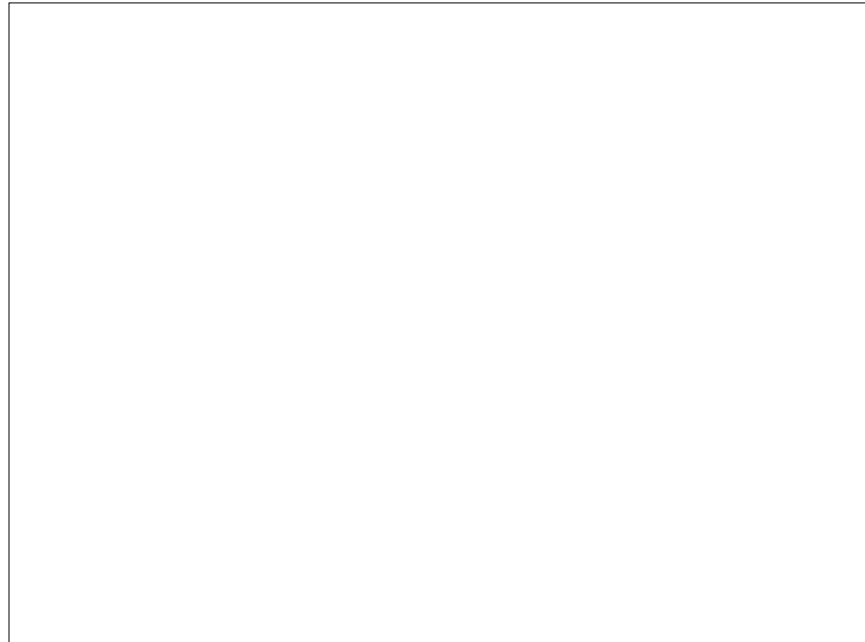


Central Office
1213 State Street, Suite H
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 962-3332



MESSENGER

The Promises

Today I was looking at the clouds enveloping the mountains, awestruck with the raw beauty of it, and acutely aware of a time not long ago when I was immune to the clouds, to the mountains, to any kind of beauty at all.

I have now been clean and sober for nearly two years, and the gratitude I have for the gifts this program has given me is inexpressible. I came into the rooms angry, afraid and lost, with a heap of wreckage so large that I was unable to bring myself even to look at it. I was three months pregnant, strung out, and had been living like an animal for so long that I could not remember what a proper meal or a kind face looked like. I have faced up to a lot of fear over the last couple of years, and put in a lot of dedicated work. I can say without reservation that this work has paid off in ways I never would have even thought to ask for. The reasons for my gratitude are so numerous that I am unable to list them all in this letter.

Every day I experience a moment in which I am deeply humbled by the innumerable forms of wealth which continue to find their way into my life, sometimes unsought, and sometimes as the result of dedicated effort. I was not the cause of any of these gifts. I simply opened myself to the possibilities through the continuous combination of faith and action. I did not need to lie or steal or manipulate or force anything. I have what I need at the time that I need it, and I am able to give without feeling impoverished in so doing.

Today I have a seventeen month old son who is healthy and bright and has never seen me loaded. After a year in court, I now have sole custody and am able to be a sane and present mother to him every day. After nearly two years in residential treatment and transitional housing programs, I am now living in a beautiful home. My family is not only speaking to me, but they want me around. My criminal repercussions have been dealt with. I have gone way back through the closed doors of my past and made amends for things I thought I would never be able to face up to. I am able to respect myself, and to live with the decisions I make today. Materially I have more than enough and my needs are met. I am rich in friends and am no longer alone and isolated. I have told everything that I know about myself to another human being and I no longer need to walk in fear of discovery. I have returned to school, and not only am I a straight-A student, but I have received a scholarship that will take me through graduate school. I sponsor some amazing, strong women who have taught me the joy of really getting to know another person.

My life has a kind of grace today which I never imagined I would find in all those years of striving and controlling and getting over on everyone, trying desperately to achieve one long moment of peace. Somehow that peace has found me. I am comfortable in my own skin about 80% of the time, and in the remaining moments I know the discomfort will pass and I know what to do until it does. All of this is a direct result of working the program of Alcoholics Anonymous to the best of my ability, cultivating a relationship with a Power greater than myself, continuing dedication to honesty, and helping other people whenever and with whatever I can. I have a life today that is worth living. Truly, I am blessed.

Arielle D., Alcoholic

MANAGERS CORNER

I want to thank every group in our area who supported your Central Office, as well as the supporting members who contribute to help us be able to remain open and be of maximum service to the alcoholic who still suffers.

A special thanks to our IGR Board and IGR Members, who donated their time and effort to be of service to our A.A. Community, Great Job.

In the upcoming year, we will continue to find ways to get more people involved in our recovery community. Also find ways to better meet our goal of one alcoholic helping another.

We brought in over \$3,000.00 for "Gratitude Month", so thanks to everyone, "group and individual" who participated. "There is a list of what each group donated on page 4.

To all of the volunteers who answer the phones at the Central Office, THANK YOU, without you, the office wouldn't be the safe and loving place it is. Also thanks to all the everyone who volunteers their time in helping out with various jobs at the office.. You really make a difference with your service.

In 2011 we will be having our 2nd annual "Bring your Sponsor to Breakfast", breakfast. "Date to still be decided" at the Goleta Valley Community Center at 9:00am, We will be having eggs, hot-cakes, bacon, sausage, juice, yogurt, coffee and a lot of great fellowship. There will be a great speaker and a 50/50 raffle, so we look forward to seeing everyone out there at 9:00am-12:00pm.

I look forward to being of service in the upcoming year and hope to see some of you who have never visited your Central Office. Come in to say hi.

In Service,
John S., Manager`

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.

GROUP DONATIONS December 2010

	Dec 10	Nov 10	Jan - Dec 10
001 Sunrisers	280.00	0.00	280.00
002 Courage To Change	0.00	0.00	278.30
003 Eye Opener	150.00	150.00	2,200.00
004 Monday At A Time	282.85	400.00	1,334.11
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	0.00	330.00
010 Foundation Group	0.00	0.00	320.42
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	140.00	1,351.00
013 New Pair Of Glasses	0.00	0.00	100.00
014 El Montecito Saturday Night	0.00	250.00	410.00
019 Onward & Upward	80.00	0.00	215.00
020 Cambridge Group	0.00	78.80	198.95
021 Summerland Monday Group	61.00	0.00	61.00
022 There Is A Solution	0.00	166.80	457.80
023 For Women Only	120.00	0.00	527.40
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	27.50	40.00	357.50
026 Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	0.00	286.00
034 Women of Change	0.00	0.00	105.00
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	0.00	330.00
045 Alternative Group	92.00	0.00	678.50
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	0.00	0.00	512.70
049 IN Your Face Book Study	0.00	94.02	134.02
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	0.00	0.00	199.00
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	0.00	330.00
055 Staying Alive	0.00	0.00	261.00
056 Women By The Books	0.00	0.00	144.00
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	0.00	491.60
067 Rigorous Honesty	20.00	57.00	976.01
068 Stepping Stones	0.00	200.00	459.00
074 Casa Serena (BB Study)	0.00	0.00	445.10
076 11th Step	0.00	0.00	330.00
079 Harbor Group	84.27	361.46	1,837.02
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	0.00	0.00	160.00
084, 83 - 87 Group	0.00	360.00	3,625.00
089 Here & Now	0.00	0.00	189.33
093 Into Action, Thurs	0.00	0.00	160.20
094 Questions & Answers	0.00	0.00	30.01
097 Almost Saints	0.00	100.00	1,157.20
098 Keep It Simple, Saturday	0.00	0.00	45.00
099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	0.00	330.00
100 Student of Life	20.00	0.00	141.00
111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	0.00	379.00
112 Montecito/Carpinteria	0.00	0.00	416.78
113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	0.00	10.00	133.16
114 Schooner Group	0.00	0.00	343.00
115 Eleventh Step Meditation	0.00	0.00	150.00
117 Way Of Life	51.00	1,120.00	1,961.00

	Dec 10	Nov 10	Jan - Dec 10
120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	0.00	0.00	871.30
125 On Awakening	0.00	150.00	1,586.00
126 Squirrel Crossing	100.00	0.00	100.00
128 Ladies Night Thursday	0.00	0.00	100.00
130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	0.00	216.00
133 Action Participation	0.00	0.00	188.40
139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	0.00	0.00	142.20
140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	0.00	0.00	326.10
141 Off Center	0.00	0.00	154.27
144 Back To Basics, Young People	0.00	0.00	215.00
145 The How And Why Of It	0.00	44.00	294.60
146 Out Of Town Speaker, NH II	0.00	0.00	345.07
148 San Ysidro	0.00	0.00	260.00
149 Getting To Know You	94.91	0.00	94.91
150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	0.00	50.00
153 Happy Destiny	0.00	0.00	1,340.00
156 Start Your Day Right	0.00	0.00	300.00
158 Isla Vista Sobriety	0.00	0.00	37.50
159 Speak Easy STep and Traditions	0.00	0.00	80.00
161 Back To Basics Group	0.00	0.00	102.00
163 Mustard Seed	0.00	0.00	25.00
164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	225.00	320.00	3,045.00
165 Junkyard Dogs	0.00	0.00	1,021.00
166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	55.00	129.96
167 Women's Big Book Study	0.00	0.00	120.00
170 Barefoot Group	4.00	0.00	47.00
173 Let it Go-11th Step Meditation	36.00	0.00	366.00
177 Key Group	0.00	566.17	2,946.17
181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	0.00	1,104.49
182 Just the Black Print	0.00	0.00	182.70
183 Summerland/Montecito, Thurs.	0.00	0.00	136.00
190 Living Sober Book Study	0.00	81.60	81.60
191 Men on a Mission	0.00	0.00	155.00
197 Big Book Comes Alive Women's Meeting	0.00	55.20	120.00
198 Noon Naked Step Study Group	0.00	23.69	51.11
201 Birthday Donations	71.01	0.00	1,985.01
202 Supporting Members	1,371.00	989.22	9,584.82
204 Memorial Fund	0.00	0.00	283.79
207 Gratitude Month	2,507.65	226.40	2,820.05
211 Rent Received	50.00	72.85	1,715.91
212 Special Events	0.00	0.00	3,273.00
	\$5,728.19	\$6,112.21	\$61,158.07

Relationships in Early Recovery

“Why all this insistence that AA’s avoid relationship early in their recovery?

(Paraphrased from Step 1, page 24.)

It’s often said, ‘No relationships on the first year.’ What does that mean? That on day 366

you’re qualified to be in love? That something mysterious and magical happens?

Nothing in our literature directly addresses this, yet it’s as popular as ‘90 meetings in 90 days,’

another oft-quoted line. Substantial, yes, but again, not found in within our first 164 Big Book pages

nor in our Step & Tradition book.

Avoiding the emotion confusion of relationships in early sobriety can help ensure that you stick around long enough for your sobriety to transform into your recovery. Sobriety is the absence of alcohol; recovery is the application of spiritual principles. If you didn’t dilute your drinks, why would you dilute your recovery?

‘...*better do one thing supremely well than many badly.*’ (Step 5, page 150) Same theories apply.

Here’s my experience:

The person you’re attracted to in early sobriety...

Some guy asked me to dance at an AA dance. After the dance, he asked. ‘How much time do you have?’ and I promptly (and proudly) answered ‘Six months.’ He said, ‘Good for you’ and promptly eased (ran) away from me. I was insulted! Complained to my sponsor about it, and she offered these pearls of wisdom...

‘**He did you a favor.**’ She said:

“The type of person you’re attracted to in early sobriety will not be the type of person you’re attracted to when you have time.

And the person who’s attracted to you in early sobriety will not be the same type of person who will be attracted to you when you have time.”

Have you spent that much time... (Time - T.I.M.E. – Things I Might Earn... Things I May Enjoy)

After that, I was invited to go out on a date. A bit wiser, or so I thought, I asked friends for their feedback and discussed it with whoever would listen to me. This time I was fully prepared for my sponsor’s response. When I explained my dilemma, she offered this to me: “Sounds like you’ve spent quite a bit of time thinking about this.’ Proud of myself for my thorough research, I said, ‘Yes I did.’ To which she said...

“Have you spent that much time building a conscious contact with a God of your own understanding?”

Feeling spiritually fit...

Another time, because I was such a desirable charm bracelet of femininity, a person from my past called me to get together. He and I had previously spent time...inappropriately. I told him I don’t do that anymore.

‘No problem,’ he said, ‘we’ll just get together and say hello.’ Once again, I dutifully ran this one by my sponsor, and was greeted with these incredible words...

“If you’re not feeling spiritually fit, don’t go there.

And if you are feeling spiritually fit, why would you want to?”

Instead of putting a year between you and a relationship, how about putting 12 Steps

between you and a relationship? Better yet, put 12 Steps and 12 Traditions between you and a relationship. Clear away the wreckage of your past (BB p.164) for increased chances of success.

The Steps teach us to live with ourselves, and Traditions teach us to live with others. Use them.

Happy Sober 2011.

Maryjean B.

On the 1st Step

The first of the 12 steps in the creed or philosophy of Alcoholics Anonymous is, "We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable." By such an admission any alcoholic, provided he is sincere, has achieved his first success on the road to well-being.

Such an admission is usually very difficult for the alcoholic to make. The very nature of his disease makes him shun the knowledge of his inability to cope with the problems of everyday life. Hence his desire for something that will rapidly create whatever he thinks he lacks as an individual. With a few drinks under his belt he can fashion the most wonderful dreams about himself. These dreams can become his real characteristics--but only when he recognizes that he must dominate alcohol rather than have alcohol dominate him.

The sincerity with which the newcomer takes the first step is the gauge by which his recovery through A.A. can be measured.

Over the years the alcoholic develops a three-dimensional ability at picture building, which is a kind way of saying that alcoholics are adept liars. So that by really taking the first step--admitting freely and without reservation that he is an alcoholic--a person starts to build a new pattern of thought. The whole, at last, is fabricated from truth rather than wishful thinking or fantasy.

"Ye shall know the truth--and the truth shall make you free" applies certainly to the first step in this program--for truth, to the alcoholic, is simply admitting to himself that he can't handle alcohol, and because of this his life is unmanageable. To those who accept this first step the other eleven follow in the natural course of events--as the scope of the teachings of A.A. become realized and some small rewards have been received.

November 1944

John B

Printed with the permission of Grapevine, inc.

District 23 General Service News & Events

Happy New Year &

Welcome to Your New GSR Officers!

At our last GSR meeting, we elected the following new officers for the upcoming 2 year term:

DCM: Matt D.

Alt. DCM: John R.

Recorder: Nancy R.

Registrar: Olivia C.

Please join me in welcoming them to their new service commitment. And THANKS TO ALL who participated in the elections! And let me give a deep and heartfelt THANK YOU to our previous panel of officers who served for the last 2 yrs.:

Alt. DCM: Matt D.

Treasurer: Jim S.

Registrar: John R.

Recorder: Marcus T.

And finally, THANK YOU from me (Don H., Past DCM) to all of the GSR's, AA members & groups, and the Central Office, for allowing me to be of service for the last 2 years as your DCM. And for helping to keep AA available for the alcoholic who still suffers. I am looking forward to Matt D. to continue the excellent service activities in our community - and I can tell you he is fired up to be your new DCM!

BUT, We do have an important position that still needs to be filled:

District 23 TREASURER is an OPEN POSITION! Jim S. has done a great job in the past year making this an automated task using QuickBooks. If you are a GSR or former GSR, and are willing to serve as Treasurer, PLEASE contact Matt D., DCM, as soon as possible.

Come join us and become a GSR. We have a new panel and a new year of service ahead of us. Let your group's voice be heard & help maintain the unity and strength of our Fellowship. Our once-a-month GSR meeting has been streamlined to 1 hr & 15 mins, which includes a GSR sharing session, and free coffee (wow!)

Hope to see you there!

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

Jan 3 & Feb. 7: GSR Monthly Meeting (1st Monday): 6 PM, Holy Cross Church, 1740 Cliff Dr.

Feb. 20: Area Assembly: Santa Clarita, CA

For More Info: Contact your Group's GSR, -or- your DCM: Matt D. (886-1904) 1964goletian@gmasil.com

Responsibility Declaration:

“I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.”

GRATITUDUE MONTH DONATIONS FOR 2010

Below are the Gratitude donations from each group total donations listed.

This is calculated through December 31, 2010.

If you do not see your group listed or have any questions, please feel free to contact Central Office at 805 962.3332

Thank you for your support.

#003 Eye Opener	358.00	#079 Harbor	109.00
#004 Monday at a Time	77.00	#084 83-87 Group	105.00
#007 Ladies Sound Off	47.00	#111 Carpinteria Canalino	21.00
#010 Foundation Group	43.00	#114 Schooner Group	81.00
#011 Sundowners	25.65	#117 Way of Life	42.00
#019 Onward & Upward	17.00	#126 Squirrel Crossing	57.00
#020 Cambridge Group	33.87	#133 Action Participation	98.65
#021 Summerland	61.00	#156 Start Your Day Right	597.24
#023 For Women Only	84.00	#159 Speak Easy	23.60
#025, Grateful Group	15.00	#170 Walking Barefoot	30.50
#026, Carpinteria Study Group	28.33	#173 Let it Go Meeting	72.00
#030 Sisters of Gratitude	29.00	#177 Key Group	143.35
#045 Alternative Group	30.00	#197 BB Comes Alive Women's	79.21
#047 Men's Stag	122.75	Anonymous	81.00
#055 Staying Alive	99.50	Maribella Gratitude Solutions Meeting	113.00
#064 Casa Wed. Night	25.00	Total Donations through 12-31-10:	\$2,825.05
#068 Stepping Stones	75.40		

DECEMBER 2010 BIRTHDAYS

Name	Years
John C	1
Nina T	1
Sybille K.	1
Victoria T	1
Charlie O	2
Kristin	2
Lisa	2
Maggie C	2
Michael M'	3
Martha	4
Lauren	5
Bowie J	6
Kelly B	7
Clay C	10
Manny B	11
John L	12
Cindy K	13
Georgia T	16
Susan B	17
Deborah W	18
Cathy M	20
Dinah M	21
Jay F	21
Dean P	22
Arnold L	24
Duncan B	24
Joan L	24
Patricia E	25
Bo S.	26
Jerry W	26
Hank V	28
Spenser W	28
Dennis W	30
Joe R	32
Lucy H	34
Kathy N	36
Tony C	36



The Messenger is published monthly by:
23rd District Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
 1213 State Street, Suit H
 Santa Barbara, California, 93101
 Phone: 805-962-3332
 Email: sbaa@santabarbaraAA.com
 Website: <http://www.SantaBarbaraAA.com>

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. We are looking for articles for the step or tradition associated with the month of the same number. For the 2nd month, February, we need writing on Step 2 & Tradition 2.

Send submissions to
JohnS@santabarbaraAA.com

Central Office Statistics

During the December 2010 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	515
Al-Anon Referrals	37
Referrals to other programs	29
12step via answering service	19
Out-of-town visitors	21
12-step via office	24
Office walk-ins	238
Hits on our Web site	1,505

Service Meetings

General Service Representatives (GSR) meet at 6:00 p.m. on the 1st Monday of each month at Holy Cross Church Hall, 1740 Cliff Dr. Behind the Church.

IGR's (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at First Presbyterian Church, 21 East Constance in Santa Barbara.

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of each month at Central Office.

PI (Public Information) meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Central Office.

Facilities Committee meets at 6:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month at Central Office.

Group Contributions to AA

Make check payable to:

Santa Barbara Central Office

1213 State Street, Suite H
 Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Include your meeting name, and local meeting number (from the meeting guide)

Central Office will collect donations for **Hospitals and Institutions and GSR** through the office when you bring your Central Office Donation.

Central California Area 93

606 Alamo Pintado #140
 Solvang, CA 93463

Include your meeting name, GSO group number

General Service Office

P.O. Box 459
 Grand Central Station
 New York, NY 10163

Include your meeting name, GSO group number

Any questions please call Santa Barbara Central Office at 805 962-3332