



MESSENGER

Convention News

How many alcoholics does it take to put on a convention? Judging from the turnout at last night's committee meeting, quite a few. The room was filled to capacity with people eager to help make our 2008 convention a reality. It was standing room only, in fact. The energy level was high as the room buzzed with people exchanging ideas of how to make this year's event the best one yet.

Maggie, the Chair for 2008, somehow managed to bring us all to order, though, and turn our focus to the next task for the committee: picking a logo for the convention. This year's theme is "Age of Miracles", (from page 153 of the Big Book), and we were all curious as to what sort of artwork our recovery community would come up with to depict that. We were surprised by the number of ideas that were submitted, and the creativity shown. There are sure a lot of talented folks out there!

The submissions ranged from pencil sketches to completed computer graphics. All of them were considered, because it was the idea we were interested in, rather than the execution. Turning the idea into a logo falls into the capable hands of the convention Graphics Committee, so we had the freedom to look at everything, not just the "finished" products.

The meeting where the committee chooses the logo is always one of the liveliest of the year. For one thing, it's always fun to see what people come up with to depict the theme. For another – not surprisingly in a group of recovering alcoholics – there are always strong and diverse opinions among the committee members, and that promotes enthusiastic discussions, to say the least. The first phase in the selection process allows each committee member three votes, and the three submissions with the most votes go on to the final phase. Committee members then discuss the final three, and then one last vote picks the logo that will be used.

The voting, on both the first ballot and the second, was very close this year, with every submission having its own contingent of strong supporters. Finally, a consensus was reached, however, and we chose a beautiful logo for this year. The committee would like to thank all those who submitted ideas, and to express our appreciation for the work and creativity that went into each one.

During the discussions, before and after the final vote, committee members made a few suggestions for minor changes to the artwork. The Graphics Committee, working with the artist, will make the changes and produce the final artwork which will be presented to the full committee for final approval at the next meeting. After that, your first opportunity to get a look at the 2008 logo will be on the convention web site, www.sbaaconvention.org. That will provide a preview of what the coffee mugs and tee shirts will look like this year.

So, the work goes on. The Program Chair is lining up the main speakers; the Site Coordinator is starting to consider how the facilities will be used; the menus are being planned. There's a lot to do, but we're heading in the right direction, one day at a time. The next committee meeting will be at 6 PM on March 13th, at Maggie's preschool. Go to the convention web site 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 still plenty of opportunities to help out.

Earlier we asked how many alcoholics it takes to put on a convention. Another question is how many alcoholics does it take to make a convention? The answer is, hundreds! There won't be a convention without you, so mark your calendar for October 24, 25 and 26, and plan to join us for a weekend of fun, fellowship, recovery and renewal. We'll see you there!



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! 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.

Made a Decision

I was sitting with a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous, listening as he shared his story with me.

He said, "I am confused. I see the effects of drinking all around me. I have listened in meetings. I understand that alcohol gets me in trouble. But as I sit in a meeting of AA, my mind tells me to go get drunk, to go get a bottle, to just get some relief."

My friend tells me, "I wake up in the morning and my first thought is, Me,me,me. I need a drink. Please let me get the relief I know is there waiting for me. After I drink my coffee, I remember my friends in AA. I know my taking a drink will be a disappointment for all of the people at the meetings who are there working hard to not drink. But I do not care -- I just want the relaxation of a bottle now."

He thinks, "Maybe I am different. Maybe I can drink."

My friend says to me, "It's crazy this not drinking. I am tired, sick and disgusted. I don't know what to do but I know a bottle will help."

The two of us stood up together. I looked him in the eyes. Gently I said, "Yes, I think you can drink."

His eyes grew large. He spoke loudly and with great force, "That is the stupidest idea I have ever heard."

He made a decision.

And so did I.

Hank

Santa Barbara District 23
General Service Representatives

Why have a GSR?

Bill W. called them the

"Guardians of the Traditions"

The G.S.R. is the group's link with the General Service conference, through which groups share their experience and voice and contribute to A.A.'s Collective Conscience.

Why Else?

- Commitments are thought to enhance one's sobriety!
- Learn more about how AA works as a whole.
- Help to inform your meeting's Group Conscience with Conference Approved information.
- Service, not politics.

The GSR meeting is held the 1st Monday of every month at 6:00 PM @ Holy Cross, 1740 Cliff Drive.

Ask your secretary if your group has a GSR!

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."

www.ccaadistrict23.com

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UPCOMING EVENT: Central Office Breakfast

When: Saturday, May 10th 2008

**Where: Goleta Valley Community
Center**

5679 Hollister Ave

Breakfast at 9:00am

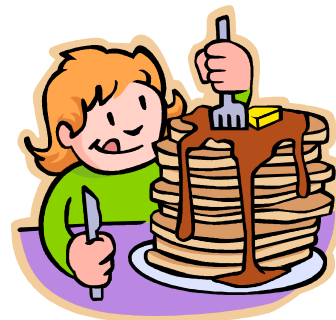
Speaker Meeting at 9:30am

Tickets \$5 each

Call 962-3332 for information

**Menu will include: Hot Cakes,
Eggs, bacon, sausage,
coffee and more.**

Plus Great Fellowship



Another Good Year

My name is Bob C. and I am an alcoholic. I have to be sure I never forget this. I'm beginning a new year in sobriety, having made it through 2007 without giving in to my disease. But I must always remember that I am still an alcoholic – regardless of how long it has been since I took my last drink.

In the year that just passed, I've had a few moments that made me glad I've had the guidelines of this program to help me in my battle against alcoholism. My mom passed away. The parole board again denied my parole and I've had another unfavorable decision from the court. Nothing that many of us in here don't face on a fairly regular basis. But before I found this program, I might have caved in to temptation and allowed my disease to dictate how I responded to these life events.

I can't express how grateful I am that I have the 12 Steps in my life. I don't claim to be perfect in my journey – not even close. I must be doing something right though, because I am still sober. That's all that matters.

I wish I was one of those people who just loved everything about this program, can't go to enough meetings, take on as many service commitments as possible and live and breathe by the principles we are taught. Unfortunately, it doesn't usually work that way for me!

Many times I've got to be coaxed, prodded or guilt-tripped into going to a meeting. Luckily for me, I have a friend who doesn't mind fulfilling that role. It's not that I don't like the meetings, because I do! Once I actually am there, I almost always enjoy the message I hear. It's just actually getting there that I have problems with sometimes. That is why it's important for me to remember this is a fellowship and that we have people to coax, prod or guilt-trip us when necessary. It's equally important for me to be willing to do the same thing for my fellows when they need it. Help is a two-way street.

When I made my first trip through the Steps, I learned more about myself than I thought possible. During my years of drinking, I learned little of my true self. Not all the things I learned in this process are flattering. I'm not the tough guy I thought I was when I was drunk. Through the clear eyes of sobriety, I'm certainly not as cool as I thought I was when I was drinking. Sobriety made me view all of my flaws and character defects without being able to round off the rough edges with a bottle.

While this process of discovery can be painful, it was absolutely essential that I did it. If I had never looked at myself by the way of a thorough moral inventory, I would never have seen the truth about myself. If I had never seen the truth, then I probably would never have changed, at least not enough to have truly embraced the program and the sobriety it has given me.

I didn't enjoy everything that happened in 2007, but it was a good year as far as I'm concerned. When things weren't going well in my life, whether it was a loss, conflict, disappointment, etc., I didn't turn to alcohol. I turned to my Higher Power and my friends for strength. That never would have happened if I hadn't learned a different way of living my life.

While I may have needed some help along the way to stay in the right frame of mind, 2007 was good because I didn't take a drink on any of those 365 days. If I'm able to say the same thing at the end of 2008, it will have been another good year.

Bob C.

Big Four Fellowship

Being of Service

My name is John S. I am an alcoholic; my sobriety date is June 15, 1985. As many of you know, Tim W. has retired. For over a year now, I have been a special worker in your Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous in Santa Barbara. As of January 1, 2008, I was approved by the IGR Board to be the new manager of your Central Office. Tim has moved on to the position of Chairman of the Inter-Group Representatives, so he is still around and active with the operations of your Central Office.

I remember when Tim called me in December 2006 and asked me if I would like to work part-time at Santa Barbara Alcoholics Anonymous Central Office as a special worker. I told him I would love the chance. So I began working part-time at two different jobs. In January of 2007, I moved to Carpinteria in order to be closer to Santa Barbara and my work at Central Office.

Shortly after I began working, Tim became ill. I assumed the majority of the responsibility for the day-to-day operation of Central Office, and continued to do so on and off for several months while Tim recovered. Of course, I had a lot of help from the volunteers who give their time to Central Office and from the members of the Board, and I am grateful to all of them.

During this time I was blessed with the opportunity of being of service and the chance to meet many of you in A.A. when you came into Central Office.

From listening to other office managers, I know how blessed we are here in Santa Barbara with over 185 meetings a week and great A.A. fellowship, plus the support of the members and groups in this area.

I am here to do all I can to make your Santa Barbara Alcoholic's Anonymous Central Office a comfortable, friendly and safe place to come and visit. I look forward to being able to meet more of you. Hopefully when you are in the area, you will stop in and say hi and see your Central Office in person and in action.

With Gratitude,

John S.

My Birthday

As I sit here and reflect on the fact that 9 years and 1 day ago I had damn near finished off a 1/2 gallon of scotch, when I asked for help from a God I didn't believe in. At that moment, God saw fit to remove from me the demons who had not only taken over every aspect of my physical body, but also my mind and spirit. You are receiving this note from me today because you are one of the many people who took the time to hug me when I needed one, nudged me back onto the path when I started to stray and most of all, showed me through **Love and Example** that I too could have what you have... if I was willing to apply myself. 9 years later, I stand before you a changed man... a loving and responsible husband, father, grandfather and friend. For this I am so very grateful and I owe it all to Alcoholics Anonymous and you.

A very special thanks to Mike C. and Bob H., without whose help and guidance and sponsorship I never would have come this far. I love you guys!!!

May God Bless all of you, keep you and guide you so that you may continue to help other suffering alcoholics. Thank you my Friend, I really do owe you my life.

Peter



**February 2008
Birthdays**

Caroline D.	1
Dwight C.	1
Nicole	1
Robert S.	1
Rosa R.	1
Glenn L	1
John Paul	2
Kathleen P	2
Chris H.	3
Richard B.	3
Onia D.	3
Patrick N	4
Allen O.	4
Diel W.	4
Calvin T.	6
Peter D	9
Bradley C.	9
Eric L	10
Larry	12
Barton H.	12
Jennifer	14
Maggie	16
Lowell B	17
Ned N.	17
Peggy F.	17
Liz K	18
Fred R.	20
Michael I.	20
Bob T	20
Jean V	25
Brian S	25
John Mu	25
Evan S	26
John K	28
Joan S.	28
Jon H.	31
Renee L	31
Mary Mc.	37
Carlton P	38
Eve D.	44

The Messenger is published monthly by:

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1213 State Street, Suit H
Santa Barbara, California, 93101**

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sbaa@santabarbaraAA.com

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. For the April 2008 Messenger we are looking for articles for Step 4, Tradition 4. or Concept 4. Or any other AA related story, H and I, or any on your experience, strength and hope. Send submissions to **JohnS@SantaBarbaraAA.com**

Central Office Statistics

During the February 2008 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	876
Al-Anon Referrals	45
Referrals to other programs	38
12step via answering service	31
Out-of-town visitors	36
12-step via office	33
Office walk-ins	684
Hits on our Web site	1,165

Service Meetings

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

IGR's (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 P.M. the second Tuesday each month at First Presbyterian Church 21 East Constance in Santa Barbara

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) meets at 6:00 P.M. at 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 each Month, 6:00 P.M. at 3523 Modoc Rd. Commitments Available!

**Donations by Group
February 2008**

	Feb 08	Jan 08	Jan - Feb 08		Feb 08	Jan 08	Jan - Feb 08
001 Sunrisers	100.00	0.00	100.00	113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	27.00	0.00	27.00
003 Eye Opener	260.00	270.00	530.00	114 Schooner Group	0.00	101.00	101.00
004 Monday At A Time	0.00	182.50	182.50	115 Eleventh Step Meditation	35.00	12.00	47.00
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	80.00	80.00	120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	0.00	150.00	150.00
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	312.00	312.00	133 Action Participation	0.00	881.00	881.00
021 Summerland Monday Group	216.00	0.00	216.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	0.00	149.55	149.55
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	40.00	40.00	80.00	141 Off Center	0.00	374.85	374.85
030 Sisters In Solution	0.00	25.00	25.00	156 Start Your Day Right	250.00	300.00	550.00
045 Alternative Group	0.00	75.00	75.00	161 Back To Basics Group	32.43	0.00	32.43
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	0.00	56.60	56.60	164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	0.00	462.00	462.00
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	96.00	0.00	96.00	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	57.72	57.72
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	80.00	80.00	170 Barefoot Group	70.75	90.00	160.75
055 Staying Alive	0.00	60.00	60.00	181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	371.03	371.03
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	80.00	80.00	TOTAL:	1490.99	5005.69	6496.68
062 Do The Steps Or Die	58.50	30.44	88.94				
067 Rigorous Honesty	30.00	0.00	30.00				
068 Stepping Stones	126.21	0.00	126.21				
079 Harbor Group	149.10	191.00	340.10				
076 11th Step	0.00	80.00	80.00				
097 Almost Saints	0.00	174.00	174.00				
099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	80.00	80.00				
111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	240.00	240.00				

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