

NEWSLETTER for the Fellowship

FEB 2016

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The Sunshine of the Spirit

It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worth while. But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal. For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit.

Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition, p. 66.

32nd Annual High Desert Convention set for June 10th—12th

The 32nd Annual High Desert Convention, *Sunshine of the Spirit*, has been confirmed for June 10th, 11th and 12th, 2016, at the Courtyard Marriott in Hesperia, California. As in previous years, this year's convention will include a variety of activities, including special entertainment on the opening day (Friday), an Al-Anon Luncheon, a Banquet and Dance on Saturday, and a Golf Tournament that begins on Friday morning. Discount registration rates are available prior to May 27th, though registration will remain open throughout the convention at a slightly higher cost.

Registration can be completed by mail or online. If sending a check, please make checks payable to: **Victor Valley Convention Committee**, and mail to P.O. Box 1894, Apple Valley, CA 92307. To register online, please go to www.highdesertconvention.com. Those seeking general information about the convention

are encouraged to call Sue. C. (951) 751-1558. For more Al-Anon information, please call Beverly at (760) 617-71.

A Message from Betty B., Apple Valley

Writer and Editor of Newsletter for the
Fellowship, 1993 - 2016

Twenty-one, twenty-two, or even twenty-three years ago if someone would have asked me what in the world was going on with me, I would have answered, "I don't know." That answer always went over like a lead balloon when I tried to pull it on my sponsor all those years ago. Yet, here I am today, still trying the same trick.

"Where is the Newsletter?"

(Continued on page 2)

“I don’t know.”

“What is going on with you?”

“I don’t know.”

“When are you going to get the Newsletter done?”

“I don’t know! Quit YELLING at me!” (Very rarely did my sponsor ever yell at me. It was only my newcomer’s perspective.)

So, where is the newsletter? What’s going on with me? When am I going to get the newsletter done? With ever part of my being, at 25 years sober, I want to say, “Leave me alone! I don’t know!” But today that is a lie. I do know and it’s time to let you know. I do need to give you fair warning; I may go in circles before I get to the point, so your patience is appreciated.

I wrote a letter in 2005 that was a desperate please for help—and the members of the Fellowship stepped up to bat for me and gave me not only the help I needed with the newsletter, but they also gave me tremendous support for the health concerns I was facing at the time. For that, I will always be grateful. But something happened during the six months of chemotherapy that changed something in me. Though the chemo was successful and did what it was supposed to do, it changed me in ways that are just now starting to reveal themselves.

Where there was once a pretty reliable sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous and society, there is now a black hole. It’s not the type of hole that has left me hopeless, or full of despair, or up against a drink, but a hole nonetheless. It has grown slowly over the course of the past ten years. The only way I can ex-

plain it is to give a little bit of background to it.

During the chemo, I turned into a homicidal, suicidal, blithering idiot (worse than I usually was, and worse than I sometimes still am today). And to give you an idea of what these months were like I am going to share what my first night was like after my initial treatment. Craig was driving me home from Kaiser Fontana where I had learned to inject myself. As we were coming up Sierra Ave. to the 15, my legs would not—could not—get comfortable. I kept squirming in my seat trying to position and get them to a point where I didn’t want to cut them off. By the time we got home to Apple Valley, I was in so much pain. Every major bone in my body was screaming, and they felt as if they were going to snap and splinter into a thousand pieces. I went straight to bed where, for the entire night, I had the same reoccurring nightmare; myself and the other patients in my class that day were going through the same horrific pain—just waiting to die. For the next several weeks it got worse. Food began to taste like Craig had driven all over the desert looking for the most rotten road kill to serve. My hair started to fall out. My moods were hitched to a pendulum that swung between “Who am I going to kill?” to “How am I going to kill myself?” In the middle of the pendulum were the uncontrollable tears. It always seemed as if I could not catch my breath. I would be sitting in church or at a meeting and all of a sudden I would let you an enormous amount of air—along with the beautiful noise that makes—because it felt like a mule had just kicked me in the gut. Though I needed to lose a little weight at the beginning, I did not need to lose 40 pounds, but 40 pounds I lost.

I injected myself every Friday evening. Our son, Christopher, was stationed in San Diego at the time.

(Continued on page 3)

Each Friday night that he was in port and had the weekend off, he drove up so he could be at home with me/us for the ritual. I would sit on the floor using my chair as my backrest. I would then prepare the needles with the drugs. Then Craig, Christopher, and our daughter Christabelle, would sit on the floor with me while I physically and mentally prepared to dose myself. (Looking back now, my family was the herd surrounding the weaker herd member—me.) I would try to find a new spot to inject the needle, but by about week 10 the pickings were getting pretty slim. And then the tears would come. Mine because I knew what was going to come later that night and the rest of the week until the following Friday, and theirs because they hated to see what I was getting to endure. (Yes, I GOT to endure it!) And so it went for 26 weeks. (I still cannot talk or write about this without bursting into tears. I feel so sorry for Craig!)

In the past few months, as my apathy has blossomed and grown, I have spoken to several people—men and women—who have gone through chemotherapy for whatever reason. They, too, have been left with the same gaping black hole in their being that I have been experiencing. Theirs also crept up on them when they were not looking. But just as realizing in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous that I was not alone when it came to the disease of alcoholism, I am not alone in this area of my life. There is a solution as long as I am willing to work on the problem.

I am not telling you all this as a way to get your sympathetic “There, there.” Nor am I trying to justify or rationalize my behavior over the course of the past few months. I’m sharing this in order to explain my behavior and help me better understand what I need to do to make my amends to the Fellowship and to my family. Also, as I have been taught, by sharing my

“darkest secrets” with another human being (or in this case, beings), the power of the secret gets taken away to I can again see the light. I do sincerely apologize for shirking my responsibilities as the Editor for the Newsletter for the Fellowship. As a trusted servant I have not been very responsible to those I serve and I apologize. I apologize to all who answered my monthly please for articles, yet I did nothing with them. For being a genuine, selfish, self-centered jerk, I apologize.

Now, with all that being said, I have come to a decision. Craig and I figured it out that for the better part of 23 years I have had my hand in the publishing of the newsletter. I have now come to that time in my life where I need to pass it on.

I sincerely want to thank the High Desert A. A. community for the honor and privilege you have given me in being Editor for the newsletter all these years. It is a part of my sobriety that I hold very dear in my heart. You have allowed me to grow. You have propped me up. And not once did you ever allow my head to get too big for my own good. I have been blessed.

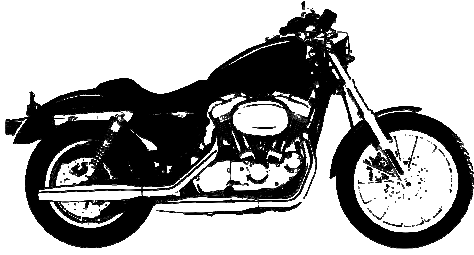
In sobriety,

Betty B., Apple Valley
Editor, Newsletter for the Fellowship
1993—2016



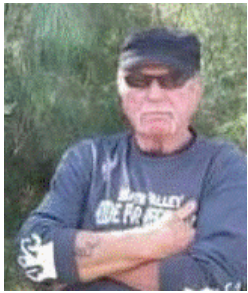
Don't Forget!

A BIG BOOK that is falling apart, is generally owned by someone who is not.



Things We Cannot Change

Everett Lee “Briefly!” Mc Comas
1945 - 2015



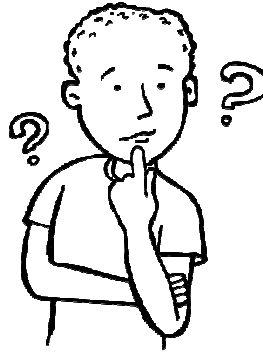
The H.U.G. group, and the larger A.A. High Desert community, lost a dear member on December 20th, 2015 in Everett Lee Mc Comas of Hesperia, California.

Lee was born July 11th, 1945 in Ohio. He celebrated 29 years of sobriety in April 2015 and was living proof that A.A.’ers are not a glum lot. Lee had a passion for motorcycles, hotrods, his family, and his loving wife, of whom he spoke frequently and with great adoration. Although Lee was a long time member of A.A. and participated in a number of meetings and get-togethers, in recent years he routinely attended the daily H.U.G. meeting on Main Street in Hesperia, as well as the Men’s Stag meeting Wednesday nights at the same location. His memorial service was held on December 30th, 2015 at the Apple Valley Church of the Nazarene. Attendees sported orange and black colors (Lee was a fan of Harley Davidson), and celebrated his life, memory and legacy.

Lee is survived by his wife Karlen, his daughters, Tammy and Schanna, his son Dylan, three granddaughters, one grandsons, and three great grandsons. Lee is, and will continue to be, sorely missed by all who knew him.

Did You Know?

Central Office
History



Did you know that your Central Office has been in existence since 1978? There was a newsletter before there was an established Central Office location.

In the first newsletter, (March 1978), Editor Charlotte D. announced that the Central Office would officially open on April 3rd, the day the phone service would be connected. At this time, the Central Office group was known as the High Desert Intergroup, and was located at 15628 10th street, in Victorville. The first office shift was worked by Charlotte D. and George S.

A meeting directory published by the Inland Empire Central Office in November 1976 listed ten meetings for Apple Valley, Barstow and Victorville — **that’s 10 total.**

The second newsletter reported office statistics, showing that the Central Office had 12 information calls and four 12-step calls in the first month. In August 1978, Chuck C. was the speaker at the Apple Valley Speaker Meeting. The meeting list expanded to 21 total meetings in the directory.

In April 2016, your Central Office will celebrate 38 years! Today, our office covers the territories of Apple Valley, Barstow, Fort Irwin, Hesperia, Lucerne Valley, Newberry Springs, Phelan, Silver Lakes / Helendale, and Victorville, and Wrightwood. Today, we have 173 different meeting listed.

Intergroup Minutes January, 16th, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Helen M., who led us in the Serenity Prayer.

Bill P. read the minutes for the December meeting, and minutes were accepted as read. 12 Traditions were read by Chad F. Present were: Helen M., Bill P., Chad F., Randy M., and Craig B.

Treasurer's Report: Chad F. gave the Treasurer's report as of 12/31/15, which showed we had: \$19,888.87 in savings, \$7,130.90 in C.D., and \$4,294.18 in Checking. We had a total income of \$2,165.88. Expenses were total of \$3,088.05. Income before literature was \$922.17, with a net income of \$566.50.

Office Manager's Report: Craig B. delivered the Office Manager's Report for December. Central Office had 107 visitors, 164 information calls, 0 12-step calls. Call-forwarding had 107 information calls and four 12-step calls. Totals were 271 information and four 12 step calls. Craig B. also acknowledged all people who supported the Central Office through their individual donations. Also, more men and women are needed for the Victorville 12-step list.

District 19 Report: Randy M. Reported that new officers were elected. District 19 meets every 3rd Sunday of each month at 3:00 p.m. at the Victor Valley Alano Club on 11085 Central Road in Apple Valley.

Old Business: Craig B. stated that the Newsletter Editor position was still open. One year sobriety is required.

Congratulations to Chad F. on Seven Year's Sobriety.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill P., Secretary.

Intergroup Minutes February 20th, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Helen M., who led us in the Serenity Prayer. Introductions were made. 12 traditions read by Matthew F. Carl O. read the minutes for January 16th meeting, and minutes were accepted. Present were: Craig B., Chad F., Carl O., Ted B., Helen, M., Jim F., Matthew F., Patrick C., and Julia W.

Treasurer's Report: As of January 30th, there was \$20,437.87 in savings, \$7,130.90 in C.D., \$4,028.17 in Checking, \$2,740.28 total income, \$4,050.28 expenses total, \$1,126 in literature sales, and \$1,310 income before literature. Net income was \$183.75.

Office Manager's Report: Craig B. delivered the Office Manager's Report for January. Central Office had 106 visitors, 168 information calls, 1 12-step calls. Call-forwarding had 131 information calls and 2 12-step calls. Totals were 299 information and 3 12 step calls. Craig B. also reported that repairs would be made to Central Office for carpet, ceiling etc.

Webmaster's Report: Jim F. reported that the webpage is running fine.

District 19 Report: Randy M. reported that 2016 general service conference agenda items are now out.

(Continued on page 6)

February Minutes continued...

H&I Representative Report: Patrick C. reported that the New Year's Eve function speaker meeting and dance was a success. H&I roundup is looking for a place to hold next event. H&I meets the 3rd Monday of every month at 6:30pm at the Alano Club. Connor M. added that donations are now split between literature and operating costs for H&I.

7th Tradition was passed.

Old Business: Craig B. announced that Julia W. applied for the Newsletter position. Julia W. showed her credentials to the group and all were satisfied. Julia W. and Scott J. are to have the Newsletter position.

Betty B. read about her experience of doing the Newsletter for 23 years. She lent her full support to Julia W. and Scott J.. She gave thanks for her 23 years of service. Chad F. presented her with an appreciation plaque on behalf of the Central Office.

Announcements:

Respectfully submitted,
Carl O., filling in for Bill P. (Secretary)

CENTRAL OFFICE ACTIVITIES	January
Visitors	106
Information Calls	168
12-Step Calls	1
CALL FORWARDNG	
Information Calls	131
12 Step Calls	2
TOTALS	
Information Calls	299
12 Step Calls	3

**DROP
AND
GIVE ME
ZEN**

**DROP REGRETS.
DROP LIMITING BELIEFS.
DROP RESENTMENTS.
DROP DOUBTS.
DROP WORRIES.**

Twelve Rewards of Sobriety

1. Hope instead of desperation.
2. Faith instead of despair.
3. Courage instead of fear.
4. Peace of mind instead of confusion.
5. Self-respect instead of self-contempt.
6. Self-confidence instead of helplessness.
7. The respect of others instead of their pity and contempt.
8. A clean conscience instead of a sense of guilt.
9. Real friendships instead of loneliness.
10. A clean pattern of life instead of a purposeless existence.
11. The love and understanding of our families instead of their doubts and fears.
12. The freedom of a happy life instead of bondage of an alcoholic obsession.

Text taken from: <http://fff-and-10other.weebly.com/sobriety.html>

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF JAN. 30th, 2016



	January	YTD
Savings	\$ 550.00 .	
C.D.	\$ 0.91 .	
Cash in Union Checking		

BALANCE	\$ 20,438.87
	\$ 7,130.90
	\$ 4,028.17

INCOME	January
Group Donations	\$ 1,432.68
Birthdays	\$ 18.00
Memorials	\$ 23.00
Faithful Fivers	.
P.Y.M.W.AY.M.I.	\$ 331.00
Newsletter	.
Chips and Medallions	\$ 896.10
Coffee Kitty	\$ 22.50
Intergroup 7th Tradition	\$ 17.00
INCOME FOR THE MONTH	\$ 2,740.28

Apple Valley (cont.)	
There is a Solution	\$ 120.00
Mon. 5 p.m. Open Participation	\$ 45.00
Wed. Women's Participation	\$ 90.00
How it Works	\$ 56.00
Simple Changes	\$ 75.00
Children of Chaos	\$ 60.00
Questions & Answers	\$ 30.00
Front & Center	\$ 117.68

EXPENSES	
Rent	\$ 360.00
C.A.M. Charges	\$ 144.45
Utilities	\$ 89.07
Manager Salary	\$ 1,027.28
Charter	\$ 75.42
Printing	\$ 41.50
Security/Maintenance/Office	\$ 267.52
Chips and Medallions	\$ 357.35
Payroll Tax State (EDD)	\$ 67.65
Board of Equalization (sales tax)	\$ 465.00
Federal Payroll Tax	\$ 1,081.28
Credit Card Fee	\$ 24.76
Stamps	\$ 49.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 4,050.28

HESPERIA	
Back to Basics	\$ 450.00
LUCERNE VALLEY	
The Place	\$ 20.00
VICTORVILLE	
Friday Speaker Meeting	\$ 40.00
In Memory of:	
Barbara G. by Les. P.	\$ 23.00
Happy Birthday To:	
Wayne S.	\$ 18.00

INCOME BEFORE LITERATURE	\$ (1,310.00)
Sales	\$ 1,126.25
Purchases	.
Total Literature	\$ 1,126.25
NET INCOME	\$ (183.75)

APPLE VALLEY	
Anonymous Group	\$ 166.00
Keep it Simple	\$ 121.00
Coffee Talk	\$ 42.00

Contacting the Newsletter for the Fellowship

If you would like to receive the newsletter via email, send your email address to:
newsletterforthefellowship@yahoo.com

Have information on upcoming A.A. events? Do you have thoughts or announcements you'd like shared with the Victor Valley Intergroup? Please email us and let us know!
newsletterforthefellowship@yahoo.com