

Made a Decision...

MARCH 2015

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

I didn't want to become an alcoholic. I became one after my first drink; that drink was the solution to all of my affairs up to that point, for seventeen years. At the age of thirty-eight, I was ordered to Alcoholics Anonymous by a judge. He gave me a choice; I could go to prison for child abandonment or go into a recovery center. Since I had been to jails and institutions before, I chose a recovery home in Bellflower.



When I got to the recovery center, I was physically, spiritually, and emotionally broken. I didn't know that I was powerless and hopeless. I remember the day when I was living in an alley with a baby, and got on my knees and asked God for help. At that point, I honestly thought I would die in that alley with a tag on my toe saying "Jane Doe." As the fog lifted, I thanked God for the judge that knew what I needed, Alcoholics Anonymous.

My first meeting at the recovery home was an H&I panel of women. At the end of the shares, Toni LaRue said, "if you don't drink, you won't get drunk." I thought she was talking to me; there were so many times I took a drink to take the edge off, and always got drunk. Even when I didn't want a drink, I would drink and get drunk. I was powerless and I had no control over area of my life without a drink. So, I had to watch this woman to see if she were drinking – my first resentment.

This woman and her AA friends came to the recovery home and took us girls out to AA meetings. When the old timers spoke, they would say such things like, "let us love you until you can love yourself," and "you can have my God until you find a God of your own understanding." What?? I never heard anything like that! I hung in there because I loved the hugs and kisses, and slowly began to feel that these people truly loved me. I didn't trust anyone before or shortly after I came to AA, but for the grace of a loving God, I began to trust a few people to be in my life. No matter what I said to her, she always said, "well, did you have to take a drink? No! Today, Thank God and call me tomorrow." Then she hung up.

I was grieving in my sobriety at about 9 months into my recovery; we did steps 1, 2, and 3 at the recovery home. But when it came to step 3 – I didn't understand what it meant, and I thought it meant made a decision to

Continued on Next Page

Harbor Area Central Office

3450 E. Spring St, Ste 109 Long Beach, CA 90806 *(562) 989-7697 * www.hacooa.org *info@hacooa.org

Harbor Light

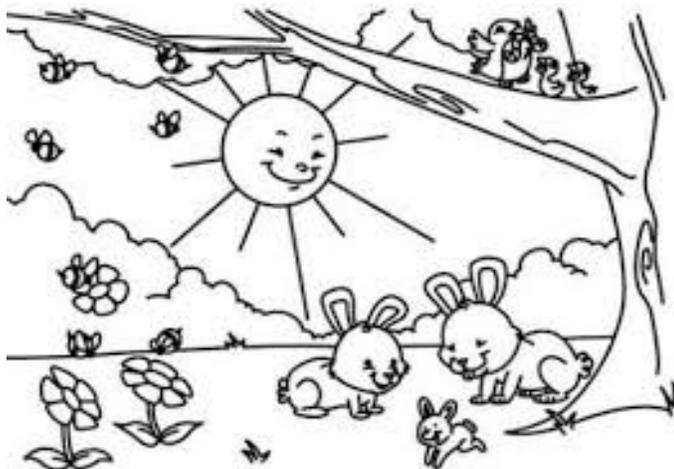
go to church. So, I started going to church and became judgmental of the people in AA. I also began to think I was better than them. They'd be going to the YMCA while I was going to church. One day, a fellow alcoholic, Bernie M. came to my house and said, "if you don't go with the herd, you will take a drink." I took his advice and followed to herd to the YMCA. What a relief, what an order! I believe that God talks through people, and I thank God that I didn't have to take a drink.

When I got back to the house, I got on my knees for a quiet meditation. I was making a decision, but I was in fear of the unknown; as a child, I believed I had to be perfect for God. Then and now, I knew I could come to God just as I am. I made a decision to turn my will (selfishness/ego) and my life (good/bad) over to the care of God as I understand him. I thank my God that I don't have to be perfect, just progress as we trudge the road of happy destiny. So, "God, I offer myself to thee – to build with me and to do with me as thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I'd help of thy power, thy will, and thy way of life. May I do thy will always."

I want to thank the group of drunks in my life who give me Good Orderly Direction; because of them, I haven't found a good reason to take a drink.

G.O.D. for GOD

Rosemary C., Bellflower CA
7/15/1989



Your Invited to the Party of the Year!!! Your own sober birthday! Share it with your friends, family, home group and sponsor right here with a birthday shout out donation to info@hacoaa.org. In the subject line please write "**Central Office Sober Birthday Party in Print**" so we can be sure to mention your special day on this sober party page. A.A. members may send \$1, \$2, \$3, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$30, \$40 or more for each year of sobriety to any or all of the following A.A. service entities: (1) The Local Office, (2) The District Office, (3) The Area Assembly Office and (4) The General Service Office. Each service component provides information and services to other alcoholics who may be dying and need A.A. life support. Your birthday donations continue to help the Harbor Area Central office provide the following services to A.A. groups:

- A.A. 24 Hour Hotline
- A.A. Archives
- A.A. 12 Step Calls
- A.A. Literature—English & Spanish
- A.A. Grapevine Publications
- A.A. Updated Meeting Directories
- A.A. Speaker Information
- Harbor Light Sobriety Newsletter
- Website•Public Information/CPC Resources
- Harbor Area A.A. Sponsored Events



Mail Your Birthday Donations

Harbor Area Central Office, 3450 E. Spring Street, Suite 109, Long Beach, CA 90806-2461

General Service Office, PO Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

Contributions are limited to \$3,000 per member per year and are tax deductible under Internal Revenue §Code 501 (3)
©. Page 9—Self-Support Pamphlet.



TRADITION 3

"The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking."

The first edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* makes this brief statement about membership: "The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted." This expressed our feeling as of 1939, the year our book was published.

Since that day all kinds of experiments with membership have been tried. The number of membership rules which have been made (and mostly broken!) are legion. Two or three years ago the Central Office [now the General Service Office] asked the groups to list their membership rules and send them in. After they arrived we set them all down. They took a great many sheets of paper. A little reflection upon these many rules brought us to an astonishing conclusion. If all of these edicts had been in force everywhere at once it would have been practically impossible for any alcoholic to have ever joined *Alcoholics Anonymous*. About nine-tenths of our oldest and best members could never have got by!

In some cases we would have been too discouraged by the demands made upon us. Most of the early members of AA would have been thrown out because they slipped too much, because their morals were too bad, because they had mental as well as alcoholic difficulties. Or, believe it or not, because they did not come from the so-called better classes of society. We oldsters could have been excluded for our failure to read the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* or the refusal of our sponsor to vouch for us as a candidate. And so on ad infinitum. The way our "worthy" alcoholics have sometimes tried to judge the "less worthy" is, as we look back on it, rather comical. Imagine, if you can, one alcoholic judging another!

At one time or another most AA groups go on rule-making benders. Naturally enough, too, as a group commences to grow rapidly it is confronted with many alarming problems. Panhandlers begin to panhandle. Members get drunk and sometimes get others drunk with them. Those with mental difficulties throw depressions or break out into paranoid denunciations of fellow members. Gossips gossip, and righteously denounce the local Wolves and Red Riding Hoods. Newcomers argue that they aren't alcoholic at all, but keep coming around anyway. "Slippees" trade on the fair name of AA in order to get themselves jobs. Others refuse to accept all the Twelve Steps of the recovery program. Some go still further, saying the "God business" is bunk and quite unnecessary. Under these conditions our conservative program-abiding members get scared. These appalling conditions must be controlled, they think. Else AA will surely go to rack and ruin. They view with alarm for the good of the movement!

At this point the group enters the rule and regulation phase. Charters, bylaws and membership rules are excitedly passed and authority is granted committees to filter out undesirables and discipline the evil doers. Then the group elders, now clothed with authority, commence to get busy. Recalcitrants are cast into the outer darkness, respectable busybodies throw stones at the sinners. As for the so-called sinners, they either insist on staying around, or else they form a new group of their own. Or maybe they join a more congenial and less intolerant crowd in their neighborhood. The elders soon discover that the rules and regulations aren't working very well. Most attempts at enforcement generate such waves of dissension and intolerance in the group that this condition is presently recognized to be worse for the group life than the very worst that the worst ever did.

After a time fear and intolerance subside. The group survives unscathed. Everybody has learned a great deal. So it is, that few of us are any longer afraid of what any newcomer can do to our AA reputation or effectiveness. Those who slip, those who panhandle, those who scandalize, those with mental twists, those who rebel at the program, those who trade on the AA reputation--all such persons seldom harm an AA group for long. Some of these have become our most respected and best loved. Some have remained to try our patience, sober nevertheless. Others have drifted away. We have begun to regard these ones not as menaces, but rather as our teachers. They oblige us to cultivate patience, tolerance and humility. We finally see that they are only people sicker than the rest of us, that we who condemn them are the Pharisees whose false righteousness does our group the deeper spiritual damage.

Every older AA shudders when he remembers the names of persons he once condemned; people he confidently predicted would never sober up; persons he was sure ought to be thrown out of AA for the good of the movement. Now that some of these very persons have been sober for years, and may be numbered among his best friends, the old-timer thinks to himself, "What if everybody had judged these people as I once did? What if AA had slammed its door in their faces? Where would they be now?"

That is why we all judge the newcomer less and less, if alcohol is an uncontrollable problem to *him* and he wishes to do something about it, that is enough for us. We care not whether his ease is severe or light, whether his morals are good or bad, whether he has other complications or not. Our AA door stands wide open, and if he passes through it and commences to do anything at all about his problem, he is considered a member of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. He signs nothing, agrees to nothing, promises nothing. We demand nothing. He joins us on his own say so. Nowadays, in most groups, he doesn't even have to admit he is an alcoholic. He can join AA on the mere suspicion that he may be one, that he may already show the fatal symptoms of our malady.

Of course this is not the universal state of affairs throughout AA. Membership rules still exist. If a member persists in coming to meetings drunk he may be led outside; we may ask someone to take him away. But in most groups he can come back the next day, if sober. Though he may be thrown out of a club, nobody thinks of throwing him out of AA. He is a member as long as he says he is. While this broad concept of AA membership is not yet unanimous, it does represent the main current of AA thought today. We do not wish to deny anyone his chance to recover from alcoholism. We wish to be just as inclusive as we can, never exclusive.

Perhaps this trend signifies something much deeper than a mere change of attitude on the question of membership. Perhaps it means that we are losing all fear of those violent emotional storms which sometimes cross our alcoholic world; perhaps it bespeaks our confidence that every storm will be followed by a calm; a calm which is more understanding, more compassionate, more tolerant than any we ever knew before.

Bill W..

Grapevine, November 1987



My Story as a Lifer



My name is Tod, and I am an alcoholic. I have been incarcerated for 19 years as a direct result of not treating my alcoholism. I drank like an alcoholic from the very start, from my first drink at 12 years old. I drank until I got sick and passed out. This seemed perfectly normal to me, since this is pretty much how I saw my parents drink on a daily basis, all my life. I thought I was doing it “right.”

I continued to drink like this at every opportunity. In high school I began to mix drugs with the alcohol. Eventually the drugs took priority, but I remained an alcoholic at heart. As much as I hated to admit it, I had become much like my father – one of the things I swore I’d never do.

I began to commit felonies to support my drug addiction. Prison sentences followed close behind. Finally, at 35 years old, I was sentenced to life in prison, as a “career criminal.” I was deemed “un-rehabilitatable.” Society had given up hope on me, and I had given up hope on myself.

I sobered up many times over the years, sometimes voluntarily, and sometimes not. I had many opportunities to change the course of my life, but I refused to look within myself and see that the problem was not simply the alcohol and drugs.

Finally, at 8 years into my life sentence, and deep into my alcoholism, I reached a point where I could not go on. I could no longer continue with the alcohol and drugs, yet I could not imagine my life without them. So, late one night in my prison cell, I decided to end my life. I made a plan I was sure would succeed, and then I carried it out. By the laws of science and medicine, I should have been dead – several times over – but I somehow survived. The medical professionals brought me back to life, but now I look back and see how my Higher Power saved me. That Higher Power had a purpose for me.

I spent 3 days in a rubber room in isolation, on suicide watch. During that time I had an epiphany in which I finally realized that my actions were hurting all those that loved me. I could no longer lie to myself that I was only hurting myself. All my misery was of my own making. I realized that alcohol was no longer the answer, but wasn’t yet sure how I was going to stop.

I’d like to say that I remained sober from that point on, but that was not the case. I still had to put myself through the wringer one more time.

Several months later I found a “good” excuse to get loaded one more time. I went on a 3-day to another institution. I

thought this a horrible turn of events, but it ended up being exactly what I needed.

Upon arrival in my new “home,” I did the traditional “meet-with-the-homeboys.” I passed inspection. I also told them I no longer drank or used, and would appreciate it if they did not include me in any way in these activities. To this day, I have no idea why I said this – I had never done so in the past. After that very recent 3-day bender, I had no real reason to believe I’d actually stick to this.

At the conclusion of our meeting, one of the homeboys invited me to another sort of meeting: a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. Again, without pause, I said yes. From that day to this, I have remained continuously clean and sober.

I began to do that thing I was so horribly frightened of. I began to look within myself to search for who I really was, assuming responsibility for my actions.

I got a sponsor through the AA Inmate Correspondence Program. He was nothing like me. He had never spent a day in jail, never done a drug, and he was gay. But he was an alcoholic who had many years of sobriety.

From 3,000 miles away, he walked me through those 12 Steps. I never saw his face or heard his voice, but he taught me how to live a sober life. I did those 4th and 5th Steps I thought were impossible for me. I had this deep, dark secret I had not shared with a single soul for 32 years, which I had planned to take to the grave with me. But after working the first 3 Steps and applying them as I went along, my Higher Power gave me the strength to share that secret with him. I had been molested by a man when I was 12 years old – (about the time I took that first drink) – and I thought that what happened to me that day was my fault. I carried that guilt with me all that time. But my sponsor told me that it was **not** my fault, and that it didn’t change who I was as a person, or how he saw me.

Since then, I have shared my secret with all my sponsees, and even in a couple of meetings. Letting this secret out into the light of day has freed me from the power it held over me. I share it because it helps me, but also in the hope it helps others share their secrets, so that they, too, may find freedom. That huge secret that haunted me all those years is no longer a big deal to me. It was only a few minutes out of my 54 years of living, and most importantly, I know now that it was **not** my fault.

I have been clean and sober for almost 11 years now. My sponsor has since passed away, but he gave me so much! I owe him a debt no amount of money could possibly repay. He was the most patient and caring man I have ever met. I believe he was a gift from my Higher Power. As hard as it was to move on, I have gotten another sponsor, and he is teaching me even more.

I have learned through recovery that my alcoholism wasn’t just about my drinking and using, which were but the tip of the proverbial iceberg. They were

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visible on the outside, but what was really going on was that I was all mixed up on the inside. I didn't know how to deal with reality, and I wasn't comfortable in my own skin. I had no idea who Tod was. I was full of fear, and tried to cover it up with a tough, "convict" exterior.

Since working through the 12 Steps several times with my sponsors, applying them in my daily life, attending many meetings, and sponsoring others, I have become pretty comfortable in my own skin. I no longer have to put something in my body to change how I feel. I have learned that whatever feelings I have, they will pass. All feelings are temporary. Today I don't drink or use no matter what!

I still have about 10 years to go before I go to the parole board, but my life is not on hold until the day I'm released from prison. I get up each morning and ask my Higher Power to give me the strength to stay sober one more day, to show me how to be of service, and to help me see how I can give rather than just take. I sponsor 5 guys today, and the feeling I receive from helping others is so much better than any chemical high I've ever known.

Life is good today! People actually like and trust me. What a turn of events that people even seek me out for advice today, and sometimes tell me what a good guy I am – crazy!

My grown sons talk with me and tell me they love me. Their mom even talks with me from time to time, and treats me with respect. I've met a wonderful and beautiful woman who loves me and wants to marry me. She tells me I'm the best thing that has ever happened to her. I am now capable of loving her back, and treating her like the unique and special person I know her to be.

Today I have a purpose, one which I believe my Higher Power saved me that day to fulfill. That purpose is to carry the message of sobriety.

I no longer feel like it's me against the world. I'm now able to accept others, character defects and all. I now know we are all flawed and make mistakes – myself included, and I'm even learning to accept that, too. My life today is so much better than it once was. I no longer lay down at night hoping I won't wake up in the morning. Often times I'm full of joy and peace. I've been given all these gifts and much more, through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

My hopes and prayers are that if you are an alcoholic like me, you, too, can find freedom, and that happy, joyous life you deserve – **what we all deserve!** If you haven't given this program an honest chance, no matter where you are or what is going on in your life, please do! You've got nothing to lose and everything to gain!

Tod C.
California Institution for Men (CIM), Chino CA



THIS PRECIOUS LIFE

They say four billion years ago life showed its face on earth

They knew not then, that man would be, the product of that birth

Then grapes appeared upon the vine, eight thousand years just past.

Their juice, when crushed, seemed harmless, when enjoyed with repast.

But like all things that seem so fine, and too good to be true,

a darker side revealed the lure that many came to rue.

When smitten by this patient foe the bearers have no shield,

and when the choice is yea or nay, the stricken always yield.

So shameful was this malady, a moral thing they said.

Their families kept their secret safe, long after they were dead.

Centuries have come and gone, since first it got its grip,

and one in ten would pay the price, when venturing one sip.

Then God saw fit to intervene and offer up a choice,

and Bill and Bob were listening, and heard his loving voice.

How fortunate we are today, to be among the first,

to have been chosen, at this time, to quell that deadly thirst.

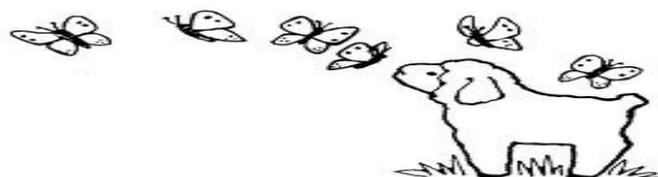
The wisdom of eight thousand years is laid there at our feet.

How blessed to have it waiting, when I stumbled in defeat.

When pondering the suffering crossed, that vast expanse of time,

I would not waste one moment of, His precious gift sublime.

Rick R.



Daily Reflections

“A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle” – Grapevine, August 1999

“In A.A. we aim not only for sobriety — we try again to become citizens of the world that we rejected, and of the world that once rejected us. This is the ultimate demonstration toward which Twelfth Step work is the first but not the final step.” - As Bill Sees It , pg. 21

“Nobody can go from hell to halo in three weeks” – Grapevine, January 1946

“Our very first problem is to accept our present circumstances as they are, ourselves as we are, and the people about us as they are. This is to adopt a realistic humility without which no genuine advance can even begin. Again and again, we shall need to return to that unflattering point of departure. This is an exercise in acceptance that we can profitably practice. Provided we strenuously avoid turning these realistic surveys of the facts of life into unrealistic alibis for apathy or defeatism, they can be the sure foundation upon which increased emotional health and therefore spiritual progress can be built.” — As Bill Sees It, page 44

“Learn from the mistakes of others. You don't live long enough to make them all yourself.” – Grapevine, February 2006

“I believe we are all sober and alive for only one reason: God has a job for us to do. I have also come to believe that I must please God first, myself second, and everybody else third. When I can live and feel that way--and it isn't all day everyday--things seem to work out. When I try to run the show, everything goes to hell.” - Came to Believe, pg. 97

“I try hard to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits. When brimming with gratitude, one's heartbeat must surely result in outgoing love, the finest emotion that we can ever know” – As Bill Sees It, pg. 37

“A.A. is no success story in the ordinary sense of the word. It is a story of suffering transmuted, under grace, into spiritual progress.” — As Bill Sees It, pg 35

Most of us have seen death close up. We have known the kind of suffering that wrenches the bones. But we also have known the sort of hope that makes the heart sing. . . . If you are a problem drinker, you already know enough about pain and loneliness. We'd like you to find some of the peace and joy we have found in meeting the reality of life's ups and downs with a clear head and a steady heart.” – Living Sober, pg. 86

Wit and Wisdom

Words of recovery spoken in the rooms of Harbor Area AA meetings. By Kevin P.

I just wanted to get mellow, but I always overshot.

Just because we're sober doesn't mean we're angels--progress, not perfection.

“God help me!!” is the easiest and fastest prayer.

My life just kept getting smaller and smaller until it was just me and my bottle.

I no longer wake up, curse God and wish I were dead.

Normal people have their own problems, but alcohol isn't one of them.

I have a garage full of ex-obsessions.

Ours is a spiritual malady and you can't think your way out of it.

If all I do is sit here I'll just grow mold.

I'm just one of God's kids, like all of you.

If you don't like the God you have---- fire him!

Do you want some cheese with that whine?

Participate in life!

Alcohol made me the man I never wanted to be.

I didn't want to pray because I didn't want God to know where I was.

The more you experience things, the less you fear.

If you put the tip of your tongue to your palate then you can't get mad.

You can't stay mad if you sing Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah.

I'm still here because I don't want to be here.

Rule 62: putting the fun in the fundamentals.

Hear something clever, witty, even profound at a meeting? Send it to: harborlightchair@hacooa.org



HARBOR AREA SPEAKER MEETINGS

High on Life 835 E. 33rd St.@Atlantic, Signal Hill	Sunday, 9:00am
Sisters in Sobriety Women's 835 E. 33rd St.@Atlantic, Signal Hill	Sunday, 2:00pm
Signal Hill Speakers 835 E. 33rd St., Long Beach	Sunday, 7:00pm
East Bay Group 6400 E PCH@2nd/Marina, Long Beach	Sunday, 7:00pm
Paramount Speakers 8021 E. Rosecrans Ave., Paramount	Sunday, 7:00pm
Carson Speakers 23621 S. Main St., Carson	Sunday, 7:00pm
Torrance Speakers Group 1422 Engracia Ave., Torrance	Sunday, 7:30pm
Fireside Speakers 641 S. Western Ave., Anaheim	Sunday, 8:00pm
Dirty Shirt Group Speakers 5881 Cherry Ave./E. South St., Long Beach	Monday, 7:00pm
Bellflower Big Book 9603 Belmont St., Bellflower	Monday, 7:30pm
Seal Beach Speakers 500 Marina Dr., Seal Beach	Monday, 7:30pm
Speakers (Serenity Hall) 12336 Penn St., Whittier	Tuesday, 10:00am
Depth & Weight Group 8021 Rosecrans Ave, Paramount	Tuesday, 8:00pm
Arbor Road Speakers 5306 Arbor Road, Long Beach	Tuesday, 8:00pm
Speakers (Whittier Art Gallery) 8035 S. Painter Ave, Whittier	Tuesday, 8:00pm
Way of Life Speakers 835 E. 33rd St., Long Beach	Wednesday, 8:00pm
12 Steps & 12 Traditions 5950 E. Willow St., Long Beach	Thursday, 7:00pm
Palos Verdes Speakers 2200 Via Rosa/Palos Verdes Blvd, Palos Verdes	Thursday, 7:00pm
Palos Verdes Speakers 2200 Via Rosa@Palos Verdes Blvd.	Thursday, 7:30pm

Long Beach Speakers 759 Linden Ave@8th St., Long Beach	Thursday, 7:30pm
Lakewood Speakers 5306 Arbor Road, Long Beach	Thursday, 8:00pm
Downey Thursday Night 9813 Paramount Blvd, Paramount	Thursday, 8:00pm
We're Making It Speakers 23621 S. Main St./Gulf Ave., Carson	Friday, 7:30pm
La Palma Big Book Speakers 11600 Los Alamitos Blvd., Los Alamitos	Friday, 8:00pm
Rule 62 Speakers 16865 Pacific Coast Hwy., Sunset Beach	Saturday, 7:00pm
Sober on Seven Speakers 3125 E. 7th St./Obispo, Long Beach	Saturday, 7:30pm
True Ambition Women's 2696 Dawson Ave, Long Beach	Saturday, 7:30pm
Whittier Speakers 15215 Janine Dr./Colima Road, Whittier	Saturday, 7:30pm
New Friends (Little Company of Mary) 1386 W. 7th St., San Pedro	Saturday, 7:30pm
South Bay Serenity Group 3315 Lomita Blvd., 3rd Fl Med Center, Torrance	Saturday, 7:30pm
Intercity Saturday Night Speakers 5881 Cherry Ave/E. South St., Long Beach	Saturday, 8:00pm

To submit your speaker meeting schedule, email:
harborlightchair@hacoaa.org

FROM THE EDITOR
FOR THE APRIL 2015 ISSUE WE
ENCOURAGE SUBMISSIONS ON THE
FOLLOWING:

- ⇒ Oldtimer Stories
- ⇒ Experience, Strength & Hope
- ⇒ A.A. Sponsored Events
- ⇒ GSRs, Group Conscience Speaks
- ⇒ A.A. Speaker Schedules
- ⇒ Gratitude Stories

Deadline: March 10

For a comprehensive Harbor Area meeting directory, visit:
<http://www.hacoaa.org>

GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS

The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous suggests that groups support AA by sending excess funds to various service activities. There is no required breakdown of these contributions and each group should take a group conscience in making that decision. Many groups in the Harbor Area divide their contributions according to the percentages below. Also, consider making a personal donation during your birthday month in the dollar amount of years you have been sober.

50% to Harbor Area Central Office
3450 E. Spring St., suite 109, Long Beach, CA 90806

10% to either:

Mid-So. Cal (Area 9)
PO Box 51446, Irvine, CA 92619
or

So. Cal AA (Area 5)
PO Box 481193, Los Angeles, CA 90048

30% to AA World Services Inc.
Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

10% to you local district area
District 1, PO Box 10113, Torrance, CA 90505
District 2 (North of Carson), PO Box 8343, Long Beach, CA 90808
District 3, 1840 S. Gaffey St. #251, San Pedro CA 90731
District 4 (South of Carson), PO Box 9972, Long Beach, CA 90810

	<u>Jan 15</u>	<u>Jan 14</u>
12 Steps & 12 Traditions Sunday	133.78	0.00
Aloha Women's Group	87.00	0.00
Att Adj 7 AM Tues Marina Pacifica	75.00	0.00
Attitude Adj 645 am Lakewood	50.00	50.00
Big Book Study Los Alamitos 6pm	180.00	0.00
Compton 401 Bullis Group	25.00	25.00
Cypress Womens	84.60	74.64
Downey Tues Womens Home Group	140.00	0.00
Early Bird Att Adj Sun IFH	100.00	0.00
Fri Free for All	91.31	0.00
Friday Night Men's Stag	200.00	0.00
Grassroots	50.00	48.00
Group #000175884	82.20	0.00
Group #129414	50.00	0.00
Group #168356	50.00	50.00
Group #168467	120.00	0.00
Happy Days Book Study Downey Saturday	30.00	0.00
Happy Hour Wed MWA	60.00	0.00
Harmony Group	60.00	80.00
Invisible Spkr Mtg	100.00	0.00
La Palma Big Book Speakers	103.50	0.00
Lomita Wayfarers	25.00	0.00
Marina Pacifica Sat Noon	45.00	0.00
One Hour Men's Stag	101.00	200.00
Saturday Nighters AA Group	10.00	0.00
Sisters In Sobriety	30.00	0.00
South Gate Participation	10.00	0.00
Southern California Conference	550.00	0.00
Step Sisters Long Beach Saturday	50.00	0.00
Surrender is Freedom	290.00	240.00
Topic Discussion - Twin Town	61.75	0.00
Wed Night Men's Stag	100.00	60.00
Westside Early Risers	150.00	200.00
Willing to Grow	31.20	55.20
TOTAL	3,326.34	4,878.64

In like a LION...



Grapevine , March 1958

THE A.A. LAUNCH PAD



I was sitting at a meeting recently when I heard a very young and very sincere, single mother of two, sharing that her first experience in AA was the thought of having to do all this stuff for **the rest of her life** and she **didn't find it too comforting**. It sounded to me that, from her perspective, **she knew that she had to do it**, but it **wasn't going to be easy or fun**. I admired her for her **courage and conviction** and I tried to encourage her by explaining things that I had experienced when I was faced with the life changing challenges of sobriety. I was the father of a boy, I was in the Navy, and I was divorced. It was a difficult time but I had to go through it, drinking or not. I began the process of recovery in a slow, methodical and thorough way, and I came out a stronger person for it. I likened it to the first **Apollo space mission to the moon**. It goes something like this:

When you first see the size of this space craft and consider the amount of energy it would take to put it into space, it is hard to fathom. After the countdown is complete, the engines fire and a tremendous amount of flame and smoke engulf the entire area, and in a few moments, it slowly starts to lift off. As it lumbers its first few hundred feet, it is expending a tremendous amount of fuel. Slowly it starts to gain momentum and pick up speed, still shuddering along. Soon the

booster tanks are depleted and they are ejected and the main tanks begin to propel it further along the flight path with even more thrust as it is reaching for orbit. Next, the main tank is depleted just before orbit and is ejected. What is left is a very small portion of what left the launch pad. Soon the craft leaves orbit and heads toward the moon. **Something else happens that often goes unnoticed**; the gravitational pull of the moon has more influence on the craft than the earth has, and it is gently drawn along its path. Very little energy is needed at this point except for minor course corrections.

In AA, when we first get started, it appears to be an insurmountable task and it requires a tremendous amount of effort just to get off the launch pad. Not every launch is successful and some of us don't make it the first time, and we have to exert all that energy in each successive attempt. As we do get on our way, it starts to get easier as we increase our momentum. Much of the burden falls away as we make progress, and the going gets easier as we head for our objective. When we go through the twelve steps, we finally reach orbit.

After we are satisfied that everything is in order, we can now set out for the moon. If we stay on course, the spiritual gravity of values we have adopted in the AA program will far outweigh the negative gravity of the past as long as we eject all of the dead weight that held us down. As we continue to adjust the day to day mistakes that we make, and adopt an unselfish approach to life, somewhere along the flight path, we will cross that line where we are drawn towards a life of peace and serenity that is hard to imagine when we are setting on the launch pad. The most important part of the journey is the lift off. If we can get through that most difficult time, it does get easier, and then we need only to stay the course.



Rick R.

HARBOR AREA SERVICE BOARD
Minutes for January 7, 2015
<http://www.hacoaa.org>

The meeting was called to order with the Serenity Prayer at 7:00 pm by Rodney W.

Board Members Present: Chair 1, Rodney W.; Chair 2, Bruce E.; Chair 3, Amethyst J.; and Chair 4, Ira C. Chair 5 is vacant.

Secretary's Report: Tim S., acting secretary, read the minutes from the December meeting and they were approved as read.

Chair 1 Report: Rodney W. welcomed the new board and expressed his expectation of another successful year of service in Harbor Area.

Treasurer's Report: Ralph M. read the Income Statement. On a motion by Ira C., it was accepted. Ralph also read the Literature Report and year-end Balance Sheet. The proposed budget for 2015 was discussed at length and a number of changes will be made when it is presented to the Harbor Area Service Committee (HASC) meeting.

Central Office Reports: Sue T. and Tim S.:

Newcomers	31	Out of Town Calls	0	Fellowship Calls	145
Miscellaneous	33	Total Office Calls	209	After Hours Calls	
Visitors	0	12 Step Calls	1	Persons Reporting	
Harbor Lights Published	232	Harbor Lights Mailed Harbor Lights Emailed	207 20	Web Site Visits	4,150

Assembling of the February 2015 Harbor Light is scheduled for Saturday, January 31, 2015, at 8:30am.

Committee Reports

Program Chair: Vacant.

Public Information: Pete K. had no report.

H & I: Absent.

12 Step (In Office): Dennis S. reported that there are currently two openings to answer the phone. They are Monday from 3-6pm, and alternate Fridays 9am-12pm.

Action and Responsibility: Absent.

Archives: Absent.

Phones (After Hours): Absent.

Harbor Light: Carrie A. reported that she is working on the February Harbor Light.

Website: The chairperson was absent. Amethyst J. reported that Matthew L. has been unable to attend meet-
Continued on Next Page

ings because of the demands of work and school. She also reported that another person is interested in joining the committee.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Employee benefits were discussed and it was decided to recommend no changes to the By-laws and to pay employees as specified in the By-laws.

The literature fund was discussed. The limit was raised to \$21,000 last year but approval by the HASC does not appear in the Minutes as approved, so the change does not appear in the revised By-laws. It was decided to recommend this increase at the HASC meeting again.

Donor reply envelopes and their benefits were discussed. They had been discontinued in April 2000. It was decided to recommend to the HASC meeting that they again be given with donation receipts and to groups that request them.

A motion from November 2011 prohibiting taking Financial records from Central Office was discussed. It was decided to recommend to the HASC meeting that the Treasurer or the Treasurer's designate be allowed to have a digital copy of the Financial records.

Amethyst J. advised that she was working on revising the Job Descriptions and asked each Chair to look at, update, and revise the Job Description for their position.

Ira C. made a motion to adjourn and Bruce E. seconded it. The meeting was adjourned with the Serenity Prayer at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tim S., Acting HASB Secretary



Thank you to the delegates who attended the February Harbor Area Service Committee Meeting

10+ Group—Cindy F.

5420 Group—Esme V.

12 Steps & 12 Traditions—Ben L.

Belmont Heights Closed Women's—Lee Z.

Bowling Green—Mark J.

Came to Believe—Matt L.

Carry the Message—Ron W.

Crossroads—Angels B.

Depth & Weight—Tanya D.

Dirty Shirt—Carrie A.

Downey Thursday Night—Alan O.

Downey Tuesday Women's—Christina F.

Early Attitude Adjustment ICFH—Revo M.

Friday Night Participation—Jamie C.

High on Life—Dale C.

Hill Street Blues—Gary S.

Indian Charlie—Frank U.

La Palma Big Book—Pete K.

Lakewood Speakers—Gilbert G.

No BS—Judi B.

Paramount Speakers—Nick O.

South Gate Participation—Tim S.

The Common Welfare Group—Marty H.

There is a Way—Ron T.

Thursday Night at the Fights—Jim K.

Tuesday Night Men's Stag—Thomas W.

Uppity Women's Group—Lanie

VA Hospital Tuesday Night—Dennis S.

Wednesday Night West—John R.

Wednesday Discussion—Rebecca F.

HARBOR AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE Minutes for January 14, 2015

<http://www.hacooa.org>

1. The meeting was called to order by Ira C. at 7:35 pm followed by the Serenity Prayer.
2. HASC meeting announcements and rules were explained by Ira C.
3. The 12 Traditions were read by Tammi R.
4. Three new delegates were introduced. They were Carmella K. from East Bay, Bill K. from Los Altos, and Cindy F. from the 10+ Group.
5. Gilbert G. reported that 24 delegates were present so a quorum, 14 this month, was present.

Secretary's Report: Tim S., acting Secretary, read the minutes of the December 10, 2014 meeting. One correction was noted. On a motion by Joe W. and seconded by Alan O., they were accepted as corrected 21-0.

Treasurer's Report: John B., for Ralph M., read the Income Statement for December 2014, noting in particular that Harbor Area had a net income for the year over \$11,000. On a motion by Andrew K. and seconded by Denis S. it was accepted 22-0. John B. then read the Literature Report and the year-end Balance Sheet. A question as to why it was out of balance by \$2 was not answered. On a motion by Tammi R. and seconded by Gene G. it was accepted 23-1. The 2015 Budget, which had been scheduled for New Business, was struck from the schedule by the presiding officer, Ira C.

Ira C. thanked Gary S. for making the coffee and John B. from bringing the dinner.

Chair 1 Report: Rodney W. welcomed the delegates and thanked them for attending. He reported for December:

Newcomers	31	Out of Town Calls	0	Fellowship Calls	145
Miscellaneous	33	Total Office Calls	209	After Hours Calls	
Visitors	0	12 Step Calls	1	Persons Reporting	
Harbor Lights Published	232	Harbor Lights Mailed Harbor Lights Emailed	207 20	Web Site Visits	4,150

Assembly of the Feb. 2015 Harbor Light is scheduled for Sat., Jan. 31, 2015, 8:30 am at Central Office

Committee Reports

Public Information: Pete K reported a possible event for Wellness Week at CSULB. He invited ideas from all.

Program Chair: No report, the position is currently vacant.

H&I: Ron T. read the minutes of the last H&I meeting; he described the H&I Conference coming up in May and encouraged attendance; he reported that the Chili Cook-off raised \$13,181; and he reported the H&I election results. Tammi R. announced that January is Bring a Friend month and that the next H&I meeting is January 21, 2015.

In Office/Twelve Step: Dennis S. reported that there are two openings: alternate Friday mornings from 9am-12pm, and Monday afternoons from 3pm-6pm.

Action & Responsibility: Jamie C. was not present, there was no report.

Archives: Mark J. reported that Area 9 needs volunteers for archivists and also that the booklet "A Pre-AA History Book", which is not Conference approved, is available from him in PDF format by emailing him at ArchivesChair@hacooa.org.

Phones (After Hours): Esme V. was not present, there was no report.

Harbor Light: Bruce E. reported for Carrie A. that she is currently seeking articles on Step 4 and Tradition 4 for the April issue and also that there is a flyer describing the various kinds of writings that can be contributed to the Harbor Light.

Website Committee: Ira C. reported for Matthew L. that a great deal of work has gone into a redesigned website for Harbor Area and that it should launch soon.

Continued on Next Page

District 2: Revo M. introduced Tanya D., the DCM for District 2. She described what a worthwhile experience General Service is, and she also explained that each District 2 meeting has a different theme. They are not boring. Tanya D. also described Bridging the Gap, a form of Twelfth Step work that reaches out to those just out of detox or a recovery home that is new in this area.

District 4: Gilbert G. also talked about Bridging the Gap.

Area 9: Revo M., with his always engaging enthusiasm, encouraged all to register for the H&I Conference in May and reiterated that January is Bring a Friend month at the H&I meeting.

Old Business

Ira C. read the job description for Chair 5. Gene G. nominated Andrew K., who respectfully declined. Both Bruce E. and Tanya D. addressed the Committee on the importance of this position and the rewards of this form of service. Tammi R. volunteered and was elected by acclamation.

Ira C. read the job description for the Program Chair. There were no nominations, but Christina F. volunteered and was elected by acclamation.

New Business

There was a Board recommendation that the Literature Limit be raised to \$21,000. Amethyst J. explained that this had already been passed in September 2014, but that since it had not been included in the Minutes it could not be placed in the By-laws. Tanya D. made a motion that the limit be raised retroactive to when we first started using it, October 2014. It was seconded by Alan O. and passed 20-1.

There was a Board recommendation that donor reply envelopes be given with donation receipts and to groups that request them. They had been discontinued in 2000. It was so moved by Gene G., seconded by Tammi R. and passed 19-0.

There was a Board recommendation that the Treasurer or the Treasurer's designate be allowed to have a digital copy of the Financial records. Taking Financial records from Central Office had been prohibited in 2011. It was so moved by Mark J., seconded by Alan O. and passed 18-1.

Ralph M. distributed copies of the proposed 2015 Budget for consideration by the Delegates under Old Business at next month's HASC meeting.

Amethyst J. announced that she is in the process of revising and re-making all the job descriptions and solicited input from all current and former Chairs.

Tammi R. made a motion to adjourn that was seconded by Tanya D. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Tim S., acting HASC Secretary.



Approximately 600 meetings are listed in the Harbor Area directory; only 25 percent of those meetings are contributing to Central Office.

Give a little extra to show your support and gratitude for your sobriety. You can donate any amount—a dollar for each year sober; a dollar for each year your home group has been in existence; \$3.65, a penny a day for this past year, or if you can afford it, \$36.50 or a dime a day. The amount can be anything! Every penny counts! Spread the word!

Harbor Area Central Office
3450 E. Spring St., #109
Long Beach, CA 90806

General Service Office
PO Box 459
New York, NY 10163

Southern California Area 05
PO Box 481193
Los Angeles, CA 90048

Mid Southern California Area 09
PO Box 51446
Irvine, CA 92619-1446

District 4
P.O. Box 9972
Long Beach, CA 90810

Tradition Seven tells me how to obtain peace of mind. It shows me how to regain my self-respect. At long last I understand the inner peace that comes from being responsible for myself, and to myself. Tradition Seven says, "Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." What a relief that is! No longer do I need to wait for contributions. I am now free to give contributions.

Dr. Earle M. Grapevine, 1964

HARBOR AREA HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS**Minutes for January 21, 2015**

<http://www.hacoaa.org>

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Many thanks to Gary for coffee and to those who helped set up. Dodie read the Twelve Traditions. The December minutes were approved. Marty ran the 50/50 raffle.

NEWCOMERS: There were twenty-two newcomers tonight. We will have names and phone numbers available next month.

BIRTHDAYS: There were six birthdays for the month of January: Terry with 2 years, Shelly with 6 years, Patty with 7 years, Johnny with 12 years, Sarah with 13 years and Revo with 33 years. A total miracle of 73 years! We provided cake and sang Happy Birthday.

TREASURERS REPORT: Johnny gave a detailed Treasurers report. In our general fund, we have \$3,666.34 and in the literature fund, we have \$12,536.31 available for literature.

INFORMATION MEETINGS: Miles explained how information meetings work. We have two informational meetings scheduled. The Depth & Weight meeting in Paramount is set for Tuesday, 1/27, at 8 pm. The second information meeting scheduled is Saturday Night Weekenders on Saturday, February 14th, from 8-9 pm.

LITERATURE REPORT: Vern gave a detailed Literature report and explained how to order literature and how to pick it up. We spent \$994.69 on literature this month.

INTERGROUP REPORT: There was no Intergroup meeting in December. The 2015 Conference planning meetings are going well. The next planning meeting will be on Super Bowl Sunday, February 1st, in Fullerton at 11 am. The 34th Annual Southern California Hospitals and Institutions Conference will be held May 15th, 16th and 17th 2015 at the Holiday Inn in La Mirada. Registration is \$15.00 per person. There will be t-shirts, a \$500 raffle (winner need not be present), a Second Edition Big Book raffle as well as a 50/50 raffle. All proceeds will go to the Literature Fund to buy books for those committees in need who take them into hospitals and prisons. Hotel rates are \$89 double occupancy and \$99 for four people per night. This is a really good rate. There will be a Saturday night Banquet and Speaker Meeting, a Saturday Al-Anon Luncheon and Speaker Meeting. There will be a Saturday night dance as well. The next Intergroup meeting will be on Sunday, January 25th, hosted by our own Harbor H&I at the MWA Club in Signal Hill. Lunch will be at 11 am. The business meeting starts at 12pm. All are welcome.

SERVICE COMMITTEE: 24 delegates in attendance. A quorum is 14 and was had. Central Office finished December with a net income of \$2,396 with a year ending income of \$11,645. Additional Elections for 2015 as follows: Chair Five is Tammi. Christina is Program Chair. In Office/12 Step volunteer positions available are Fridays 9am-12pm every other week and Mondays 3pm-6pm. Contact Central Office if interested. After Hours Phone volunteer positions might be needed. Contact Central Office. Motion approved to raise the literature limit to \$21,000 retroactive to mid-September 2014. Account motion was approved at September's Service Committee meeting but not noted in Bylaws appendix. Assembling of the February 2015 Harbor Light is scheduled for Saturday, January 31st at 8:30am at Central Office. All are welcome.

AREA ASSEMBLY: Revo gave a detailed report on Area Assembly.

POLICY COUNCIL: Tanya said that the first Policy Council meeting will be held on 1/25 at the MWA Club at 2 pm after the Intergroup meeting. All are welcome.

CHILI COOKOFF: Mark stated that this year's Chili Cook-off will be held on September 19th. Our first planning meeting will be held on March 18th at 7 pm at the American Legion Hall before the regularly scheduled business meeting.

SPANISH LANGUAGE: Rafael gave the report and stated that the Spanish language H&I business meetings are held at Casa Metro 6060 Paramount Blvd. from 7-7:45 pm. Rafael stated that H&I is new and it is growing.

PANELS: Panels were filled. Kent explained the process for getting involved at Los Padrinos. He said there is an Orientation at noon on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

OLD BUISNESS: Unfilled panels

NEW BUISNESS: Motions were made and approved for books. Motion approved to reimburse Lois M. for a onetime purchase of chips for Terminal Island in the amount of \$24.85. Johnny G. won the 50/50 raffle and took home \$79.50. The meeting ended at 9:03 pm.

The next meeting will be on February 18th, at the American Legion Hall 5938 East Parkcrest Street, Long Beach, CA 90808. Newcomer Orientation is at 7:30 and the business meeting is at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Chris T.

HARBOR AREA CENTRAL OFFICE INCOME STATEMENT

	Jan 15	Jan 14
Income		
Total Contribution	3,647	5,364
Total Literature Sales	3,897	4,161
Other Income/Interest	2	2
Cash over/(short)		
Total Income	7,546	9,527
Cost of Goods Sold		
Total Cost of Literature	2,637	3,053
Inventory Adjustment	223	(4)
Credit Card Fees	58	27
Total COGS	2,918	3,076
Gross Profit	2,628	6,451
Expense		
Bank Charges		9
Bookkeeping	45	113
Copy Plan (Xerox)	262	1,038
Less Directory & HL copies	(198)	
Depreciation Expense	42	
Total Harbor Light	87	
Insurance - General	125	125
Insurance - Workers' Comp	38	143
Total Payroll	3,656	3,755
Postage		46
Rent - Office	1,244	1,244
Rent - HASC	65	65
Security System	20	75
Total Supplies	10	95
Telephone/Internet	191	189
Utilities - Water	31	30
Total Expense	5,618	6,927
Net Income	(990)	(476)

Upcoming Event Calendar

- Harbor Area Service Board**
March 4, 2015 at 7pm
3450 E. Spring St., Suite 109, Long Beach, CA
- General Service—District 4**
March 4, 2015 at 7pm (new GSR orientation at 6:30pm)
1900 E Carson St., Long Beach, CA
- Harbor Area Service Committee**
March 11, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.
1900 E. Carson St., Long Beach, CA
- Harbor Area H&I Service Committee**
March 18, 2015 at 8:00 p.m.
5938 Parkcrest St., Long Beach, CA
- PRAASA 2015**
March 6-8, 2015
Davis Conference Center
1651 North 700 West, Layton, UT 84041
<http://www.praasa.org>
- 38th Annual San Diego Spring Round Up**
April 2-5, 2015
Town and Country Hotel & Convention Center
500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108
<http://www.sandiegospringroundup.com>
- 30th Annual OCAAC Convention**
April 3-5, 2015
Hilton Hotel
3050 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626
<http://www.ocaac.org>



Harbor Light is a monthly publication of the Harbor Area Service Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous. Send articles, comments, letters and artwork to:

Editor, *Harbor Light*
3450 E. Spring St., Ste. 109
Long Beach, CA 90806
E-mail: harborlightchair@hacoaa.org

The deadline for submissions is the 10th of the month prior to publication.

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Bruce E., HACOAA Liaison
Angie B., Dale C., Neil E., Harbor Light Committee

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