



The Santa Barbara

October 2005

MESSENGER

Convention Time Approaches

The convention is only a couple of weeks away. The good news is that preparations are about where they are supposed to be. In fact, some would say preparations are *exactly* where they're supposed to be, and if you consider the outcome is in God's hands, not ours, that's certainly true.

But your committee is busy doing the footwork, doing its best to put together a great party for everyone who comes. The speakers are set, their transportation and lodging arranged. Decorations have been selected. Carlos has his workers lined up to do their usual fine job of cooking and setting things up at the Elks Club. There will be games to play, raffles to win, and food to eat.

Speaking of food, you won't want to miss the barbeque or the banquet. The Elks are noted for their tri-tip and chicken barbeque, which will be featured Friday night. Remember, that's when the golf prizes will be awarded, too.

And this year's banquet menu—your choice of stuffed Cornish hen or baron of beef, with mud pie for dessert—is guaranteed to be delicious. The best part, though, is the fellowship—dinner conversation with old and new friends.

As mentioned in last month's *Messenger*, Al-Anon will be a big part of this year's convention. Their opening meeting starts at 6:30 Friday evening. From 11:00 to 12:30 on Saturday, there will be a District 8 Get-Together in the upstairs room at the Elk's Lodge, to celebrate the new Santa Barbara Al-Anon district. All are welcome to attend! Later that afternoon, at 3:00, there will be an Alateen meeting, with speakers and an orientation program for sponsors. This is a great opportunity for AAs and "double winners" to learn about this important program. And there will be plenty of other Al-Anon events, including a "Men's Stag" meeting Saturday at 5:00.

We got our first look at the sweatshirts and t-shirts at the September committee meeting, and they are beautiful. The logo is printed in blue and white, and it looks great against the heather grey of the fabric. We think we'll sell out early this year,

so don't put off getting one for yourself, your sponsor, or a sponsee. And as noted in the last issue, the coffee mugs are beautiful, too—don't forget the free coffee when you bring your mug to the hospitality table!

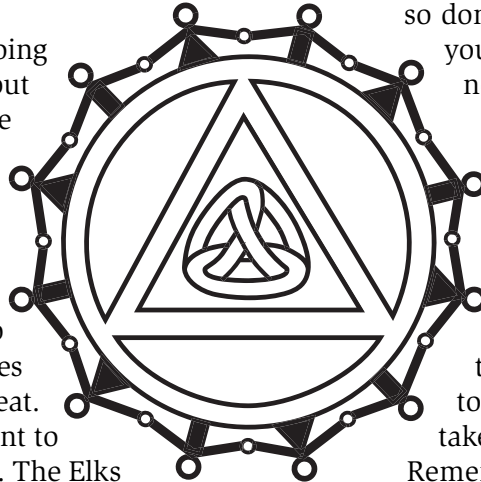
If you haven't registered yet, it's not too late. You can register online at our web site www.sbaaconvention.com through October 10. Otherwise plan to register on-site. And, yes, we do take MasterCard and Visa.

Remember our theme this year: "Unbreakable Kinship" ("AA Comes of Age," page 77). Conventions are an opportunity to celebrate our freedom from alcohol, and the wonderful friendships that can be found among people who understand what we went through to get here—because they went through it too!

Your committee members hope to see you Friday, October 21 when we open the doors for this convention. If we don't know you yet, we hope to meet you there. We know we'll see old friends we haven't seen since last year's convention, and look forward to catching up with them. We look forward to attending some marathon meetings. We pray our ears are open to the message our speakers will bring. Remember, "We absolutely insist on enjoying life" (*Big Book*, page 132). This is a grand opportunity to do just that.

See you at the Elks Club October 21, 22 and 23. Don't miss it!

—Your Convention Committee



Thanks to Those Who Serve AA

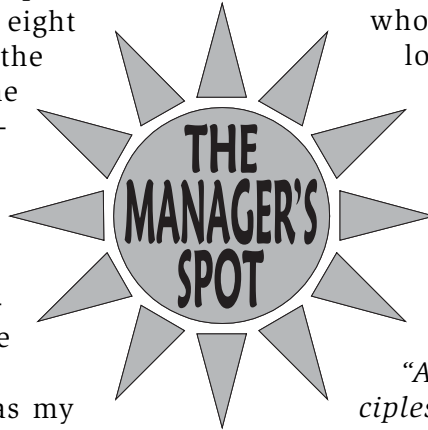
I would like to thank Jim S. for the outstanding job he has been doing as the new Messenger editor. He is, I believe, the eighth person to have filled that position in the eight years that I have been managing the office. Every person who has done the job has brought their own vision and personality to it, not to mention their selfless dedication and service. And not one of them ever failed to deliver the copy on time for the printer, although there were a few close calls!

What brought this to mind was my e-mailing Jim recently and telling him that our usual end-of-the-month push to get everything done needed to be a few days later than usual for this issue because I was going to be out of state at the national Intergroup conference. Could he still make it happen on time for publication? He wrote back and said no problem, we can make it work. Phew! Another bullet dodged.

The number of times someone from our community has stepped forward and helped me avert the latest crisis here at the office are too numerous to count or relate. I guess that's where I'm going with this. How proud and

humble it makes me to be associated with the caliber of people who do service work in Alcoholics Anonymous. They are the ones who are under the radar and aren't looking for recognition. They just show up here to answer phones, or help publish our newsletter, or take calls at home from suffering alcoholics. They give rides to meetings, and they show up for commitments when they are asked to.

In our Service Manual it says "*A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.*" So thanks Jim, for cutting me some slack. And thanks also to the rest of you who help make my life so easy. Thanks for saving your own lives, and for making mine so much easier.



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! 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.

New Tenth-Step Meeting

Santa Barbara has a new meeting that focuses on Step 10. It meets each Saturday at noon at the church at State and Padre. Every week the group reads out loud the chapter on Step 10 from *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. It's a great weekly pit stop as we trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

A Member's Experience of Step 10

What distinguishes Step 10? Is it not the emphasis on assets as described in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*? I have found that although a sponsor may, as directed, mention assets in Step 5 conferences, assets are seldom a central theme. Since most of what we do each day is good rather than bad, and since all inventories must include analysis of what is in stock as well as items that are low or not present, I cannot overemphasize that being happy, joyous, and free-thinking about our merits, with due concern for Grace, is essential.

—Gardiner L.

A Tenth Step Prayer

I pray I may continue: to grow in understanding and effectiveness; to take daily spot check inventories of myself; to correct mistakes when I make them; to take responsibility for my actions; to be ever aware of my negative and self-defeating attitudes and behaviors; to keep my willfulness in check; to always remember I need your help; to keep love and tolerance of others as my code; and to continue asking in daily prayer how I can best serve you, my God.

Tradition 10 Contemplation Questions

Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

1. Do I ever give the impression that there really is an "AA opinion" on Antabuse? Tranquilizers? Doctors? Psychiatrists? Churches? Hospitals? Jails? Alcohol? The federal or state government? Legalizing marijuana? Vitamins? Al-Anon? Alateen?
2. Can I honestly share my own personal experience concerning any of those without giving the impression I am stating the "AA opinion"?
3. What in AA history gave rise to our Tenth Tradition?
4. Have I had a similar experience in my own AA life?
5. What would AA be without this tradition? Where would I be?
6. Do I breach this or any of its supporting traditions in subtle, perhaps unconscious, ways?
7. How can I manifest the spirit of this tradition in my personal life outside AA? Inside AA?

—Originally published in the *AA Grapevine*

Concept X

Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority—the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and bylaws. —*AA Service Manual*

Letters

The Sound of Faith Being Restored

Hi, Don M. Panel 55, Area 27 (Louisiana) here. I am just getting some very limited and sporadic e-mail access after Hurricane Katrina, and we are overwhelmed and touched by the outpouring of AA love and support we are receiving from around the AA world. Along with many others, my family and I evacuated from the New Orleans area before Hurricane Katrina devastated our city and homes. AAs across the Gulf South are spread throughout the country.

Communication is tough. No one with whom I have spoken seriously expected the evacuation to last the length of time now suggested (months), much less the damages experienced. We are crushed that we will not be hosting ICYPAA this coming weekend, but we promise that we will make up for it when we get up and going.

Things are still very much in a confused state throughout the Gulf South. For now, we are trying to find each other, and verify that our fellows are safe, and determine whether we can be of service to them and their loved ones.

There have been hundreds of e-mails from AAs from everywhere AA is. In all appropriate cases, I will post these on our website, consistent of course with our traditions. I haven't yet had a chance to read all of them, much less to respond. Each one that I read brings tears to my eyes, and I am not one to cry. The love and fellowship in AA is powerful beyond words, at least words I can express. Please pray for our fellows.

Now the good news. I have been able to speak with numerous AAs with stories of great individual loss and personal tragedy. The tremendous hope and serenity that our steps and traditions bring is evident in all of them with whom I have spoken. The dominant theme in each conversation is "to whom can I be of service?" In the face of these challenges, a drink hasn't been an answer or solution to the scores of us with whom I have spoken. Challenged, confused, angry, lost and scared? Sure. Drunk or drinking? No.

We love each of you, and we will make it through these challenging times, following the excellent example of many, many of our fellows who have faced adversity and tragedy and actually shown gratitude

for their lives. Consistent with our primary purpose, and of course our three legacies of recovery, unity and service, we assure you that we will find suffering alcoholics to whom we hope to carry our experience, strength and hope.

We hope to meet with you soon on the (dry) road to happy destiny.

—Don M., Panel 55/Area 27

We Pay Our Own Way

Once again, the time of the Santa Barbara AA Convention is fast approaching. This is the ninth Convention Committee I have served on, and for the most part, it has been an absolute pleasure. Let me be clear, though, that I am not writing on behalf of the committee, and this letter doesn't represent its views. These are only my personal thoughts on some things I have observed over the years.

I am one of those people who loves AA conventions. I love the renewed commitment to my program that I get at a convention, the "common bond" I feel, the messages I hear, and the confirmation that we recovering alcoholics "absolutely insist on enjoying life."

I know there are those who don't look at the convention the same way I do. Whether they are uncomfortable in crowds of people, or don't like the noise, or for whatever reason, they just don't enjoy conventions. And they don't come, which is fine.

But every year there are those who clearly are attracted to at least part of the convention, but don't want to pay even the minimum, to register. These are the perfectly nice people who come to the registration table and say, "I just want to go to the Al-Anon split pitch," (or Old Timers Meeting, or whatever), "do I have to register?" And then leave in a huff when the answer is yes.

Then there are the ones who send in their registration forms showing payment for one convention registration, but two banquets. They say, "My husband [or wife] wants to come the banquet and hear the Saturday night speaker, but doesn't want to attend the rest of the convention." The question, stated or not, is, "Why should someone have to register if they are attending only one event?"

Finally, there are the dozens, perhaps hundreds, who, without registering, attend the Sunday morning "Spiritual Meeting." I've heard so many say how much they love the Sunday meeting, the sobriety

(Continued on page 5)

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countdown, the warm fellowship that marks the conclusion of the convention, but then they add, “It’s an AA meeting. Why should I have to pay?”

The General Service Organization in New York addressed this in their “Frequently Asked Questions” regarding the 2005 International Convention:

Q. Must everyone register? I thought I didn’t have to pay to go to an A.A. event.

A. Yes. Everyone must register. Attendance at this special celebration is voluntary and, as responsible A.A. members, “we pay our own way.”

So, first of all, let’s look at the Santa Barbara Convention as a special event. According to the *AA Guidelines on Conferences, Conventions and Round-ups*, published by G.S.O., “Registration fees cover costs for special events.” In other words, *we pay our own way*.

What does it mean to pay our way in this case? Even though the committee makes every effort to keep costs down, there are many expenses associated with putting on a convention. There is the cost of the site itself. The food for the barbeque and banquet is a significant expense, and we must commit to a minimum number of meals for each— *whether we sell them or not*. Then you have the expense of bringing speakers in, including travel and lodging.

What does this add up to? It may surprise you to learn that it costs more than \$25,000 to fund our convention. The cost of the site alone—just the location for holding the meetings, the banquet, and so forth—is more than \$3,700, including security, which is required for insurance purposes. That means nearly 250 people must register, at \$15 each, just to pay for the site.

So what happens to the money the convention does bring in? Do we make a profit? It takes a year to plan the convention. Hopefully we begin the year with a “prudent reserve” fund. Believe me that isn’t always the case, but that’s the goal, and when we don’t have that “seed” money it’s tough to get started. There are deposits to be paid, printing and mailing expenses for the flyers, payment for T-shirts, coffee mugs and other items. Early registrations offset these expenses somewhat, but we can’t count on those to make up for a lack of start-up money.

Every year, then, we hope to bring in enough to cover our expenses, plus enough set aside to start off the following year’s convention. Any proceeds beyond that go directly to benefit AA – G.S.O. in New York, the local G.S.R., Hospitals and Institu-

tions, and our own Central Office. In this way the Santa Barbara AA community, through our convention, helps carry the message. As a bonus, we get to have a darn good time, too!

We do know there are members who simply cannot afford the full registration fee. Because of the generosity of the AA community there are scholarships available, thanks to those who contribute to the scholarship fund when they register themselves for the convention,

There is plenty of work during the convention, and all we ask of scholarship recipients is that they pay a small “token” registration, and volunteer a couple of hours to help out. Earning your convention registration that way is a great way to become “part of” AA here in Santa Barbara, and to have fun too. Many of our volunteers enjoyed themselves so much they didn’t want to leave at the end of their shift, and many have come back for a second or third shift, even when they didn’t have to. And there are those—inspirations to me—who started their very first days of sobriety helping at the convention and now celebrate multiple years of sobriety.

Unlike the International Convention, where you can’t get into the main speaker meetings without a badge, no one will stop you from attending any of those events at the Santa Barbara Convention. We don’t have badge police. That’s just not the way we’ve ever done things here.

So there’s nothing to prevent you from attending the Sunday morning Spiritual Meeting without registering, or the Old Timers meeting, or anything else if that’s what you want to do. No one will stop you. But please think for a moment of the fact that the convention wouldn’t be here if not for those who *do* register. There wouldn’t be the fine speakers who come from all over the country. There wouldn’t even be a building to hold the meetings in.

And to those who do register and attend the convention every year, thank you! You are the reason we have a convention. Without your support and enthusiasm, it wouldn’t happen. Though I don’t speak for them, I know from experience that your convention committee members look forward to seeing you again at this year’s event.

—Anonymous



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ann T	1
George T	1
Natalie	1
Mack N	2
Margie H	4
George C	7
Cathy H.	8
Mark A.	8
Chuck E.	9
Samantha (Sami)	10
Rey A	11
Cody F.	11
Bob U.	11
Max M.	15
Dee	18
Carla M.	18
Laurette	19
Emilio R	20
Ron N.	21
Mary J.	24
Bruce C.	25

***The Messenger* is published monthly by:**

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Meeting Change

Stepping Stones Monday-night women's meeting is moving to the Fireside Room, First Congregational Church, corner at Padre and State Streets, as of October 3.

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 eleventh month, November, we need writing on the Step 11 and Tradition 11. Send submissions to jimstoic@hotmail.com.

Central Office Statistics

During September your Central Office had:

AA information calls	774
Al-Anon referrals	28
Referrals to other programs	38
12-step via answering service	49
Out-of-town visitors	16
12-step via office	7
Office walk-ins	602
Hits on our Web site	664

Service Meetings

GSRs (Group Service Representatives) meet at 6:00 p.m. the first Monday each month at the Cottage Hospital, Conference Rooms E and F.

IGRs (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 p.m. the second Tuesday each month at First Presbyterian Church, 21 E Constance, in Santa Barbara.

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) meets at 6:00 p.m. 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.

OCTOBER

	September	August	YTD		September	August	YTD
001 Sunrisers	0.00	0.00	40.00	110 Focus On Recovery	0.00	0.00	34.17
003 Eye Opener	335.00	560.00	3,315.00	111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	159.00	759.00
004 Monday At A Time	141.60	0.00	316.60	112 Montecito/Carpinteria	0.00	0.00	420.00
005 Noon Step Study	0.00	50.00	50.00	113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	34.00	0.00	97.00
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	80.00	180.00	114 Schooner Group	0.00	139.00	369.00
007 Sound Off	50.00	50.00	150.00	115 Eleventh Step Meditation	0.00	13.38	104.38
008 Beginner's Group	0.00	0.00	84.85	117 Way Of Life	225.00	260.00	2,177.00
010 Foundation Group	87.15	69.00	604.15	120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	176.00	0.00	1,004.60
011 Sundowner Group	255.00	0.00	650.00	121 Problems And Solutions	0.00	0.00	21.00
013 No Shenanigans	40.00	35.00	176.00	130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	0.00	144.00
016 Big Book Workshop	14.00	0.00	46.00	133 Action Participation	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
021 Summerland Monday Group	0.00	0.00	174.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	139.50	0.00	661.50
022 There Is A Solution	0.00	145.80	458.60	140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	111.00	0.00	206.05
023 For Women Only	0.00	0.00	300.00	141 Off Center	185.40	0.00	980.07
026 Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	100.00	100.00	143 Sunday Go To Meeting	0.00	70.00	70.00
030 Sisters In Solution	0.00	0.00	15.00	144 Back To Basics, Young People	52.31	54.00	230.31
034 Women of Change	102.07	0.00	222.07	146 Out Of Town Speaker, NH II	0.00	0.00	305.40
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	0.00	100.00	148 San Ysidro	0.00	0.00	130.00
045 Alternative Group	90.00	0.00	269.00	149 Getting To Know You	0.00	0.00	404.00
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	84.00	150.00	579.00	150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	79.00	79.00
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	113.61	0.00	420.59	153 Happy Destiny	0.00	0.00	300.00
052 As Bill Sees It, Weds.	0.00	0.00	30.00	156 Start Your Day Right	0.00	80.00	80.00
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	80.00	180.00	162 No Frills	0.00	0.00	187.35
055 Staying Alive	40.00	0.00	347.00	164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	0.00	232.00	1,049.18
056 Women By The Books	0.00	0.00	98.40	165 Junkyard Dogs	75.96	63.39	638.59
062 Do The Steps Or Die	64.21	62.29	450.02	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	30.00	134.00
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	56.00	392.00	170 Barefoot Group	4.00	28.00	136.11
067 Rigorous Honesty	200.00	12.00	871.00	177 Key Group	0.00	0.00	1,200.00
068 Stepping Stones	56.00	0.00	237.64	181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	0.00	766.74
070 Success roup	0.00	60.00	210.00	183 Summerland, Thurs.	543.00	0.00	1,366.09
071 The Loft	300.00	0.00	435.00	186 Turning Point	260.00	0.00	383.00
072 Discussion Gay Wednesday	48.00	0.00	48.00	196 Powerful Cement	0.00	0.00	50.00
073 Young People's	0.00	0.00	177.08	200 Anonymous Donations	23.00	21.04	153.04
076 11th Step	0.00	80.00	180.00	201 Birthday Donations	0.00	140.00	758.00
077 Briefly Big Book	0.00	0.00	21.00	202 Supporting Member	677.00	1,065.00	9,742.00
079 Harbor Group	0.00	961.12	3,524.12	203 SBYPAA	0.00	53.42	53.42
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	107.00	0.00	210.00	204 Memorial Fund	0.00	60.00	160.00
089 Here & Now	0.00	90.00	140.00	205 Refunds	0.00	154.47	243.27
091 New Life	0.00	240.00	240.00	209 Meeting Guide	115.00	170.00	785.00
093 Into Action, Thurs	30.00	0.00	80.00	210 Convention Income	0.00	0.00	811.79
097 Almost Saints	214.40	130.28	870.13	211 Central Office Rent Received	38.00	175.00	1,350.80
098 Keep It Simple, Saturday	0.00	0.00	66.00	212 Special Events	276.00	0.00	3,063.50
099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	80.00	180.00				
100 UCSB Discussion	0.00	0.00	55.00	TOTAL	5,307.21	7,138.19	49,901.61

FINANCIALS

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