montecito Saturday Night	100.00	0.00	100.00
020 Cambridge Group	60.00	0.00	60.00
028 The Mother Group	60.00	0.00	60.00
045 Alternative Group	55.00	0.00	55.00
055 Staying Alive	0.00	282.20	0.00
062 Do The Steps Or Die	142.40	88.58	142.40
067 Rigorous Honesty	168.00	12.00	168.00
068 Stepping Stones	57.96	0.00	57.96
079 Harbor Group	714.20	381.00	714.20
091 New Life	232.00	0.00	232.00
093 Into Action, Thurs	0.00	100.00	0.00
097 Almost Saints	790.00	0.00	790.00
112 Montecito/Carpinteria	112.00	0.00	112.00
113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	19.00	0.00	19.00
114 Schooner Group	97.00	0.00	97.00
115 Eleventh Step Meditation	12.00	13.64	12.00
117 Way Of Life	50.00	25.00	50.00
120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	166.60	151.00	166.60
122 Came to Believe Candlelight	60.00	0.00	60.00
133 Action Participation	500.00	0.00	500.00
140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	0.00	75.00	0.00
141 Off Center	0.00	597.00	0.00
144 Back To Basics, Young People	0.00	178.22	0.00
164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	435.00	0.00	435.00
170 Barefoot Group	81.50	34.00	81.50
177 Key Group	420.00	0.00	420.00
181 Keep Coming Back Group	403.80	0.00	403.80
183 Summerland, Thurs.	0.00	349.13	0.00
201 Birthday Donations	24.00	236.00	24.00
202 Supporting Members	1,999.00	1,625.00	1,999.00
204 Memorial Fund	100.00	500.00	100.00
210 Convention Income	3,156.75	0.00	3,156.75
211 Rent Received	125.00	169.00	125.00
Totals:	15,513.61	8,991.52	15,513.61

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(805) 962-3332

