

NEWSLETTER for the Fellowship

APR. 2017

Victor Valley Intergroup, Central Office, Inc.
18888 Highway 18, Suite 107
Apple Valley, CA 92307
Telephone: 760-242-9292
Email: newsletterforthefellowship@yahoo.com
Website: <http://www.victorvalleyaa.org/>



A Pre-Inventory prayer:

"God, please help me to honestly take stock. Help me to search out the flaws in my make-up which caused my failure. Help me to see where resentment has plagued me and resulted in spiritual malady, but more importantly help me to understand my part in these resentments. Help me to resolutely look for my own mistakes and to understand where I had been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened. Please help me to be searching and fearless in my endeavor to write my inventory."

The Big Book, p. 64:2, 64:3, 67:2

Save the Date!

Annual A.A. High Desert Convention

will be held June 9, 10, 11 2017
Holiday Inn

How a Flock of Pigeons Helped Start A.A.

Ebby T. is the person who carried his alcoholic solution to Bill W. Clarence S., Cleveland A.A. founder, is quoted, **"Bill might have scored the touchdown, but it was Ebby who handed him the ball."** Ebby grew up under ideal circumstances; his brother was mayor of Albany, NY, as was his uncle and grandfather in previous years. There is even a park named after his family in his hometown of Albany, NY—**John Boyd Thacher State Park**. In 1932, his older brother, Mayor Jack Thacher, was a candidate [for] N.Y. State Governor when F.D.R. became U.S. President. But Ebby found himself repeatedly caught up in drinking scrapes which is not good news for such a political family; thus came the suggestion that he leave Albany and take residence in their family summer home in the prestigious township of Manchester, VT.

Ebby's family doubtless hoped that the relative tranquility of the Manchester resort community would bring about at least some moderation to his drinking sprees, and it did – sort of. After a few months, Ebby joined a group who spent the entire winter clearing the trails of the Green Mountains. He claimed to have drunk two pints of gin on the first day, but there was no more to be had for the next six months of pseudo isolation. He spent the winter of 1932—33 enjoying the rugged work and doing lots of hunting on the weekends. Upon [his] return to Manchester, he continued to stay dry for a few more months; but soon thereafter his drinking bouts resumed. Ebby moved into one of the furnished rooms of the large family residence on Taconic Avenue in Manchester during the spring of 1934.

Ebby's sprees brought about two slight brushes with the Manchester authorities; he was fined only five dollars on each occasion, but with the warning that the third time it could go hard on him. Perhaps it was remorse that led Ebby to follow his brother's urging to paint the huge family summer "cottage" that summer. But, not surprisingly, that task was too much for one person, so a professional helper was hired for added assistance, and the job was finished that summer. He must have felt a great satisfaction, for who wouldn't be proud of such a large scale accomplishment?

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There is no evidence of this, but perhaps Ebby was celebrating with a little hooch when he noticed a flock of ungrateful pigeons on the roof. Out came his shotgun—and doubtless the neighbors, as well—as loud blasts shattered the tranquility of this calm and peaceful community (Robert Todd Lincoln, the President's son, once lived across the street).

Ebby faced six months in Windsor Prison or Brattleboro Insane Asylum but, lucky for us, the judge let him off the hook, under the custody of millionaire Rowland H. (P. 26). Ebby eventually landed on Calvary Mission in lower Manhattan. Being sober several months, he gleefully carried his sober message to Bill W. on a bleak November day of 1934—and you know the rest of the story. But don't forget the pigeons!

Bob S.

Via, *By The Way*
Central California Fellowship of A.A.

Submitted by,
Craig B., Apple Valley, CA

Why I call myself a “high-bottom” drunk and does it even matter?

Taken From: *Sober Nation*, April 10, 2017 by Amy Borel
Stable URL: <https://sobernation.com/why-i-call-myself-a-high-bottom-drunk-and-does-it-even-matter/>

In the world of substance use disorders is a concept of a “bottom” or “rock bottom.” Even those outside of recovery programs recognize that to find a way out of the deep well of those that suffer from substance use disorders, there is a kind of desperation that must occur. It's the theory that “it gets worse before it can get better” and a person must go so far down that well, that the only direction left to go is up. It may sound like just another cliché or overused euphemism but it's all true in all the different ways a “bottom” is experienced by those that suffer from substance use disorders.

Before I recognized my own disease I was convinced that I knew, well actually, a lot, including what a drunk was. A drunk was dirty, lazy, poor, probably homeless, and could be found begging for money which would certainly end up being something in a brown paper bag. A drunk was someone who occasionally walked the streets talking to themselves and often ended up in the hospital for withdrawals or other frequent health issues. A less harmless kind of drunk was the abusive husband. He goes to work, usually at a poor-paying job, and either stops at the bar or the liquor store before going home to rage on his wife and kids. Then there was the rich drunk lady who is so bored with her life, and so lonely without her busy business-focused husband that all she's left to do is drink all day long. The last type of drunk I concluded exists must be the enabling drunk couple. One partner convinces the other that it's perfectly normal to spend the evenings stumbling back and forth from the kitchen to retrieve drinks and then to endure the hangover until it's time for Bloody Mary's at breakfast.

I knew everything there was to know about alcoholics before I realized I was one.

*The truth is, living with a substance use
disorder looks a lot different from the inside.*

In recovery, I learned that I have had more than one “rock bottom.” Sometimes it was simply having hurt someone I love with my behavior. Sometimes it was physically assaulting another person or even myself. Sometimes it was finding myself in front of a judge. I went to work hungover, often. I woke up in places I didn't recognize and have been told stories about things I did that I don't remember. I slept with people I didn't know. I cheated, I lied, I stole. I was carried out of a crack house in Detroit by four men and then pushed out of a car while one of them drove. I'm not even sure how I ended up there in the first place. For me, all of these are bottoms. High or low, all bottoms. Looking back it was apparent that I wasn't ready to quit digging. Even after all that, the lowest I've ever gone is the moment I realized that I had everything I ever wanted and I was STILL miserable. I had a realization that if I couldn't change the patterns I created in my life over years and years, then I really didn't want to live anymore. Life was truly good and inside I was suffering from a disease that wouldn't allow me the ability to see that. Stuck in the proverbial purgatory of living with a substance use disorder: I didn't want to live but I didn't want to die either.

Enter sacred desperation.

I was desperate to have meaningful relationships and enjoy life. I wanted to know myself, feel I had a purpose, and fix the many things I broke inside and outside of me. I wanted to stay married and be a better mother to my daughter. I once heard in a meeting that a “high bottom drunk” is a person who didn't have to lose everything before getting sober. Many of us still had good jobs, functional marriages, some of us even had people who cared about us despite our inability to realize it. As far as I can tell that is the ONLY difference between me and the dirty homeless drunk on the street (who society had me convinced was the REAL drunk). I haven't got there...YET.

“There but for the grace of God go I.”

I share all of this in detail because I think it's helpful to shed some light on how we perceive substance use disorder. I have met those that suffer who are of every age, race and gender. I've talked to those that suffer who work at fast food restaurants and others who are surgeons. Some have families. Some have none. Some are homeless and some live in gigantic well-furnished houses. Some alcoholics only drink on weekends.

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FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF MARCH 31, 2017

	BALANCE	
Savings	\$ 19,025.84	
Cash in Union Checking	\$ 5,275.85	
INCOME	MARCH	Y.T.D.
Group Donations	\$ 1,111.04	\$ 4,939.15
Birthdays	\$ -	\$ 19.00
Memorials	\$ -	\$ 24.00
P.Y.M.W.Y.M.I.	\$ 275.00	\$ 864.00
Newsletter	\$ -	\$ 10.00
Chips and Medallions	\$ 770.08	\$ 2,176.68
Literature	\$ 1,038.69	\$ 4,307.85
Credit Card Fee	\$ 14.00	\$ 42.00
Coffee Kitty	\$ 12.10	\$ 67.66
Buck of the Month	\$ -	\$ 5.76
Ride for Recovery	\$ 477.00	\$ 1,303.00
Mountain AA Conference	\$ -	\$ 300.00
Intergroup 7th Tradition	\$ 13.00	\$ 39.00
INCOME FOR THE MONTH	\$ 3,710.91	\$ 14,098.10
EXPENSES		
Rent	\$ 360.00	\$ 1,080.00
C.A.M. Charges	\$ 132.24	\$ 363.65
Utilities	\$ 71.16	\$ 229.91
Manager Salary	\$ 1,029.36	\$ 3,088.36
Charter	\$ 101.47	\$ 304.74
Printing	\$ 153.09	\$ 334.42
Security/Maintenance/Office	\$ 128.54	\$ 473.62
Chips and Medallions	\$ 506.31	\$ 1,084.01
Literature	\$ -	\$ 3,701.57
Payroll Tax State (EDD)	\$ -	\$ 67.47
Board of Equalization (sales tax)	\$ -	\$ 326.00
Federal Payroll Tax	\$ -	\$ 1,081.28
Freedom Financial (tax prep)	\$ -	\$ 60.00
Credit Card Fee	\$ 34.75	\$ 90.62
Liability Insurance (Hub Int.)	\$ -	\$ 575.00
Alarm	\$ 96.00	\$ 96.00
Ride For Recovery	\$ 85.95	\$ 360.95
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 2,698.87	\$ 13,317.60
NET INCOME	\$ 1,012.04	\$ 780.50
APPLE VALLEY		
Keep it Simple		\$ 50.00
How It Works	\$ 74.38	\$ 190.94
Simple Changes		\$ 100.00
Children of Chaos	\$ 84.69	\$ 192.70
Front & Center	\$ 130.22	\$ 379.40
Saturday Speaker Meeting	\$ 40.11	\$ 179.47
Nuts and Fruits		\$ 60.00
Womens 12 X 12/ Big Bk.		\$ 81.00
Sun. Just for Today		\$ 50.00
Thursday Mens Stag		\$ 50.00
Primary Purpose		\$ 60.00
Anonymous Group	\$ 126.00	\$ 269.00

Wed. Womens Participation	\$ 20.60	\$ 20.60
Coffee Talk	\$ 44.00	\$ 104.00
Original Big Book		\$ 100.00
Barstow		
Los Coyotes Mens Group	\$ 100.00	\$ 300.00
Mon. Mens Meeting- Vets Home		\$ 10.00
Friday Nite Live	\$ 100.00	\$ 200.00
Our Primary Purpose		\$ 100.00
Ft. Irwin		
HESPERIA		
Back to Basics		\$ 571.00
Hesperia Umbrella Group		\$ 960.00
LUCERNE VALLEY		
Newberry Springs		
Mon. 12 x 12	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00
Sat. Breakfast Club	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Phelan		
Tues. Phelan Sober	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00
Silver Lakes		
No Valid Complaints	\$ -	\$ 65.00
Thursday Big Book	\$ -	\$ 80.00
VICTORVILLE		
Tumbleweed Group	\$ 40.94	\$ 65.94
Friday Night Speaker Meeting	\$ 10.10	\$ 10.10
Wrightwood		
Wed. Mens Stag	\$ 120.00	\$ 300.00
Mon. Womens	\$ -	\$ 50.00
9 a.m. Sun. Open Participation	\$ -	\$ 120.00



Image taken from Zoe and Zara Twitter Account Entry:
<https://twitter.com/zoeandzara/status/605061650618687488>

Some drink all day and all night. Most have tried many times to get sober and maybe never told anyone. We are your next door neighbor, your in-law, your child's school teacher. We are the drunk on the street and the surgeon in the O.R. (hopefully sober at the time). We are as diverse as any other group of diseased humans working every moment of our lives to live in the cure that is only a daily remission: sobriety. I am particularly sensitive to topics surrounding substance use disorder and especially alcohol use, as this is how it manifests in me. When I hear of another person who suffers from a substance use disorder that lost the fight for sobriety it pains me inside as if it were my own blood. Because it is. It's not just my own blood, it IS ME. I get it. What a blessing and a curse to see it from both sides.

Does it Matter?

Really, the short answer to the question of "Does it really matter?" is yes and no. No, because whether or not our bottoms looked the same, we felt the same. And yes, considering myself a high-bottom drunk matters to me, but only in the sense that I could go down a lot farther if I really wanted. All I have to do is pick up a drink. Personally, I experience a healthy fear of getting drunk again because there is so much farther to go, and the farther down you go, the harder it is to climb out.

Intergroup Meeting Notes from March 18th, 2017

Meeting called to order at 9:33 by Chairman Ted B. Also present. Craig B, office manager. Bill P. Assoc member. Chad B Treasurer. and Doug H. member at large. (very large)

Ted B led in the Serenity Prayer and Bill P read the 12 Traditions

Last month minutes read by Doug H and approved as read. (Motion Ted B and 2nd Bill P)

Treasurer's Report for January and February
Jan. 2017. Balance Savings \$18,025.39, Checking \$5,992.13. Income \$5,119.76 Expenses \$5,459.73 Net Loss \$339.97

Feb. 2017 Balance Savings \$18,525.39 Checking \$5,030.62 Income \$5,267.43 Expenses \$5,159.00 Net Gain \$108.43

Report accepted by acclamation.

Office Manager Report.

Office Visits 81. Information Calls 87 Twelve Step Calls

CENTRAL OFFICE STATISTICS		Mar.	FINAL YTD
Visitors		86	259
Information Calls		153	398
12-Step Calls		1	3
CALL FORWARDNG			
Information Calls		140	312
12 Step Calls		0	2
TOTALS			
Information Calls		293	710
12 Step Calls		1	5

2

After hours phone. Information Calls 69 Twelve Step Calls 1

Total Visits 81 Information Calls 156 Twelve Step Calls 3

All shifts are filled at this time.

The newsletter is going well and is on time.

Old Business

Decision to buy non AA meditation books to sell was put off a couple of months until office finances are more stable.

New Business

Craig B brought up the by-law that if an officer has missed two meetings in a row, they must be replaced.

Doug H volunteered to accept the secretary position and was approved by members present.

Correction to the Meeting Directory. The Lucerne Valley meetings on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday at location LV1 are at 7PM

Convention will be June 9th 10th and 11th.

Announced the passing of Helen M of Hesperia on Feb 28. 35 years 1 month 25 days. One heartbeat at a time. Next Intergroup meeting April 15, 2017

Adjourned at 10:10AM

Respectfully submitted. Doug H. Acting Secretary

If you would like to receive or send news to the newsletter, please contact us here:
newsletterforthefellowship@yahoo.com