

93 News

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"Sponsorship, Service & Self Support in a Changing World"

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Please send articles or information for the 93 News to Stephanie S. at the above listed email.



WHO IS A MEMBER OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS?

-- 1946 --

(Tradition Three grew out of this piece by Bill W. in The A.A. Grapevine)

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 now or 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 broker!) are legion. Two or three years ago the General 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 A.A. would have been thrown out because they slipped too much, because their morals were too bad, because they had mental as well as alcoholics 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 A.A groups go on rule-making benders. Naturally enough, too, as a group commences to grow rapidly it is confronted with any 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. New comers argue that they are aren't alcoholics at all, but keep coming around anyway. "Slippees" trade on the fair name of A.A. in order to get themselves jobs. Others refuse to accept all the Twelve Steps of the recovery program. Some go still further, saving that 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 A.A. 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 evildoers. Then the Group Elders, now clothed with authority, commence to get busy. Recalcitrants are cast into the outer darkness; respectable busy-bodies 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 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 A.A. 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 A.A. reputation – all such persons seldom harm an A.A. 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 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 A.A. 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 A.A. 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 A.A. 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 case is severe or light, whether his morals are good or bad, whether he has other complications or not. Our A.A. 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 A.A. 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 A.A. 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 next day, if sober. Though he may be thrown out of a club, nobody thinks of throwing him out of A.A. He is a member as long as he says he is. While this broad concept of A.A. membership is not yet unanimous, it does

Concepts – (short form)

- I** Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
- II** The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.
- III** To ensure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision."
- IV** At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
- V** Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
- VI** The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.
- VII** The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.
- VIII** The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.
- IX** Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.
- X** Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
- XI** The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
- XII** The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

represent the main current of A.A. 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 worlds; 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.

Reprinted from the pamphlet "AA Tradition – How it Developed by Bill W."

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Send contributions to:
Central California Area 93
PMB # 140
606 Alamo Pintado, # 3
Solvang, CA 93463

Responsibility Declaration
I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.
From the December 2002 Grapevine. Reprinted with permission of The A.A. Grapevine, Inc.

PreConference Workshop

I have just received copies of the preliminary agenda items for the General Service Conference in New York to be held April 2006. Now the Delegate, Vicki, and I will begin preparations for Area 93's pre-conference workshop. It is held the third weekend in March on a Saturday and continues on Sunday morning prior to our Area Assembly. The format will be presentations on topics that will be discussed at the Conference. If you attend PRAASA, you will most likely hear the same topics discussed. For our preconference workshop, volunteer presenters will prepare a 4 or 5 minute presentation on the topic they are assigned. After 3 or 4 presentations, we will break into round table discussions and then we will have report backs from those roundtables at the microphone. You will have an opportunity to share your group conscious and your informed opinion with your Delegate prior to her leaving for New York. The presentations and reports back from the roundtable discussions are taped and the Delegate takes those tapes to listen to prior to the Conference.

Since Vicki serves as Chairman for the Conference Literature committee at the General Service Conference, there will be some items on our preconference agenda regarding her committee. But the Conference Theme is "Sponsorship, Service and Self Support in a Changing World with many interesting topics including Presenting AA to Newcomers, Sponsorship into Sobriety/ into Service, Performing Service Without Expectations.

You will receive copies of the preliminary agenda items and the Delegate opinion poll at the January Assembly.

Our preconference workshop will be held in Lompoc this year. Make your plans now to spend a full day Saturday and a full day Sunday in Lompoc. Don't cheat yourselves out of this experience; enjoy learning the process and participating in it. Give the Delegate your best effort so she will leave for the Conference prepared to the best of our ability!

Debbie J
Area 93 Alternate Delegate

AGENDA

Area Assembly Meeting – Sunday March 19, 2006

Lompoc Veterans Memorial Building
100 East Locust Avenue – Lompoc, CA 93436

08:30 a.m. **Registration**

10:30 -12:00 **Meetings:**

New GSR Orientation, Archives, CPC/Treatment Facilities, Finance, Grapevine, La Viña, Registration, G&P, PI/Website/Accessibility, Literature/Audio Visual/Newsletter, CO Liaisons, Translation

12:00 p.m. Lunch provided on site - - We are self supporting - - Suggested donation \$ 5.00

01:00 p.m. **Opening** **Serenity Prayer** **12 Concepts**

Roll Call / Report, by Secretary - - AA Birthdays for: February and March	Alternate Delegate Report
Treasurer Report	Delegate Report
Registrar Report	FORO, Standing Committee Reports
Chairman Report – Approve January Minutes & Financial Reports	

02:30 p.m. **Break**

Old Items:

1. PRAASA 2006 final report
- 2.

New Items:

1. Modifications to Budget
- 2.
- 3.

Written Bids for August Assembly 2006

General Sharing – Announcements for the good and welfare

Adjourn – Responsibility Declaration

Area 93 Officers

DELEGATE: Vicki B. cell 805-565-2019 – delegate@aaarea93.org
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SECRETARY: Jess A. – 818-988-5691 – secretary@aaarea93.org
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REGISTRAR: Peggy D. – 661-940-0606 – registrar@aaarea93.org

Area 93 Committee Chairs & Subcommittee Chairs

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ARCHIVIST: Mike S. – 805-648-6040 – mikekaxa@yahoo.com
GRAPEVINE: Laurie H. – 805-641-1601 – grapevine@aaarea93.org

Past Delegates

Jeanine R. – Panel 53 (2003-2004) – 805-735-2173 – jtriosaa@msn.com
Al H. – Panel 37 (1987-1988), SoCal 05 – 661-366-4592 – ahendri331@aol.com
Mary Ellen D. – Panel 43 (1993-1994), SoCal 05 – 805-495-0276
Joe V. – Panel 47 (1997-1998), SoCal 05 – 661-252-2228 – joe@tclairnc.com

Pacific Regional Trustee

Phyllis H.

Appointed Committee Member, Trustee's Literature Committee

Ray R. – 818-845-5603 – wordsong2@aol.com

It is impossible to
overestimate the value of
your friends

ANGER
is one letter short of
DANGER

If you are right, you don't need to
be angry. If you are wrong, you
can't afford to be angry.

CCAA Area 93 Upcoming Events

Date	Name of Event & Info	Who should attend	Location and/or Comments
March 18 & 19, 2006	Pre-Conference Workshop & Area Assembly – hosted by District 52	Everyone For info 805-310-1203	Veterans Hall 100 E. Locast Avenue Lompoc, CA
April 16, 2006	Area Committee Meeting	Standing Committee & Subcomm. Chairs, DCMs, DCMCs, & Area Officers	5679 Hollister Ave. Goleta, CA 93117
Apr. 22 & 23, 2006	33 rd Annual Golden Empire Round Up	Everyone	Rabobank Convention Center 1001 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield, CA
April 28 – 30, 2006	SoCalH&I Conference P. O. Box 2593 Seal Beach, CA 90740 714-926-9573	Everyone	Double Tree Hotel 100 The City Drive Orange, CA 92868 1-800-222-TREE
May 21, 2006	Area Assembly Hosted by Gold Coast	Everyone	Oxnard, CA
June 23, 24 & 25, 2006	2006 Pacific Regional Forum P. O. Box 459 New York, NY 10163 <i>pre-registration encouraged</i>	Everyone There is no registration fee	Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport 18740 International Blvd Seattle, WA 98188 206-246-8600
June 2006	Budget setting meeting	Area Officers, Committee & Subcommittee Chairs	TBD
July 16, 2006	Area Committee Meeting	Standing Committee & Subcomm. Chairs, DCMs, DCMCs, & Area Officers	5679 Hollister Ave. Goleta, CA 93117
Aug. 20, 2006	Area Assembly	Everyone	TBD
Oct. 15, 2006	Area Committee Meeting	Standing Committee & Subcomm. Chairs, DCMs, DCMCs, & Area Officers	5679 Hollister Ave. Goleta, CA 93117
Nov. 19 – 20, 2006	Area Assembly & Elections 56 th Panel	Everyone	TBD
Dec. 17, 2006	Area Committee Meeting	Standing Committee & Subcomm. Chairs, DCMs, DCMCs, & Area Officers	5679 Hollister Ave. Goleta, CA 93117
March 2, 3, & 4, 2007	PRAASA 2007 Hosted by Area 58 Rich B., Chairperson 541-474-6411	Everyone Chairperson email: richblake5378@charter.net	Red Lion Hotel on the Riber Jantzen Beach 909 N. Hayden Island Dr. Portland, OR 97217 1-800-733-5466

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Thank You

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