



MESSENGER

RESTING ON MY LAURELS

Resting on my laurels is anything connected to minimizing my efforts to sustain sobriety. Thinking that I have arrived, or displaying the “I got this” attitude, indicates that there’s some conflict going on. When things are going well and there doesn’t seem to be a care in the world, beware. It may be a set-up. Our disease is cunning, baffling, powerful, and patient.

I must continue to go to meetings, work the Steps, work with others, and not cease. These are essential and must be ongoing. If I feel that I have done my quota of good deeds and accomplishments, then I’m far from the truth. It’s never a done deal, and there are no masters in any of these areas.

It doesn’t matter how much time I have or how much service I perform. If I’m put on a pedestal, I have farther to fall. I am not exempt!

My commitments must be renewed on a daily basis. What I do today to ensure my sobriety is just for today. The result of these efforts can’t be measured or stored up. But I can become stagnant if I stop doing the things that I should be doing.

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous states, “What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition”.

I must surrender my will over to the care of God each day. I must also give myself a spiritual check-up so I can stay up-to-date about any changes in my attitude. I must be on the lookout for negative and complacent behavior.

In or outside the rooms of AA, I should remain humble, open-minded, and willing. I should live as proof of how the Twelve Steps work and allow my character to reflect this upbringing.

As long as I live, I will never progress beyond the need for improvement. There will always be more of myself to overcome, so I must stay active in this process. I am limited, but God is not.

If I am spiritually fit and apply myself whole-heartedly to this program, I won’t have to worry much about resting on my laurels.

Steve

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.

John B.

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 help there for the alcoholic who still suffers. I look forward to finding my monthly newsletter in the mail each month! Encloses in 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, delining outside contributions. – Seventh Tradition (short form), reprinted by permission of A World Services, Inc.

**Santa Barbara District 23
General Service Representatives
<http://www.ccaadistrict23.com>**

Literature

Your District #23 Literature Committee provides filled Literature Racks, Newcomer Packets and Meeting Directories to our Local Libraries and Facilities.

Help us reach out to the newcomer by restocking our literature, ensuring that the AA message is available even before he reaches the door of AA.

We also have startup literature bundles for groups that do not have AA Conference Approved Literature.

And, we can answer any questions you or your group have regarding the difference between AA Conference Approved Literature and Non AA Literature.

For more info or to volunteer, please contact us: Literature@ccaadistrict23.com

Responsibility Pledge

“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.”

Reprinted from Pamphlet P-1, This Is A.A., page 24, with permission of A. A. World Services, Inc.

***NEW LITERATURE AVAILABLE AT
CENTRAL OFFICE***

I Am Responsible	\$8.50
Dr. Bob and Bill W. Memorial Issues	\$7.00
AA Around the World	\$8.50
Beginners Book	\$9.00
The Best of Bill, “Large Print”	\$6.50

Central Office wants to thank everyone who participated in Gratitude Month. As you can see below, the response for our first annual Gratitude month was fantastic.

Thanks for supporting Your Central Office.

John S.

NOVEMBER 2008

GRATITUDE MONTH DONATIONS

002, Courage to change	21.00
003, Eye opener	143.00
011, Sundowner Group	117.61
013, New Pair of Glasses	50.00
019, Onward and Upward	30.00
022, There is a solution	61.10
024, Mesa Singleness of purpose	99.00
025, Grateful Group	23.86
035, 12 x 12	16.00
045, Alternative Group #45	30.00
047, Men’s Stag	78.00
053, Both oars in the water	31.67
055, Staying Alive	118.12
075, 12 steps and 12 tradition study	10.00
079, Harbor Group #79	425.00
099, Sink or Swim	27.00
111, Carpinteria Catalino	122.00
114, Schooner	71.00
120, Homeboys	78.00
133, Action Participation	350.63
139, It's a helluva Deal	135.00
156, start your day right	126.74
159, Summerland Speak Easy	44.85
164, men who have lost there legs	82.00
165, Junk yard dogs,	125.00
170, Walking Barefoot	15.00
181, KCB Group	24.00
Anonymous	2,500.00
Totals:	4,955.58

CONVENTION WRAPUP

It seems like the 2008 Convention just finished up and already it's time to start planning for next year's convention. I guess it's a lot like sobriety: a continuous process that never really ends!

First, a few words about the 2008 Convention, "AGE OF MIRACLES": awesome, fabulous, wonderful, inspiring, fun, It was a great weekend filled with events, food, fellowship, speakers, panels, meetings and lots of sobriety and love. Thank you to the 2008 Convention Committee for all their hard work and to all the volunteers who helped out. Finally, thanks to all the people who came to join the celebration of sobriety; you all made it a great week-end to enjoy and remember.

Hard as it is to believe, we are almost ready to begin again; to start planning for the 2009 Convention. This year's Chair is Don G. and the first committee meeting will be held on February 12th at 6:00 PM. We welcome anyone who wants to take part in the planning for the next convention. You can get directions to the meeting from our web site, <http://www.sbaaconvention.org/participate.htm>, or by calling central office.

At the first meeting we will be picking a theme for the 2009 convention. Please bring any and all suggestions to the meeting, drop it off at Central Office, or give it to a committee member. Themes must be a quote from conference approved literature – hardcover books (Big Book, Daily Reflections, etc.), not pamphlets. Suggestions should include the quote itself, as well as where it came from (the publication and page number).

We look forward to seeing you at the convention meetings as we start the process once more.

-Your Convention Committee

HAVE A GREAT NEW YEAR

I want to thank everyone for making my first year at your Central Office so awesome. My thanks go out for the support of all of the group secretaries and treasurers, the IGR Board, and especially the office volunteers who show up and make our Central Office a safe, comfortable place to come. Central Office couldn't keep its doors open without those dedicated volunteers.

This year's breakfast and 4th of July barbecue were great successes, filled with good food, good fellowship and good fun. I look forward to next year's breakfast and the 4th of July barbecue, where we'll try a new event--the resentment wall. More information will be coming on that later, but we can all look forward to another great day of fellowship and recovery.

Thanks to everyone who participated in Gratitude month in November, helping provide the financial support Central Office needs in order to keep serving the local AA community. There is a special place in Alcoholics Anonymous for the word "gratitude". I know I am blessed and have much to be grateful for, including the opportunity to be District 23's "special worker".

I look forward to seeing everyone again this year. For those of you who have never stopped by the office, I invite you to come down and take a look. You are always welcome and I would sure enjoy meeting each and every one of you. I would like to wish everyone a great new year, and pray that all of the promises bless you this upcoming year.

John S., Manager

The A.A. Preamble: Background Information

Service Material from the General Service Office

THE PREAMBLE was introduced in the June 1947 issue of the AA Grapevine magazine. It was written by the then-editor, who borrowed much of the phrasing from the Foreword to the original edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

In those early years, the Grapevine had just begun to circulate among nonalcoholics, and the Preamble was intended primarily to describe for them what AA is and is not. It is still often used for public information purposes. As time passed, it began appearing in all Conference-approved publications, and many AA groups now use it to open meetings.

The original version differed in two ways from the familiar form we all know: 1) It stated that “the only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking,” and 2) it contained only the very brief statement “AA has no dues or fees.”

People often ask why the word “honest” was deleted. At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate asked about the words “honest desire to stop drinking,” suggesting that since “honest” does not appear in the Third Tradition, it might be deleted from the Preamble. In discussion, most Conference members felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by the phrase. Thus, as part of the evolution of AA, the phrase had been dropped from common usage. The midsummer 1958 meeting of the General Service Board of Trustees ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply “a desire to stop drinking.”

At the same time, the phrase “AA has no dues or fees” was clarified to read as it presently does: “There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.” The current version of the Preamble appears on page one of every issue of the Grapevine.

When reprinted, the Preamble should carry the following credit line: Copyright © by *The AA Grapevine, Inc.*

AA PREAMBLE©

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Copyright © by The AA Grapevine, Inc.

Reprinted with permission by The AA Grapevine Inc



December 2008 Birthdays

Name	Years
Alycia	1
Beth	1
David P.	1
Gary U.	2
Tina O.	1
Martha	2
Christine L	3
Susan H.	3
Aiko	4
Chelsea	4
Cheryl G.	5
Naomi C.	4
Dale	5
Kelly B.	5
Laurie R.	6
Mike C.	6
Lisa N.	7
Clay C.	8
Chris D.	9
David A.	9
Manny B.	9
John L.	10
Martha K	10
Susan B.	15
Natalie	17
Rudy S.	17
Sky J.	17
Dinah M.	19
Jay F.	19
Max M.	19
Nat D.	19
Don H.	20
Bob T.	21
Cindy K.	21
Joan L.	22
Bo S.	24
Patrick M.	25
Spenser W.	26
Joe R.	30
Kucky	31
Irish Tony	34

The Messenger is published monthly by:

**23rd District Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
1213 State Street, Suit H
Santa Barbara, California, 93101**

**805-962-3332
sbaa@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 Second month, February we need writing on Step 2 and Tradition 2.

Send submissions to **JohnS@santabarbaraAA.com**

Central Office Statistics

During December 2008 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	843
Al-Anon Referrals	61
Referrals to other programs	54
12step via answering service	51
Out-of-town visitors	39
12-step via office	47
Office walk-ins	615
Hits on our Web site	1,265

Service Meetings

General Service Representatives (GSR) meets at 6:00 p.m. on the first Monday of each month at Holy Cross Church Hall, 1740 Cliff Drive. Behind the Church.

IGR's (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at First Presbyterian Church 21 East Constance.

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

PI (Public Information) meets the fourth Saturday of each month. Call 687-7673 for more information.

Donations by Group December 2008

	Dec 08	Nov 08	Jan - Dec 08		Dec 08	Nov 08	Jan - Dec 08
001 Sunrisers	0.00	0.00	180.00	111 Carpinteria Canalino	400.00	0.00	1,040.00
002 Courage To Change	0.00	0.00	200.00	112 Montecito/Carpinteria	109.60	0.00	579.86
003 Eye Opener	250.00	240.00	2,605.00	113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	0.00	8.00	134.35
004 Monday At A Time	177.00	0.00	1,142.92	114 Schooner Group	0.00	0.00	348.00
005 Noon Step Study	0.00	0.00	100.00	115 Eleventh Step Meditation	60.00	0.00	199.00
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	0.00	340.00	117 Way Of Life	0.00	0.00	2,230.00
007 Sound Off	30.00	0.00	30.00	120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	121.20	0.00	1,152.70
010 Foundation Group	0.00	0.00	397.45	122 Came to Believe Candlelight	0.00	50.00	221.48
011 Sundowner Group	140.00	140.00	2,082.00	130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	0.00	144.00
013 New Pair Of Glasses	0.00	40.00	121.00	133 Action Participation	0.00	153.60	1,381.70
014 El Montecito Saturday Night	0.00	0.00	148.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	426.51	0.00	963.82
016 Big Book Workshop	0.00	0.00	50.00	140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	0.00	0.00	300.00
020 Cambridge Group	0.00	0.00	120.00	141 Off Center	123.00	0.00	947.85
021 Summerland Monday Group	224.00	0.00	839.00	144 Back To Basics, Young People	0.00	0.00	232.06
022 There Is A Solution	0.00	0.00	390.00	146 Out Of Town Speaker, NH II	50.00	0.00	50.00
023 For Women Only	143.00	0.00	537.00	148 San Ysidro	32.90	0.00	73.15
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	40.00	0.00	280.00	149 Getting To Know You	0.00	0.00	307.00
030 Sisters In Solution	0.00	0.00	25.00	150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	100.00	200.00
034 Women of Change	217.00	0.00	418.00	151 Our Meeting	70.00	0.00	70.00
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	0.00	340.00	153 Happy Destiny	0.00	0.00	800.00
045 Alternative Group	0.00	139.56	553.56	156 Start Your Day Right	150.00	150.00	3,200.00
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	98.50	0.00	677.88	158 Isla Vista Sobriety	38.00	0.00	88.00
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	0.00	0.00	329.00	161 Back To Basics Group	0.00	0.00	194.62
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	0.00	340.00	163 Mustard Seed	0.00	0.00	115.00
055 Staying Alive	0.00	0.00	570.00	164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	513.00	0.00	2,160.00
062 Do The Steps Or Die	26.54	47.05	408.61	165 Junkyard Dogs	198.10	0.00	919.10
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	0.00	120.00	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	72.07	268.32
067 Rigorous Honesty	24.00	0.00	378.33	170 Barefoot Group	46.00	25.00	547.75
068 Stepping Stones	0.00	0.00	485.61	177 Key Group	0.00	400.00	1,170.00
070 Success Group	0.00	80.00	160.00	180 Thursday Ladies Night	0.00	0.00	72.33
071 The Loft	0.00	0.00	350.00	181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	0.00	1,034.03
074 Casa Serena (BB Study)	163.10	0.00	543.16	183 Summerland, Thurs.	0.00	0.00	1,595.70
076 11th Step	0.00	0.00	340.00	186 Sunday Night Alternative, NH III	0.00	0.00	378.20
079 Harbor Group	175.00	234.92	2,687.65	195 Vision for You	0.00	0.00	3.14
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	0.00	120.00	120.00	197 Big Book Comes Alive Women's Meeting	0.00	0.00	30.00
084, 83 - 87 Group	0.00	68.00	297.00	199 Women of Courage	0.00	0.00	20.00
089 Here & Now	0.00	90.00	254.00	201 Birthday Donations	0.00	28.00	963.84
091 New Life	0.00	0.00	200.00	202 Supporting Members	7,752.00	724.00	14,954.30
093 Into Action, Thurs	0.00	0.00	180.00	204 Memorial Fund	4,000.00	0.00	4,610.00
094 Questions & Answers	0.00	0.00	55.70	207 Gratitude Month	4,516.82	438.76	4,955.58
097 Almost Saints	0.00	400.00	1,199.00	208 World Services Donation	243.90	248.00	1,035.23
099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	0.00	340.00	211 Rent Received	300.00	165.00	2,003.00
100 Student of Life	40.00	0.00	250.00	212 Special Events	35.00	560.00	8,614.05
101 Big Book Study, Friday	0.00	0.00	11.50				
				Totals:	\$20,934.17	\$4,721.96	\$81,503.53

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

