



# GRATITUDE GAZETTE

Volume 2021.12  
December 2021

[www.temeculacentraloffice.org](http://www.temeculacentraloffice.org)  
**951-677-1535**  
**24 Hour Hotline**

Temecula Valley Central Office  
41340 Pear Street, Ste. 1  
Murrieta, CA 92562

## New Years Eve Monte Carlo Night Postponed

By Anita W.—Dec. 2021

Once again the State of California has mandated the wearing of masks in all indoor venues throughout the state. The TVCO Board of Directors have discussed all options and determined that we can postpone this happy celebration until after the 15th of January which is the current date that this new mandate will expire. We appreciate that there are varying opinions about what the correct course of action should be and trust that our Higher Power is allowing this to happen for a good reason. We look forward to celebrating the future as a possible Valentines Day Event or Chinese New Year! We will take it "One Day at a Time".

## Are the holidays difficult for sober alcoholics?

By Sarah B. — November 2009

The holidays can be a triggering and challenging time for sober alcoholics, particularly for those in early sobriety. But why? There are a variety of reasons and this time of year can prove to be emotionally charged even for non-alcoholics. The holidays can be bittersweet, in that while they may bring joy and celebration, they can also be like putting "Miracle Grow" on family dysfunction and unhealthy dynamics. Therefore, if drinking alcohol was the way in which an alcoholic coped emotionally with holidays in past years- it can be a difficult transition when they get sober.

*(continued on page 3)*

### This Month in History

#### A.A.

1975 - "Birds of a Feather" AA group for pilots is formed

#### From our backyard...

1943 - Bill speaks to 300 at meeting inside San Quentin

#### Around the world...

1979 - Akron Beacon reports death of Henrietta Sieberling

Reference: [https://www.a-1associates.com/aa/HISTORY\\_PAGE/dates.htm](https://www.a-1associates.com/aa/HISTORY_PAGE/dates.htm)

**"The feeling of having shared in a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us."**

**— Anonymous**

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# Recovery



## Step 12

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

The 12 Steps are kind of like a recipe for a special cake, one that brings about a personality change sufficient to allow us alcoholics to recover from our alcoholism. When we’ve baked the delicious spiritual experience cake and arrived at step 12, it’s time for my favorite part: putting the icing on the cake!

The concept of “spiritual awakening” has many meanings. Keeping it simple, a spiritual awakening is really just a psychic change that, among other things, eliminates our obsession to drink. For some it can be quite a powerful and immediate experience, for others it is an ongoing co-current part of working the 12 steps.

The second part of the 12th step is about carrying the message of recovery to other people. We do this as “we keep what we have by giving it away.” When we work with others, our lives change. So, we don’t help another alcoholic because they’re sick—we help another alcoholic because we are sick. The 12 Steps are a program of attraction, not promotion. We lead by our own example, so talk to people when they are ready and when the time is right they’ll ask: “How can I get what you’ve got?” Keep your message for the person who’s dependent on alcohol to what it was like for you, the result of your steps, and that you have not gotten drunk.

When talking to a newcomer, let go of labels and referring to them as alcoholics. Truthfully tell your story and let other people decide if it rings true for them. Sometimes carrying the message can be as simple as making sure that there is a warm, caring, non-judgmental place for other alcoholics to come back to and a hand shake or hug that says “We’re here for you—come on in—and keep coming back!”

On a daily basis we have the opportunity to put into practice things that we are finally in possession of: a degree of honesty, tolerance, unselfishness, peace of mind, and love. Practicing the 12 steps in all our affairs, trusting a higher power, cleaning house, sharing our experience strength and hope, staying active in service one day at a time, for the rest of our life...is like eating cake, with icing, everyday.

## Tradition 12

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of the traditions, placing principles above personalities.”

The principle of anonymity has spiritual significance, allowing members the freedom to express their struggles and their completion of the steps.

Anonymity reminds members to focus on principles above personalities, and to practice genuine humility. Blessings cannot spoil members, nor can failures stop spiritual growth.



## Concept 12

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, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

## Virtue 12

### Service

A helpful act; contribution to the welfare of others; useful labor that does not produce a tangible commodity; the active and passive forms of love that keeps us alive, allowing God to use us.

## 12th Step Prayer

Dear God,

My spiritual awakening continues to unfold. The help I have received I shall pass on & give to others, both in & out of the Fellowship.

For this opportunity I am grateful. I pray most humbly to continue walking day by day on the road of spiritual progress. I pray for the inner strength & wisdom to practice the principles of this way of life in all I do & say.

I need You, my friends, & the program every hour of every day. This is a better way to live.

# Features



## The Holidays: Survival Guide for Sober Alcoholics

By Sarah B. — November 2009

For sober alcoholics who come from active alcoholic families, this time of year is generally rampant with heavy drinking that they may have been able to avoid the rest of the year. A sober family member can unintentionally hold a mirror up to their alcoholic family members and this can inevitably cause tension. The high-functioning alcoholic (HFA) in particular is able to keep many aspects of life intact. Therefore, relatives may not have realized the severity of his or her alcoholism and may minimize the problem or not understand why the HFAs need to be sober. Sober HFAs may be dodging drinks or surrounded by family members drinking socially or alcoholically and this inevitably can be a challenging dynamic to navigate.

The holidays are a time of socializing, work parties, excessive amounts of food, celebration and inevitably drinking. Being sober can often lead these individuals to feel left out or it may be a painful reminder them of the good ole' days. Throughout the rest of the year they may be surrounded socially by a sober community or are able to set limits and boundaries around how much time they spend in drinking situations, they may not be able to avoid these environments during this time of year. Many people compare their lives and families to others and to the depictions that they see in the media of the "perfect family". For those who are single, divorced, or having family problems, the holiday season holds a magnifying glass up to these situations, leading many to reflect negatively on their life. It is important to note that there is a higher chance of relapse during the holidays and sober alcoholics and their loved ones should be mindful of this.

Holiday events, work and social holiday parties are a constant reminder to the sober alcoholic that they have to live and socialize in a different manner than those who can drink in safety. There are holiday functions that require attendance and it is important to have strategies in place that can help to prevent relapse and to minimize triggers. Here is a holiday "survival guide" for the sober alcoholic:

- Have an escape plan; bring your own vehicle or figure out the available public transportation
- Ask another sober alcoholic to be "on call" for you to check in with during the event
- Let someone whom you trust at the holiday event know that you may need additional support
- Find a tasty non-alcoholic beverage you can drink that will give you something to hold and may prevent people from offering you an alcoholic drink
- Be choosy about the holiday events that you attend and avoid "people pleasing" by saying "yes" to events that you don't need to nor don't want to be at
- Take care of yourself prior to these events: get enough sleep, eat regularly, exercise, relax, etc.
- Find new holiday activities and traditions that do not involve drinking alcohol (volunteer at a soup kitchen, go ice skating, a sober get-together, etc.)
- Remember to create structure (volunteer, exercise, go to group meetings, therapy, etc.)
- Work extra hours if needed in order to distract yourself
- Learn to say "no" if you do not want to attend an event, put your sobriety first and realize that others may not understand what this entails
- Be honest with loved ones if you are having a hard time and let them know how to support you
- No matter how you are feeling, just don't drink!

# Features



## Principles are not Flexible

By Staff Writer Rick R. — November 2021

When I entered the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, I identified with just about everything I had read and heard, and I began to recognize where I went wrong up to that point. I realized that I had no direction in my life, no moral compass to speak of, and that the failure in my personal relationships manifested itself in low self-esteem (self-loathing). I felt inferior, unworthy, disrespected, isolated, unappreciated, disliked, etc. etc. I was going to have to depend on something outside of myself to govern my judgment and my decision-making. One of the first default positions I would take to surrender to these new realities was to concede to the fact that, as an alcoholic, my brain did not process information properly, and that I was going to have to trust in something more reliable.

Living by Principles, What a Concept! There are people who believe that if we all lived by one simple principle, we wouldn't need any other laws on this planet, and that principle is The Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. That simple statement gave me an understanding of how I could begin adopting a value system, based on principles, where I did not have to originate my own rules. While reading a book on economics, the author stated that "a man who lives by principles has 99% of his decisions already made for him". With that in mind, I began to establish a system of principles that are consistent with the AA program, and, I might add, with most of the other successful philosophies of life. I would read the St. Francis Prayer (12X12pg 99) daily. I attend a step study meeting weekly to reinforce these principles. I try to make sure that I am not modifying these standards to evade the tougher actions. I was complaining about another member of our group one day, to one of my mentors at that time, and he suggested that I try to place principles before personalities. I responded, yes, but I do not agree with his principles. He then said it was not his principles that we are talking about, but that it was my principles that needed to change. He then informed me that we cannot be se-

lective about who and when we apply these values. I must treat everyone with respect, and that goes for the smallest, innocent child to the most errant rogue that I might encounter.

I know that it seems like an impossible task, but I assure you that if you start with the child and work your way to the rogue, it will get easier, if you don't let your ego convince you otherwise. There are many suggestions in the Big Book and the 12X12 that have given me plenty of material to work with so that this does not have to become a crisis management project. It is more like a lifelong pruning of my unwanted, destructive behaviors. Here are a few of those suggestions: Restraint of tongue and pen, Drop the word blame from your thoughts and speech, Stop fighting everyone and everything. Cash-register honesty means I must be honesty with everyone, not just the person at the Cash-register, and so on. If we all had amnesia, we would all be pretty much the same. The only thing that makes us different is the things we carry around between our ears. It may be time to reprogram the mental software to default to the principles that have been proven to work so well for so many. No one could ever fault us for living by the principles that we learned in AA.

## Drying-Out Spots

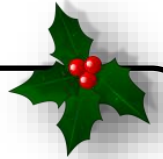
By Bob K.—July 2014

When he was so bad that he could not function, the new medical practitioner (Dr. Bob) put himself into one of the local "drying-out" spots. This happened at least a dozen times. In one small hospital for patients with socially unacceptable ailments, he sabotaged the sincere efforts of the staff by getting friends to smuggle in whiskey by the quart. If unavailable, he then stole medicinal alcohol.

*Part Two: Dr. Bob - Part Two (Akron-Style AA)  
| AA Agnostica*



# Business



## Central Office Serves the Valley

During the day, your Central Office keeps the doors open to assist recovering and suffering AA members alike and provide the following services:

- 24 Hour Hotline 951-677-1535
- Organizes 12 Step Calls
- Big Books & 12x12's
- Grapevine publications & other assorted literature
- Chips & Newcomer Packets
- [Meeting Schedules](#)
- Information for other Central Offices
- [Gratitude Gazette publication](#)

Your office manager organizes volunteers, makes sure the office is a healthy place for all, keeps your accounting data accurate, and safe guards your inventory. The office manager and volunteers are there to support the groups and the individual members of our fellowship throughout the valley.



Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, volunteers take calls from suffering alcoholics and organize 12 step calls. The phone line and special call-forwarding are paid for by your central office contributions.

Please ask at your next business meeting if you are contributing monthly to your Central Office. Contributions goes to pay for the convenient services above you receive. If your group has stopped contributing (or never started), please bring it up at your next business meeting and take a group conscious.

Let us know when and how we can help. - *Your Central Office Team*

## Service Opportunities

### Central Office Volunteers Needed

Great response last month to fill the open slots. The shifts may be filled but starting an opportunity list! 4 hours, 2, hours, 1 hour, however you can help with your time in the future.

### 12 Step Calls

Add your name to the 12 Step Call list for male & female. Spanish speaking volunteers also needed.

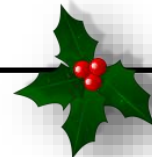
Please contact Ken for more info 951-677-1535.

## Volunteers

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| 1. Dennis | 2. Shawna  |
| 3. Sandy  | 4. Sarri   |
| 5. Jim    | 6. Tara    |
| 7. Travis | 8. Tony    |
| 9. Anita  | 10. Debbie |
| 11.       | 12.        |
| 13.       | 14.        |

**...and YOU!**

# Business



## Central Office Activity

Phone Calls: 720



Walk-Ins: 155



Purchases: 155



Website Visits: 7227



Active Intergroups: 26



### November 2021 Group Donations

Tem Del Rio Survivors \$1,200.00

Unity Hall \$750.00

Tues 12x12 Serenity Circle  
\$390.00

TVCO Intergroup \$253.45

Step Sisters Wed 645 \$222.00

Wed Mens Stag Date Street  
\$220.00

Came to believe at the Park  
\$200.00

Early Risers \$200.00

Miracle Group \$170.00

Salvation Army Solutions  
\$100.00

Robbers Roost \$85.86

We're over it \$75.00

Good dudes \$65.00

Just Us Girls 2 \$50.00

The Meeting Place \$40.00

**\$4,021.31**

Committee Meetings	Day of the month	Location (moved on line)
H&I Committee Meeting	1st Monday Call Jacob 951-837-7780	Temecula Valley Alano Club 27470 Commerce Center Dr. Temecula, CA 92590
TVCO Board Meeting	1st Tuesday 6:30pm	Central Office 41340 Pear Street Suite 1 Murrieta, CA 92562
Mid So-Cal Area Meeting	2nd Sunday 9:30am	See the MSCA website <a href="http://msca09aa.org/">http://msca09aa.org/</a>
District 17 GSR Meeting	2nd Tues 6:30pm	Springs Church- <b>Park in Rear</b> 41735 Winchester Rd #D Temecula, CA 92590
Intergroup Meeting	3rd Tuesday 6:45pm	Springs Church- <b>Park in Rear</b> 41735 Winchester Rd #D Temecula, CA 92590
TVYPAA	Text Message 951-397-1046	Temecula Valley Alano Club 27470 Commerce Center Dr # C, Temecula, CA 92590

Financial Reports, Agendas,  
Meeting Minutes

# FREE

**Do you need a report for  
your groups business  
meeting?**

Contact the TVCO Board  
Secretary at:  
[secretarytvco@gmail.com](mailto:secretarytvco@gmail.com)

**BUCK A MONTH CLUB**



Inquire with your Intergroup Rep  
or follow  
<http://ssl.temeculacentraloffice.org/>

**Comments, suggestions about the Gratitude  
Gazette?**

Please email the editor at: [temeculaaa@verizon.net](mailto:temeculaaa@verizon.net)  
[gazette@temeculacentraloffice.org](mailto:gazette@temeculacentraloffice.org)

# Members



## A Life of Joy and Happiness

I Reap More Than My Share

By Rick R., Dec. 2021

Understanding is the key to right principles and attitudes, and right action is the key to good living; therefore, the joy of good living is the theme of A.A.'s Twelfth Step. (12&12 pg. 125) How appropriate it seems that there are twelve months in a year, and we have twelve steps in the program. The joy of good living is the theme, and it blends right in with Thanksgiving in November, and all the religious holidays in December, and is topped off with the New Year's Eve celebration. The Holiday season does bring a lot of joy to most of us, but it also brings distress to some of the less fortunate ones who have not yet been blessed with the gift of sobriety and peace of mind, in and outside of Alcoholics Anonymous. (A.A.)

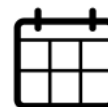
I used to be uncomfortable about the holidays as I never knew how to act around normal people. I felt like a charity case and never got into the spirit of reaching out to others. My family always celebrated Christmas, and I always (due to My discomfort) would put a damper on it by complaining about the tacky gifts that people would buy for each other and the mad rush to go shopping and all the commer-

cializing it had become. I explained this to a dear friend once, and he asked, "*Does the rest of the family enjoy it?*" I said yes. He then said, "*why don't you just take a back seat and watch the joy in their eyes as they experience these things?*" I did that exact thing and have been doing it ever since and it has changed my appreciation of this time of year.

This change of attitude has inspired me to apply the unselfish lessons that I have come to understand, and *I spend the holiday season looking for the opportunity to brighten the lives of those less fortunate than myself. I often do these things anonymously and without fanfare.* I also consider how I used to feel when I was the one on the receiving end of a charitable gesture and am very careful to do these things in a way that *preserves their dignity.* I do not have to wait for the holidays to do these things. *Every day is Christmas at my home.* More recently I started to contemplate the difference between Joy and Happiness as I always thought that they were synonymous, and they are in some respects, but they do have some different qualities. I am a happy person as the result of being very diligent when it comes to working

the steps of the program and practicing the principles in all my affairs. I am not without the little inconveniences and irritations that come with my day to day living activities, but they are nowhere near the problems I encountered prior to becoming a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. They do not lower my level of happiness because I simply take them as they come. Over a period, as I mature in this journey, my *mean* level of happiness continues to rise, and I am generally very happy as the result. When I look at the word Joy, I do not feel that I am in a constant state of Joy, but I do have many little things that happen on a day-to-day basis that rise above my state of happiness, and they sometimes bring tears to my eyes. We all can identify with the term "tears of joy." Even unhappy people can have tears of joy occasionally. I was introduced to the principle that "happiness is a byproduct of right living and not an end in itself" I have been living by that principle ever since *and you can believe me when I tell you that I reap more than my share of joy.*

## Events



Many upcoming events have been cancelled, postponed and moved online due to the restrictions in place to combat the spread of COVID-19.

Please call the host before traveling and check the TVCO Events

<http://www.temeculacentraloffice.org/aa-events/>

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**New Year's Eve/Monte Carlo Night**  
**POSTPONED** – More details soon!

<http://www.temeculacentraloffice.org/aa-events/>



# Safety



## SAFETY FOR THE NEWCOMER

We *ALL deserve RESPECT* and the right to get sober in a healthy empowered environment.

Everyone regardless of race, color, gender, age, religion, creed, disability, and sexual orientation, all deserve a chance to get sober **without harassment of any kind.**

Like one old timer in Hawaii used to say “ the good, the bad, and the ugly are in meetings just like on the street.”

### BE AWARE

Trust is earned.

If someone makes you uncomfortable in any way, tell the secretary and a friend and do not give them your contact information.

A sponsor guides you through the steps and shares their experience as to how they have stayed sober.

### FOR PARENTS AND MINORS

Minors should not take rides from members of the opposite sex.

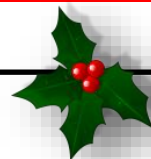
There should always be another person with them, with one being of the same sex and age as the minor.

Minors should not go alone to the house of an older sober member to do step work until trustworthiness is established. It is safer to do this work in a public area like a coffee shop.

*This literature is part of “**Make meetings safer**”. A grass roots movement in Southern California. Started by a group of concerned group members.*

*Each Group is autonomous and every group can write their own literature.*

# Leisure



## See You in the Funny Papers



"YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE PICTURES, YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE WHISTDRNE — WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?"



"I think my mistake was making Carrot Top my higer power."



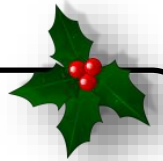
"You give him unrealistic expectations. I'll start working on tearing his ego apart."

## Laughter is the Best Medicine ... Really

<https://www1.cbn.com/laughter-best-medicine-really>



# Leisure



## Word Search of the Month

QFRNZRNOUEJBQESHJZEDYJOSH  
GIKRVDCGMJXNRADZKJDVYFBOB  
BTSAORVYKGVNOSPONSORDVSB  
UBQNTESHGVCNNXGRAPEVINERI  
JDHOEYAPVLALEYKTBIGBOOKII  
SZYNZPECHNMCKDAVNGYWSRXEJ  
ZVMYDFKSCDGYHOMEGROUPLMTJ  
AQXMOOZBEEMMWQNUAHFCVBTYC  
LLRODMNLFPRYS DHWMECTFSRJV  
SIFUCVGTVEITRLJTJWEADED  
DCBSSNUASUCNABKMGPCOERQEJ  
RKTGSURDPCZVINPDQJDPFVGLM  
PROMISESOVWEWTCFXLZIEIGYM  
LMKFXXVPKNOIUTSYEPBOFCXIQ  
PYRKMKXTSVNLHVOGNWXPTEHNY  
SYYSXCXZHEPDSPAUMUBKMSHTJN  
GPRXLHSEFEKJDNINVENTORYUC  
KEVIZXAEAWRCWYWZKREYOEDCQ  
GBZQFMLDBHCZPBBECOCSLIAXS  
RAPBZWZTLNEWCOMERFODFZNP  
YSOFELLOWSHIPKQVGGNSTMYBP  
IXKERKPEWCPTXXXFORIIBPAA  
QAZTGUYVCXMRUSHVSRMMQKWV  
EPJMLOXHZPIHIONGUFNEMGUD  
ZHJPQVAUBBIYNWZYOCOXRGGTH

Acceptance	Fellowship	Inventory	Anonymous
Grapevine	HomeGroup	Newcomer	Serenity
Sobriety	OldTimer	Promises	Defects
Sponsor	Service	BigBook	Sponsee
HALT			

## Classifieds

### Intergroup Board commitments available

Vote on Dec. 21, 2021

Does your meeting have a General Service Representative? This person keeps your meeting in the loop to make changes to Alcoholics at the world wide level. Contact District 17 or [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) for more information.

### Answer key for November

KEIGLZEIPREFCONTACTCPAQEEJ  
TFHQSPRITUAIAAAVKTNDYFQX  
DJHEUJHLSQKINDNESSBOOKWP  
CBBUOORAZHMGLORTIUOIRJARX  
RRCLDYMHTQAEWOWCGHMJCOCDL  
FVTFRGEQMZVCNDSZVHPWITSBM  
RWUWLMDRXPFAMLQHOCVWXBRTX  
BWHXNZIPUACKNOWLEDGEMENTZ  
XYIRWNTLTGXIHQHEOMAXXFJIG  
RVSFMTAKRERUYCVFWVZDHWKRM  
WSWZLNTPKYCACIKORUIRIEJCU  
OGIJRNIDZCFSLOSBBGZJYNRMU  
JQLQIVOSFUJLNFENRPIFRMBZGH  
WSUQKBWASGMOBPHMSSLBDHTAZQ  
HZGZUKAIVEPBHAOFECQZONYKHQ  
HFQXLTHANKSGIVINGIODVXTEG  
ODWZVVRUKCARXJLQQAOPKHTMX  
UVOANKCJXCXCSUSWSREUTEOPH  
NYMSXRXRQFLERIKLTWRGSKCDA  
GDISOHEVJLRSZSSFIFFESSAQAB  
ALYHNLXOOPTGBDGUIDANCEOLD  
ZOPGKPRAYERZGXPZNMOLUARVB  
SJVVLVTSIAFOWTWVFOLEXAYSD  
DRWGRATEFFUINESSMIAEWGSNFF  
AMDYNMQPGQDOKKOTYZFVVCRAA

## 7th Tradition Donations



Several ways to support Central Office while keeping with the 'Stay at home order'.

Venmo is a mobile payment service:  
Search for @TVCOAA

Or on the TVCO website:  
<https://ssl.temeculacentraloffice.org/>