



MESSENGER

Gratitude Month is November

Your Santa Barbara AA Central Office is again asking for donations during November, AA's "Gratitude Month." We wanted to share our thoughts on Gratitude Month, and give you some insight into SBAA's financial status & goals.

I joined this fellowship in a small depressed Pennsylvania farming / industrial town. There wasn't much long-term sobriety; AA took root there in the mid-1970s. If you drove 10 or 20 miles to attend a different meeting you'd see the same people. Our clubhouse was in the basement of a building that housed a bar, across a parking lot from the city jail. Virtually every local drug & alcohol counselor was in AA – every meeting was a 12-step, H&I event. Once or twice a year someone ordered books from... somewhere. In 6 years I never heard anyone mention C.O. If we had 7th Tradition money left after paying rent & bills, we held a dance or a picnic.

We moved to Goleta in 2003 and were amazed at the sizable, vibrant AA in our area. I became an Intergroup Rep in 2007 and gained an appreciation for the services C.O. provides, including: answering referral & 12 step calls, supplying literature and chips, sponsoring AA events like picnics and speaker breakfasts, publishing the Messenger newsletter, and generally linking the many AA meetings & service groups. (You can read more in the Messenger, or on the C.O. web site: www.SantaBarbaraAA.com).

C. O.'s financial goals are simple: serve the AA community, and be self-supporting through member donations. It costs about \$7500 / month to keep C. O. running – paying rent & phone bills, stocking the shelves, paying our office manager, etc. In 2008, donations to Central Office fell dramatically due to the recession. By the end of first quarter 2008, C.O. was on track to tap into the savings account –the prudent reserve. At the same time our office manager found that most C.O.s maintain 6 months prudent reserve; we only had 2 months.

To raise money, we adopted a program used by other area C.O.s and asked for special donations in November – "Gratitude Month." The history of Gratitude Month goes back to the 1940s when the General Service Board held fundraising dinners. In 1949, Bill W. proposed Thanksgiving week as a time for meeting & meditation on AA's traditions (Grapevine, Nov. 1949; reprinted in Language of the Heart, p. 95). In 1956, the 6th General Service Conference recognized Thanksgiving week as, "AA Gratitude Week." This later morphed into "Gratitude Month," a time for members to contribute and support G.S.O.'s worldwide service (Box 459, vol. 46, no. 5).

We came out of 2008 in good shape, thanks to member generosity and serendipity. Members responded to our requests and donations picked up. A defunct AA event liquidated their treasury and donated some of the money to Central Office. Institutions bought an unexpectedly large amount of literature. And Gratitude Month 2008 brought in a significant amount. Our current prudent reserve stands at 3 months.

It's been my privilege to act as C.O. treasurer for the last 2 years, to see first-hand how the operation works and how our donations support the AA community. If you have any questions about how donations are spent, I encourage you to talk to your group's IGR, the C.O. manager, John S., or me:

Charlie L, Mustard Seed Group (Isla Vista, Sunday 7:00 pm), or thru C.O.

District 23 General Service

www.ccaadistrict23.com

Facilities Committee

Please help us take meetings into sober houses, shelters, and other facilities that do not qualify for Hospitals and Institutions (H&I) meetings but may have alcoholics as residents or clients.

The next Facilities Committee Meeting will be on Wednesday, November 4th at 6 p.m. at Central Office. Anyone who is interested in bringing meetings into local sober houses and shelters or in serving in this capacity is invited to attend.

We are especially looking for people with two or more years of sobriety to serve as Facility Coordinators and who are willing to contact local facilities to bring meetings into them.

If you would like more information, please contact: Earl U. (805) 563-0467 or email: facilities@ccaadistrict23.com

AA 75th International Convention Registration Now Available!

July 1-4, 2010 in San Antonio, TX. Go to www.aa.org to get signed up. Accommodations are going fast, and you must pre-register to get your reservations started.

Upcoming District 23 events:

- **ACM (Area 93 "Officers" Mtg.):** Sunday, Oct. 18, Goleta Valley Community Center, 5679 Hollister Avenue, 9 a.m.
- **Santa Barbara AA Convention:** Oct. 23-25, Elks Lodge, 150 N. Kellogg.

For more info, please contact your GSR, or the District 23 DCM (Don H.) Phone: 630-4834 or email: dcm@ccaadistrict23.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."

November is Gratitude Month

November is traditionally Gratitude Month in A.A. During this month, a special collection is made during each meeting. In addition to the regular 7th Tradition, 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.

Because Groups need to pay rent, purchase literature and sobriety chips, buy coffee, and have other expenses, a lot of the 7th Tradition that is collected go to pay for those expenses. This one time each year we make a special request that you consider making a donation that will go directly to support the services provided by your Central Office. This donation will help to ensure that the office is able to continue providing services like keeping our AA phone lines open, keeping AA literature in stock, and ensuring that there is a place that is the central hub of local AA activities.

Donations to your Central Office are tax deductible. 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.

Consider counting the blessings you have been given as a result of your sobriety. Please, be generous with your donations, so that we may continue to support you, your group, and most importantlycontinue to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

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

Editorial:

On the 10th Step. . .

"Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

The admission of a wrong compares in its effects to a strong cauterizing agent. When applied promptly it burns away the infection, but the treatment may be painful. How much mental pain an individual incurs by admitting a wrong depends not so much on the degree of the wrong as on how seriously he is afflicted with vanity and false pride. The more vain the person, the more reluctant he is ever to admit a mistake. The more false pride he has, the more imperative it seems to him to perpetuate the illusion of his own perfection.

Since we all know that vanity and false pride are distortions of the mind, perhaps the reason they are so common is the fact that, although we can spot them immediately in others, we have considerable difficulty in detecting them in ourselves.

Here the value of the personal inventory is self-evident. If it is honest and thorough, it will leave no vanities and false pride unrevealed. It is the means by which we can detect in ourselves the faults we note so readily in others and which we know are obstacles to the growth of an effective and happy personality.

The first inventory we take as we begin to apply the A.A. program naturally tends to be the most soul-searching and the most revealing. In most cases, it is the first self-reckoning we have undertaken in many years and most of us are likely to unearth a great accumulation of debris.

This inventory provides the guide for basic, and usually drastic, correction. Subsequent inventories serve to show whether the first efforts toward correction have been effective and what additional correction may be needed. By this method of personal checkup, we can determine for ourselves whether we are actually moving forward or have slipped backward.

Continued personal inventory is also a medium for readjustment to new objectives. As the A.A. moves upward he frequently finds that he is constantly lifting his sights. What satisfied him previously does not do so any longer. When he was learning to crawl he looked ahead to being able to walk. When he could walk he wanted to run. His expanding personality demands larger fields. If the person he wanted to be yesterday has come into being, he now wishes to be a still better person.

The inventory, obviously, is only part of the treatment. The deficiencies it reveals must be made up. Or, in the thought of the 10th Step: When wrong, promptly admit it. That is putting the inventoried knowledge into action. Haliburton once wrote, "When a man is wrong and won't admit it, he always gets angry." Anger, as we well know, is particularly poisonous to us. How foolish and ironical to fall prey to it through vanity!

August 1945

Reprinted with permission by The AA Grapevine Inc

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.

Convention News

October 2009

It's almost here!!

The Convention Committee is excited and we hope you are too!

The 25th Annual Santa Barbara Alcoholics Anonymous Convention will be held on October 23rd, 24th and 25th at the Elks Lodge in Goleta.

It is coming together to be a great week-end:

Inspiring speakers, marathon AA meetings, Friday night BBQ, Friday Golf Tournament, Old Timers and Hospitals and Institutions Panels, Banquet on Saturday night.

Our traditional closing speaker on Sunday morning following the annual "Sobriety Count-Down".

There is something for everyone this convention:

Gay and lesbian speaker meeting Saturday noon , Room 106 at Best Western

Spanish speaking format

Al Anon meetings, luncheon, speakers

Young people's AA

Meditation meetings "Beyond All Hope" Saturday and Sunday at 8:00 AM in Room 106 at the Best Western.

Open Mike in the Grove area, Saturday noon til 3:00 PM

Lots of great talent scheduled for this year.

Don't forget our need for volunteers: any and all the hours you can give from Friday morning at 8:00 AM until we finish cleaning up on Sunday afternoon. Thank you in advance for your service; we could not have a successful convention without the help of our volunteers.

Most of all, come for the great fellowship ; seeing old friends and making new acquaintances. Hearing the message of experience, strength and hope.

Visit the website at sbaaconvention.org and register on-line or pick up a flyer at one of your meetings and mail in your registration.

We look forward to seeing everyone at Convention 2009.

Your Convention Committee

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."



**September 2009
Birthdays**

Name	Years
Miki G	1
Felicia M	1
Victoria T	1
Ashley	1
George H	1
Chris M	2
Ron S.	2
Chris M	2
Dirk B	3
Wally	3
Tim L	3
Ira L	3
Janice H	3
Denny R	4
George T	5
Anne T	5
Patrice W	5
Mac N	6
Kitti S	6
Sal S	6
Daphanie B.	7
Margie H	8
Mark K	10
George C	11
Rey A	15
Charlie	19
Dee	22
Laurette	23
Kathie O	23
Mike C	23
Barry K	23
Emilio R	24
Ron N	25
Tony M	25
Phil	25
Ed	26
Bruce C	29
Ellen B	30

The Messenger is published monthly by:

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

805-962-3332

JohnS@SantaBarbaraAA.com

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. For the November 2009 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 story on your experience, strength and hope. Send submissions to **JohnS@SantaBarbaraAA.com**

Central Office Statistics

During September, 2009 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	648
Al-Anon Referrals	48
Referrals to other programs	41
12 step via answering service	35
Out-of-town visitors	27
12-step via office	34
Office walk-ins	401
Hits on our Web site	1,650

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. No meeting in October.

25th ANNUAL Santa Barbara Convention Committee meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 3523 Modoc Rd. Commitments Available!

**Donations by Group
September 2009**

	Sep 09	Aug 09	Jan - Sept		Sep 09	Aug 09	Jan - Sept
001 Sunrisers	0.00	0.00	216.00	111 Carpinteria Canalino	400.00	0.00	400.00
002 Courage To Change	100.00	0.00	100.00	112 Montecito/Carpinteria	0.00	0.00	268.96
003 Eye Opener	300.00	375.00	2,396.00	113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	0.00	24.00	117.75
004 Monday At A Time	0.00	0.00	761.77	114 Schooner Group	0.00	87.00	293.00
005 Noon Step Study	0.00	0.00	9.00	115 Eleventh Step Meditation	0.00	100.00	193.00
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	0.00	380.00	117 Way Of Life	0.00	0.00	750.00
007 Sound Off	30.00	0.00	30.00	120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	283.00	0.00	1,077.60
010 Foundation Group	0.00	0.00	313.77	122 Came to Believe Candlelight	0.00	0.00	50.00
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	0.00	350.00	130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	0.00	144.00
014 El Montecito Saturday Night	0.00	0.00	100.00	133 Action Participation	147.95	0.00	520.78
019 Onward & Upward	0.00	0.00	344.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	297.60	0.00	663.60
020 Cambridge Group	0.00	0.00	100.00	140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	0.00	0.00	80.00
021 Summerland Monday Group	0.00	0.00	432.19	144 Back To Basics, Young People	0.00	94.00	347.96
022 There Is A Solution	0.00	0.00	327.00	145 The How And Why Of It	0.00	51.60	141.60
023 For Women Only	100.00	0.00	242.40	148 San Ysidro	0.00	0.00	84.00
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	40.00	0.00	160.00	150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	0.00	151.60
026 Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	49.00	99.00	153 Happy Destiny	0.00	0.00	563.50
034 Women of Change	0.00	0.00	127.10	163 Mustard Seed	0.00	50.00	125.00
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	0.00	380.00	164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	200.00	450.00	1,590.00
045 Alternative Group	0.00	106.40	453.60	165 Junkyard Dogs	270.00	0.00	670.00
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	0.00	84.00	396.00	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	0.00	105.03
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	0.00	0.00	194.00	170 Barefoot Group	25.00	18.00	167.00
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	0.00	380.00	177 Key Group	0.00	0.00	1,960.00
055 Staying Alive	0.00	0.00	495.00	180 Thursday Ladies Night	0.00	0.00	110.00
062 Do The Steps Or Die	0.00	0.00	75.33	181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	0.00	1,122.46
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	0.00	173.61	182 Just the Black Print	0.00	0.00	68.00
067 Rigorous Honesty	313.20	0.00	1,019.11	183 Summerland/Montecito, Thurs.	0.00	0.00	710.00
068 Stepping Stones	0.00	0.00	148.20	186 Sunday Night Alternative, NH III	0.00	0.00	189.00
070 Success Group	0.00	0.00	90.00	187 Turning Point	0.00	0.00	50.00
074 Casa Serena (BB Study)	0.00	56.00	56.00	191 Men on a Mission	0.00	104.00	104.00
076 11th Step	0.00	0.00	380.00	197 Big Book Comes Alive Women's	0.00	0.00	176.00
079 Harbor Group	94.75	87.50	821.40	200 Anonymous Donations	0.00	0.00	103.23
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	0.00	0.00	100.00	201 Birthday Donations	175.00	696.00	3,023.00
084, 83 - 87 Group	120.00	75.00	1,087.48	202 Supporting Members	592.82	923.88	11,186.69
089 Here & Now	0.00	0.00	180.00	204 Memorial Fund	50.00	300.00	1,450.00
093 Into Action, Thurs	0.00	170.00	270.00	207 Gratitude Month	0.00	0.00	51.95
094 Questions & Answers	0.00	0.00	39.62	210 Convention Income	0.00	0.00	2,706.00
097 Almost Saints	100.00	0.00	805.00	211 Rent Received	37.00	160.00	1,017.55
099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	0.00	380.00	212 Special Events	0.00	35.00	3,685.00
100 Student of Life	40.00	0.00	40.00				
				Totals:	\$3,716.32	\$4,096.38	\$50,669.84

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

