

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



MESSENGER

CONVENTION NEWS

A number of ideas for this year's convention theme were submitted to the committee at the February meeting. Each suggestion was read, along with the paragraph in our literature that it came from. The submissions were unusually good this year, as evidenced by the voting that was required to pick the final selection. The first round of voting narrowed the choices down to three. After the second round, there was a tie between two submissions, so it took a third vote to choose the theme for 2011:

Utopia

Most of us feel we need look no further for Utopia. We have it with us right here and now. Each day my friend's simple talk in our kitchen multiplies itself in a widening circle of peace on earth and good will to men.

- Alcoholics Anonymous, page 16

Now we need a logo for the Convention that is based on that theme. We are calling on the members of our recovery community to provide it. All submissions are welcome. Don't think your drawing has to be perfect – it's the idea that counts. The convention's talented Graphics Committee will take care of transforming your idea to a production-ready logo which will be used on the Convention web site, registration forms, badges, tee shirts, coffee mugs, and on the big banner above the speaker podium.

You can give your artwork to any committee member, mail it to Central Office (1213 State St., Suite H. Santa Barbara, CA 93101), drop it off there, or bring it to the next committee meeting at 6:00 p.m. on March 10th. We will select the logo then. Be sure to give us a way to contact you if you don't submit your work in person. If you mail your artwork or drop it off at Central Office, it must arrive by March 9.

So the planning goes on. The Site Coordinator is beginning to plan how the Elks' facilities will be scheduled, as well as deciding what will be required at the hotel. Menus are being discussed. Special events are being planned. And it's all designed to produce a wonderful experience for everyone who attends. Don't miss it! Mark your calendars (if you haven't already) for the weekend of October 21-23, and we'll see you then, if not before.

There are still plenty of opportunities for you to get involved in this year's convention. There are several committee positions still open, and, of course, the convention would not be possible without the help of all our volunteers. Not only is it a way to be of service, but it's a lot of fun, and an opportunity to work with and get to know a good group of sober men and women. If you want to participate in building the 2011 convention, plan to attend the next committee meeting to find out more. Go to www.sbaaconvention.org, the convention web site, and click on "participate" for directions to the meeting, or contact Central Office or any committee member.

~ Your Convention Committee

STEP THREE

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.

**MANAGERS
CORNER**

There are many ways in which our AA Central Office enriches our sober lives. Have you ever needed a meeting guide? Have you ever bought a Big Book for a newcomer?

Central Office provides you and your group with meeting schedules, literature, chips and coins, and publishes the Messenger. It also coordinates information between groups, provides support for meetings, and, the most important component of all — provides that voice at the other end of the phone when someone makes that first, important call.

All of this is made possible through the 7th tradition which states that we ought to be self-supporting through our own contributions. Central Office receives the bulk of its donations from you via your meetings. But not all meetings can afford to give to Central Office. With the economy being the way it is, many meetings are struggling to pay rent, let alone donate to Central Office. Donations are down. That is why we are asking for 200 people to become new supporting members at \$100 each. So far, 36 people have signed up.

Just what is \$100? It is \$8.33 a month...or \$0.27 cents a day. For me, it used to be the amount I needed just to get ready to really tie one on. For many of us it was one night of drinking. Or what we spent in one weekend at the liquor store.

Do you remember how much you spent a day drinking? If you can give \$100, or \$8.33 per month, would you consider it? Please see the Supporting Member coupon below or call Central Office to find out how you can pay by credit card. Please help continue the services that Central Office provides.

Marc G.
Chairman, Santa Barbara Intergroup

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.

	Feb 11	Jan 11	Jan - Feb 11
003 Eye Opener	420.00	200.00	620.00
004 Monday At A Time	160.00	0.00	160.00
007 Sound Off	48.00	0.00	48.00
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	140.00	140.00
021 Summerland Monday Group	72.00	0.00	72.00
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	0.00	80.00	80.00
026 Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	104.00	104.00
034 Women of Change	0.00	248.47	248.47
045 Alternative Group	66.40	0.00	66.40
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	151.16	0.00	151.16
055 Staying Alive	120.00	0.00	120.00
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	123.00	123.00
067 Rigorous Honesty	79.00	33.00	112.00
068 Stepping Stones	159.51	0.00	159.51
070 Success Group	0.00	80.00	80.00
079 Harbor Group	248.21	155.66	403.87
084, 83 - 87 Group	350.00	600.00	950.00
094 Questions & Answers	0.00	7.00	7.00
097 Almost Saints	220.05	0.00	220.05
100 Student of Life	0.00	20.00	20.00
111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	111.00	111.00
113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	11.00	20.00	31.00
114 Schooner Group	0.00	70.00	70.00
117 Way Of Life	213.59	18.00	231.59
120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	63.00	550.00	613.00
125 On Awakening	200.00	310.00	510.00
139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	538.80	0.00	538.80
140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	126.33	0.00	126.33
141 Off Center	394.20	0.00	394.20
145 The How And Why Of It	0.00	51.00	51.00
153 Happy Destiny	0.00	391.86	391.86
156 Start Your Day Right	0.00	500.00	500.00
159 Speak Easy Step and Traditions	0.00	120.00	120.00
164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	0.00	330.00	330.00
166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	31.63	31.63
170 Barefoot Group	2.00	0.00	2.00
173 Let it Go-11th Step Meditation	101.45	0.00	101.45
177 Key Group	700.00	0.00	700.00
181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	104.08	104.08
182 Just the Black Print	107.45	0.00	107.45
183 Summerland/Montecito, Thurs.	0.00	114.00	114.00
184 Jay Walker Book Study	0.00	51.00	51.00
189 Friday Night Book Study	0.00	41.00	41.00
191 Men on a Mission	175.00	0.00	175.00
196 Montecito Book Study	31.00	0.00	31.00
201 Birthday Donations	0.00	365.00	365.00
202 Supporting Members	1,604.72	1,032.44	2,637.16
204 Memorial Fund	0.00	250.00	250.00
207 Gratitude Month	129.60	512.00	641.60
211 Rent Received	48.00	51.50	99.50
Totals:	\$6,540.47	\$6,815.64	\$13,356.11

AMAZING GRACE

It's by the grace of God that I am alive and sober today. Getting here has been the hardest thing I have ever done. Walking into the rooms of AA, I had no idea what to expect and didn't care. I had been beaten down by "King Alcohol" and I was willing to do anything you told me to do. Unfortunately, I did not stay and was dragged down even farther by a series of destructive sprees. Each time I ran away from the free gift of sobriety, I was exposed to more grief and loss. The monster, "my disease", took me to the depths of hell, homelessness, institutions, emergency rooms and nearly back to my creator through death. The magnitude of misery and pain I experienced only gave me the realization that I wanted something more for myself. That "something" was freedom.

When the kind and welcoming strangers in AA told me to "Keep Coming Back", I listened and showed up even when my disease told me not to. I trusted that these strangers had my best interest in mind and they seemed to have their lives more together than I did. Desperation kept me in meetings and direction gave me a plan for each day. I was even courageous enough to show up to Central Office a few times. I was sucked up, starving and would sneak off to the bathroom to do something to stay well, thinking no one knew. But I was fed, loved and guided in the right direction. The point is that I kept coming back no matter how bad I felt or how sick I was. You accepted me in spite of myself. That is what has kept me here in AA and continues to keep me sober. The amazing grace of my higher power works through people and helps me do what I cannot do for myself. I never gave up no matter how hard I fell.

Since the day I came back last, almost one long year ago, I have kept going to any lengths to stay sober. Through the Twelve Steps, I have unlearned some unhealthy behaviors and habits and learned a lifetime of lessons that have helped me grow up here into a strong, young woman. I stay closed to the program and did whatever I was told because I was horrified at the thought of going back to where I came from. They told me not to leave before the miracle happens. *I became that miracle.* There was no other way to describe the validity of the success I had with working the twelve steps. Everything I was promised in the book came true and I learned that no mat-

ter how far down the scale I had gone, my experience could benefit others. I got the freedom I was looking for and I was amazed before I was halfway through. There is no way I could ever repay this program for what it has done for me other than to continue to do the work and give it back to the newcomer who comes after me. It has been a difficult, yet beautiful process and I welcome the future with a head held high and a smile on my face.

Angie C., Alcoholic

TRADITION THREE

The Only Requirement for A. A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

A GOD A I UNDERSTOOD HIM

When I first entered the rooms, I continued to relapse. No matter how hard I tried, something was preventing the program of Alcoholics Anonymous from taking hold. It wasn't until I had a spiritual crisis was I able to work the program as it is outlined in the Big Book.

After two very hard years in which I was forced to evacuate for a week soon followed by moving into a new residence, and then the death of two relatives, I lost all faith in my childhood God. Although there was no way I could see it at the time, this crisis was very important to my recovery. You see, as a result of this tough time, I was forced to go back and rework the first three steps. It is hard to turn anything over to a Higher Power when you do not have one!

Through reworking of these steps, which involved rereading the first 164 pages of the Big Book, listening to tapes of others who have a good amount of sobriety, and hearing how others worked these three steps, I found a Higher Power that I could trust. Once I found that God, suddenly it isn't a problem to hit my knees in the morning and before I fall asleep at night. Now that I know to whom I am praying, the program of A.A. suddenly makes sense. You see, it was only with faith in this newly found God that He brought me into true recovery.

Michael D., Alcoholic

THE THIRD STEP PRAYER

God, I offer myself to Thee — to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!

FEELING SAFE

When circuit speaker Clancy I. gives an AA pitch, he often includes the historical account of the Rand Corporation being commissioned to study alcoholics in the 1950s. The Rand Corp. was given one million dollars for this research. After studying alcoholics for one year, their research revealed two things that alcoholics seemed to have in common. One was that when they drank they seemed to change personalities and the second was that 80% of all the alcoholics studied were perfectionists.

Perfectionism is a terribly disease! I have it and I can't think of any other character defect that has caused me more suffering. It has prevented me from venturing out into the world for new experiences, it has diminished my self-esteem and confidence and it has crippled my relationships. In a meeting, I heard a gentleman share that when people and things are behaving perfectly he feels safe. That rang a loud bell for me – I didn't know that I was seeking perfectionism in order to feel SAFE. When people and things are not perfect, I get anxious and I tend to want to FIX them so that I can feel better.

Parents who expect perfection from their children are now considered abusive parents. In the book Too Perfect, the authors describe perfectionists as obsessive personality types. Perfectionists are obsessives who need to feel in control at all times to protect themselves and ensure their own safety.

There is a difference between perfectionism and striving for excellence. The difference is in the meaning given to mistakes. Those who strive, however intently, for excellence can simply take mistakes (imperfections) as inducements to further learning and work. Maladaptive perfectionists take mistakes as signs of personal defects that make us less acceptable. Anxiety over potential failure is the reason perfectionism is felt as a burden and prevents completion of projects - how many projects have I started and didn't finish?!

For me the solution to this dangerous character defect called perfectionism is to start feeling safe in the world. The way I begin to feel safe in the world is by taking Step Three, Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God. And I remember our slogans: *God's In Charge. Let It Go. Live and Let Live. Easy Does It. This Too Shall Pass. Keep Coming Back.*

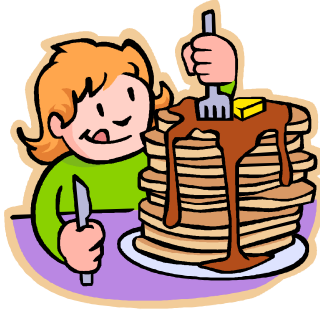
Now, I'm going to proofread my share to be sure it is perfect ... *oops... slipping again* ... back to Step Three.

*A perfectly imperfect alcoholic,
Beth P.*

CONCEPT III

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the AA General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional "Right of Decision".
— AA Service Manual

TAKE YOUR SPONSOR TO BREAKFAST



April 30th, 2011 at the Goleta Valley Community Center at 9:00 a.m., we are having a Central Office "Bring your Sponsor to Breakfast" breakfast. There will be a hot breakfast of eggs, pancakes, bacon, sausage, yogurt, juice and coffee, a 50/50 raffle, and a lot of good fellowship. Breakfast starts at 9:00 a.m. and the meeting begins right after. Noah D. of Santa Barbara will be our speaker. Breakfast tickets are \$5 and will be available at Central Office or at the door. We look forward to seeing everyone for a great time of fellowship, food and fun.

DISTRICT 23 GENERAL SERVICE NEWS AND EVENTS

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. This Service position takes only about 10 hours each month, and you won't be alone. We'll help you get things caught up and get you started.

Anyone is welcome to attend General Service events. Hope to see you there!

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

March 7 & April 4: GSR Monthly Meeting (1st Monday) 6 p.m. Holy Cross Church, 1740 Cliff Dr.

March 20: Pre-conference Assembly: Pismo Beach CA

For More Info: Contact your group's GSR or your DCM: Matt D. 886-1904 1964goletian@gmail.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."

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

February 2011 Birthdays

Name	Years
John H.	1
Melissa J.	1
Nicky A.	2
Dawn	2
Brent L.	4
Ben M.	5
Kathleen F.	5
Kathleen P.	5
Ann.	6
Ania D.	6
Ron	6
Andrea M.	6
Patrick N.	7
Ron L.	7
Jeff E.	7
Den S.	7
Andrea	8
Matt F.	9
Tom W.	12
Barton	15
Larry	15
Rick (Aloha)	16
Larry B.	16
Maggie	19
Lowell B.	20
Peggy F.	20
Jason D.	20
Liz K.	21
Susan H.	23
Will W.	24
Doris	24
Monica C.	25
Mark	25
James F.	27
John M.	28
Ned N.	28
Peter G.	30
Joan S.	31
Linda H.	34
Elle K.	38
Mary McN.	40
Jim	40
Carlton P.	41
Jim F.	50



The Messenger is published monthly by:

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Santa Barbara, California, 93101
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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 4th month, April, we need writing on Step 4 and Tradition 4.

Send submissions to AlisonSB87@gmail.com

Central Office Statistics

During February, 2011, your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	485
Al-Anon Referrals	31
Referrals to other programs	25
12step via answering service	16
Out-of-town visitors	21
12-step via office	31
Office walk-ins	198
Hits on our Web site	955

Service Meetings

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

IGR (Intergroup Representatives) meets 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.