



MESSENGER

CONVENTION NEWS

Convention time is here, everyone! The plans are all in place, and your committee is busy wrapping up the final details to make sure everything is ready to go on October 24th, when the weekend begins. The fun starts with the golf tournament, at 10 AM Friday, as the first group tees off. Golfers, be there early to get signed up and warmed up, and to be sure you're ready to go out with your foursome.

If you're a golfer, but have never played the convention tournament, you don't know what you're missing. First, there's being out on the course with sober friends on a beautiful Santa Barbara Fall day. Then there's the tournament format, a four-person scramble. You might be surprised by how well you play in this pressure-free game. There's plenty of fun and lots of prizes, and you should be sure to attend the Friday night barbeque, which is where the awards will be presented.

The convention officially opens at the Elks Club at noon on Friday. Registration will be open and the weekend's events begin. You can drop by Hospitality for coffee and fellowship, or attend a Marathon meeting or two to get your weekend started off right. There are many special meetings lined up, too, so check the schedule for the ones you won't want to miss.

From 5 o'clock on, the Registration table will get very busy, as people drop by after work. If you have already registered, you can just skip the long lines and go directly to the pre-registration station to pick up your packet. It's not too late, even now, to register on-line (www.sbaaconvention.com), or mail in a registration form (available at Central Office and most meetings). This will allow you to take advantage of early registration discounts, and assure your seat at events that might sell out.

My experience in years past is that the convention excitement builds with every moment that passes. After the barbeque Friday night (don't miss the Elks' tri-tip and chicken), the evening's speaker will kick off our weekend of recovery and renewal. Stick around after the meeting for lots of laughter with SOBER (our version of BINGO), along with a chance to win some prizes.

A great way to start your Saturday morning is to attend the H&I breakfast – guaranteed nourishment for body and soul. More events will take you through the day and into the evening, where the banquet will give you the opportunity to socialize over a wonderful meal. Saturday's main speaker will continue the message of recovery after dinner. After a brief break to clear out the dinner tables, the DJ will start spinning tunes to take us into the rest of the night. If you have the idea that you can't dance sober, just take a look at the dance floor as the music cranks up. You'll see everyone, from teens to sexagenarians (people in their 60's, for those of you with dirty minds), out there shaking it up with complete abandon. There is plenty of evidence that we do "absolutely insist on enjoying life".

The Sunday morning Spiritual Meeting will wrap up a wonderful weekend. The Sobriety Countdown, where we all celebrate the miracle of being sober, is one of the highlights of the morning. Finally, our speaker will close out the weekend with their experience, strength and hope, sending us home united and strong.

The point is, don't miss it! This is an opportunity to join your fellow alcoholics in our annual event that is uniquely Santa Barbara. We are fortunate to have an especially strong AA community here, and that's what makes our convention special, too. So come join us. And if you want to help out, be sure to look up Marcus J., our Volunteer Chair. He will be on site at the convention all weekend, and he'll find a place where you can be useful and have fun at the same time.

On behalf of all of us, thank you in advance for attending the convention. Without you and your support, there wouldn't be a convention. And we look forward to seeing you there!



November is Gratitude Month

November is traditionally Gratitude Month in A.A. During the month of November a special collection is made during each meeting. A second basket is passed and the money collected is used to directly support the services of the Santa Barbara Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous.

If you wish to be able to declare the donation on your taxes, please drop a check into the basket and your Central Office will send you a receipt acknowledging your donation.

Count the blessings you have been given as a result of your sobriety. Be generous with your donations so that we may continue to support you and your group and most importantly to...Help us carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic!

Please give what you can.

Call us anytime at:
(805) 962-3332

Local group contributions can be dropped off at or mailed to:
Santa Barbara Central Office of A.A.
1213 State Street Ste. H
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Supporting Member

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, declining outside contributions. – Seventh Tradition (short form), reprinted by permission of AA World Services, Inc.

November is Gratitude Month from Box 459

Gratitude is always in order, but many groups have designated November as a particular time to give thanks to the A.A. program. It has been that way since the 1940s, when the General Service Board held small "gratitude dinners," which were replaced in the 1960s by bigger and more elaborate "gratitude luncheons." These get-togethers, which Bill W. would address, were occasions for A.A. members to express their appreciation for the program. More important, it was A.A.'s opportunity to meet with members of the media to thank them for their sympathetic coverage. According to a G.S.O. memo at the time, the aim of the functions was, "to advance A.A.'s public relations by bringing editors, publishers, writers and broadcasters in personal contact with sources of reliable information on the movement." The luncheons, which later were deemed too expensive, ended in 1968. Why November became Gratitude Month in the U.S. (in Canada, it is in October) is uncertain. It may have something to do with Bill W.'s mistaken notion for a time that his sobriety began in November, instead of its actual start date of Dec. 11. There are clear connections to Thanksgiving, though. In 1956 and 1957, there were floor actions at the annual General Service Conferences recommending that Thanksgiving week in those years be designated "A.A. Gratitude Week." The floor action suggested that this "be noted in the annual pre-Thanksgiving appeals to the groups for funds to help Worldwide Services." However it was that November became Gratitude Month, A.A.s early on saw that staying grateful was important in staying sober. Acceptance may be the answer to all our problems, but gratitude has to be a close second. As many in A.A. have discovered, gratitude is a sure cure for self-pity. And can you be resentful at the same time that you're grateful? Some in recovery will coax their thinking onto spiritual lines with gratitude lists. If not forced to look - in black and white - at what they have been given, too many A.A.s find they can drift off into a reverie about what they imagine they've been denied. Being quick to take credit for what has been a gift also takes its toll. Bill W. once detected in himself a strain of self-congratulation for his contribution to A.A. Seeing that this attitude was cutting him off from his fellow A.A.s, he reflected, "How much better it would have been had I felt gratitude rather than self-satisfaction - gratitude that I had once suffered the pains of alcoholism, gratitude that a miracle of recovery had been worked upon me from above...." (Grapevine 1946) Some groups will hold Traditions meetings in November to remind themselves of the rich heritage of A.A. Others do topic meetings on the various aspects of gratitude, such as "gratitude is not passive" or "giving it away." During the course of the year, many members of the Fellowship send a gratitude gift of one or two dollars for each year of sobriety on their anniversaries to their local Intergroup or to the General Service Office. As Bill W. wrote in a letter in 1959, "if you carry the message to others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given you."

On Cultivating Tolerance

During nine years in A.A., I have observed that those who follow the Alcoholics Anonymous program with the greatest earnestness and zeal, not only maintain sobriety, but often acquire finer characteristics and attitudes as well. One of these is tolerance. Tolerance expresses itself in a variety of ways: in kindness and consideration toward the man or woman who is just beginning the march along the spiritual path, in the understanding of those who perhaps have been less fortunate in educational advantages, and in sympathy toward those whose religious ideas may seem to be at great variance with our own. I am reminded in this connection of the picture of a hub with its radiating spokes. We all start at the outer circumference and approach our destination by one of many routes.

To say that one spoke is much better than all the other spokes is true only in the sense of its being best suited to you as an individual. Human nature is such that without some degree of tolerance, each one of us might be inclined to believe that we have found the best or perhaps the shortest spoke. Without some tolerance we might tend to become a bit smug or superior--which of course is not helpful to the person we are trying to help, and may be quite painful or obnoxious to others. No one of us wishes to do anything which might act as a deterrent to the advancement of another--and a patronizing attitude can readily slow up this process.

Tolerance furnishes, as a by-product, a greater freedom from the tendency to cling to preconceived ideas and stubbornly adhered-to opinions. In other words it often promotes an open-mindedness which is vastly important--in fact a prerequisite to the successful termination of any line of search, whether it be scientific or spiritual.

These, then, are a few of the reasons why an attempt to acquire tolerance should be made by each one of us.

Dr. Bob of Akron

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July 1944



Central Office Breakfast

Saturday November 15, 2008

Goleta Valley Community Center

5679 Hollister Ave

Breakfast at 9:00 am

Speaker Meeting after breakfast

50/50 Raffle

You can purchase tickets

at Your Central Office

Or at the breakfast

Tickets \$5.00 each

Call 962-3332 for information

Eggs,
Hotcakes,
Sausage,
bacon,
Coffee and
more.

PLEASE COME
AND SUPPORT
YOUR
CENTRAL
OFFICE

Santa Barbara District 23 General Service Representatives

<http://www.ccaadistrict23.com>

Archives

Has the District 23 Archives display visited *your* group?

Your District 23 Archives display includes:

- Photos of some of the people and places that have made up AA history
- AA-related newspaper articles 1935-1941
- Copies of the original manuscript of the Big Book
- The booklet, *Passing it On: A Brief History of AA in Santa Barbara*, which describes how AA came about in our District.

Your District 23 Archives committee is happy to come and share any or all of items in the District 23 display with any group who would like to see them.

One of our latest projects is to bring the Archives display to the SB Convention this October.

For more information or to schedule a visit, contact the Archives Committee Chair at archives@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,
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Step Ten helps to keep me running like a finely tuned piano, that is, if I continue doing as it suggests, especially the last part ("and when we were wrong, promptly admit it"). That helps me to stay humble, which is in direct opposition to my pride and arrogance that has a tendency to crop up when I am not spiritually centered. It also helps me to maintain healthier relationships. My problem is often wanting to cast blame on the other party, but as it was when working Step Nine, and Steps Four and Five, I might add, it's not about the other person. It's about my biggest enemy: the sick one that looks at me in the mirror. I can't control other people, nor can I be responsible for their decisions. If they choose to hold onto a resentment after I have cleaned up my side of the street, then that's their issue. Not mine. I am absolved of it when I truly accept responsibility for what I have done, and have humbled myself by going to make the amends that I owe.

I don't always write each night, but do know that it is an important process that I can't ignore when things aren't going quite right. I have been fortunate enough to acquire over twelve years of sobriety, and have sponsored a few of your contributors from the penitentiary at Lompoc, many guilty of labeling me as an "A.A. Nazi". But one thing that I have learned is to just do the next right thing and leave the outcome up to God. As a result, several of those guys have multiple years of sobriety, but it wasn't me that had anything to do with it. That's between them and their "Higher Power." I just did what I had to do to stay sober, and helped love them until they could love themselves.

Wayne D.

JOKE of the Month "Efficiency Expert"

A COP came along one night and spied a drunk on hands and knees beneath a street light who was busily sifting the ground between his fingers. "What did you lose?" inquired the cop. "M' girl's diamond ring I was gonna give t' her." "Funny place to lose it," observed the cop. "How come it dropped here?" "It didn't," replied the stew. He pointed into the dark. "Doggone ring fell outa my fingers back there." Cop rocked back and forth on his heels. "Why don'tcha go where you dropped it to look?" he demanded in a soft voice. Drunk shook his head. "S'no use; too dark back there. I'm gonna look where I got a light t' see by."



The Messenger is published monthly by:

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

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September Birthdays

Name	Years
Caryn	1
Chris M	1
Harry	1
Heather	1
Jeff D	1
Jeff T	1
Shawn P.	1
Shea	1
Diane Q	2
Dirk B	2
Don W	2
Gary	2
Janice	2
Paul R	2
Wally	2
Denny R	3
Key	3
Anne T	4
George T	4
Patrice W	4
Kitti S	5
Linda B	5
Mack N	5
Margie H	7
Pete P	8
Mart K.	9
George C	10
Maggie C	11
Sami M.	13
Bob U	14
Cody F	14
Rey A	14
Brigid M	16
Marilyn W.	18
Max M	18
Dee	21
Laurette	22
Mike C	22
Emilio R	23
Phil	24

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. For the November 2008 Messenger we are looking for articles for Step 11, Tradition 11, or Concept 11. 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 September 2008 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	845
Al-Anon Referrals	63
Referrals to other programs	42
12step via answering service	41
Out-of-town visitors	37
12-step via office	32
Office walk-ins	601
Hits on our Web site	1,205

Service Meetings

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

IGR's (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 P.M. the 2nd Tuesday 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 each month at the Central Office.

PI (Public Information) meets the 4th 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!

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

