



## Temecula Valley Central Office

# Gratitude Gazette

*Carrying the message throughout our valley*

951-695-1535 Hotline 24 hours

**November 2018**

## Believe In The Process

~Crystal B, Meniffee

Alcoholics Anonymous

### Responsibility Pledge

I am responsible whenever  
anyone, anywhere, reaches  
out for help, I want the hand  
of AA always to be there, and  
for that I am responsible

*Declaration of 30th  
Anniversary International Conven-  
tion, 1965*

### Inside this issue:

Feature Article	1
Member Submissions	3
History of Gratitude Month	4
Service Meeting Schedule	5
Upcoming Events & News	5
AA's Legacy of Service	7
Group Contributions	8

**T**his month's member feature comes from James J. of Mur-

rieta. I had the distinct honor to sit down with him and his wife, Danielle, to talk about his story and how his gratitude has evolved throughout his time in sobriety.

James was one of the first people I could "hear" when I got sober. He always has a kind word for me, an inspiring or creative idea, or a word of encouragement. When I see him interact with others, or hear him share, it has always been from a place of joy and gratitude. Even through the thick and heavy that is the journey of life, James has a smile and exudes hope to those around him. He is a great example of humility, surrender and joy. I've wondered what his experience has been through his journey and growth of gratitude, so I invited him to tell me how he does it.

We talked for quite a long time about our journeys and how similar our stories were and even how similar our sober lives are now. James repeatedly told me that learning to be grateful was a process taught to him by his sponsor, the fellowship, by service work with H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) and by being a sponsor himself. There is no greater joy than sharing with others a solution that works under all conditions.

*(continued)*

He told me the story of his last suicide attempt. Before he stepped off that chair, he made one last petition to his Higher Power, as so many of us have done, "God, if you are real ... like, I know you're not... I'm ready to check out." He stepped off the chair into what I can imagine was silence full of swirling thought and anguish. An eternity of regret and hopelessness consuming him second by second as the darkness came like a welcomed night's sleep. Danielle, his wife, arrived in the nick of time and while she was breaking him free from the ropes that bound his throat, he was still mentally present. He could hear the commotion. He could hear everything she was saying. He even heard himself gasping for air. "The old James died that day." That was the beginning of the spiritual awakening.

He had been granted the opportunity to make a new beginning in one swift and easy movement of God's hand. "I was not grateful at first! Everything sucked! I had to learn how to be grateful." The first flashes of gratitude came little by little. He explained how he had to practice little things

daily to feel even a little grateful. He called his sponsor every day and wrote gratitude lists that helped him understand that it's almost always the little things that pile up over time that deliver tremendous gratitude. Having a nice meal, family, friends, the ability to accept and return love and the ability to stay sober are gifts that bring deep gratitude.

Like so many others, James didn't work for quite some time and when he was finally feeling the financial pinch, Rick H. offered him a small job working on his property. James explained how he felt that he had been restored to usefulness! He felt honored that Rick trusted him

enough and wanted him around to help. He felt welcomed and like he belonged. He said he was grateful that someone believed in him. Rick believing in him, helped James believe in himself. It was at this point that he mentioned he realized he had become not only grateful for sober opportunities, but that he had also become hopeful for the first time about a sober future.

Another way he learned gratitude and

sponsor for help. I was stranded out on the Domenigoni. I was feeling hopeless and frustrated. I asked my Higher Power for a sign and not long after, I was surrounded by a herd of sheep on the side of the road. I couldn't believe it! It was a sign just for me that I was not alone." James was suddenly overwhelmed with gratitude and so began this feeling in his heart that he was going to be ok! "When I am in faith, I find that I am also grateful." There

are signs everywhere from our Higher Power that invites us to have faith, believe and be grateful!

After James ended his relationship with the rope and chair, there were medical conditions that needed tending to. Out of the blue one day, the doctor told him that he needed spiritual help. It seemed as if it was just a random side note! Shortly after that conversation, James soon came to discover that Danielle had been secretly attending church. To solidify the signs even more, the pastor confided in her about his own son's passing as a result of suicide



faith was through adversity in early sobriety. "I drove a crappy car that was always running out of gas. Everywhere I went, I ran out of gas! I had to constantly call others for help ... because I ran out of gas!" We had a good laugh at how animated this part of his story became! "Hi again, yes yes.... I ran out of gas... again." This experience taught him about trusting the fellowship. Trusting the fellowship brought him to believe in others. Believing in others equates to having faith in them. Not only had his gratitude grown, but along with it, his faith had also naturally sprung back to life! "The last time I ran out of gas, I was forced to call my

without knowing what Danielle and James had recently been through. Here were these two beautiful people, married and in love for a long time and yet in a significant amount of pain. They were on two different roads being driven to one specific place where they could meet on a spiritual level and find healing together. James said that he started going to church and for the first time, he could really hear the message that was meant for him. He could feel it and it was powerful!

*(continued)*

James explained that his gratitude became real once he started sponsoring others. He explained that much of his growth is a direct result of carrying the message and teaching others what was taught to him.

“To see newcomers grow and flourish in a life some of them never knew they wanted is amazing. To see their perception change, to see them be able to identify themselves, to see them enjoying life and when they see for themselves that the possibilities are endless with sobriety! I’m especially grateful when I meet someone and think “this one’s never going to make it” but they do!”

“If I could share one thing with the newcomer, it would be to believe in the process, read page 417, do the work and practice being grateful. And don’t drink, even if you want to!”

A very special thanks to James & Danielle! You paid me a very meaningful 12-step call and I am ever grateful to know you both. To hear your stories and to relate to both of you so deeply has blessed me with hope for my own future. In the end, that is exactly what it is all about. We just don’t drink, no matter what and we are grateful the next day to be sober yet again.



## **Step 11**

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for the knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out.

## **Tradition 11** **Long Form**

Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

## **Concept 11**

While the trustees hold final responsibility for A.A.’s world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Therefore, the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.

# Traveling and Finding Meetings

~Susie D., Hemet, CA

I have traveled many places in AA and love to go to out of town meetings. Once, in Venice, Italy, we went to meeting in a convent. We had searched up and down the canals of Venice looking for it! When we finally found it, a nun that didn't speak English, motioned for us to sit in a room and wait.

Here we sat with beautiful paintings of priests all gazing down on us at this big table until the two English speaking ladies from AA came. They were so grateful to see all of us. There were about 10 in our group here at the meeting. We were outside in the courtyard having the meet-

ing when every church (about 200 in Venice) started ringing their bells! It was amazing!

Another time, in Amsterdam, we went to meeting in an interesting house. The house had a small and steep stairway. It was on a canal and we drank out of ceramic coffee cups in addition to doing a 20-minute meditation.

In Australia, we were a group of about 18 and when they asked for visitors, we all chimed in with our locations all over USA. They were amazed. Our travel guide was asked to be the speaker at that meeting.

Any time I go anywhere, I seek out meetings! I love to see how others do it and it always feels like home. We all share a common bond and that makes us family no matter where we go or what language we speak. Where else in the world can you feel that way?



## Getting Grateful

~Suzanne B., Murrieta

I know gratitude lists are a favorite in AA and other programs, but I don't often find it helps me to feel grateful to hear people recite their lists, especially when I don't feel grateful myself. Because if I'm not in gratitude, what I really need to hear is how to get there.

So how do I get to grateful? I do make a list: but it's a list of ways to find the gratitude I need.

▪Go to a meeting: especially a detox or prison meeting.

Even a meeting at a hospital makes me glad I'm only there for a meeting! When I hear someone struggling to get sober or stay sober, it reminds me, even in my darkest moments, that I have everything. Sobriety may bring a lot of gifts, but the biggest one is sobriety itself.

▪Go for a walk: I always see someone who doesn't have this gift, or a lot of other gifts I am so fortunate to have. Someone who's homeless. Someone who

can't walk or see. There is always someone reminding me I really have no reason to feel sorry for myself.

▪Talk to someone. Listening to a newcomer - or anyone facing challenges - reminds me that whatever troubles I think I have, someone is facing more with less: less time in AA, fewer resources, not as much support.

It works for me!





# The History of Gratitude Month

Reprinted from "Box 459" VOL. 46, No. 5/October-November 2000

[https://www.aa.org/newsletters/en\\_US/en\\_box459\\_oct-nov00.pdf](https://www.aa.org/newsletters/en_US/en_box459_oct-nov00.pdf)

## Gratitude Month

### Our Chance to Say, 'Thank You!'

"The idea is in the air that AA might adopt Thanksgiving week as a time for meetings and meditation on the Traditions," AA co-founder Bill W. wrote in the November 1949 issue of the Grapevine (The Language of the Heart, p. 95) shortly after publication of the Twelve Traditions. In fact, the idea had already taken hold earlier in the decade when, each fall, the General Service Board hosted small Gratitude Dinners-precursors of the larger, more elaborate Gratitude Luncheons that would be held during the '60s as an initiative of the trustees' Public Information Committee.

The first official recognition of an A.A. Gratitude Week, spe-

cifically designed to coincide with Thanksgiving week in the U.S. (Canada celebrates in October), occurred in 1956, when the Sixth General Service Conference approved the motion, stipulating that "this action be noted in the annual pre-Thanksgiving appeals to the groups for funds to help support A.A.'s worldwide services." Three years later, Bill urged in a letter, "Gratitude should go forward, rather than backward ... if you carry the message to still others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given to you." (As Bill Sees It, p. 29).

The motivation behind AA's Gratitude Luncheons was threefold: to express personal gratefulness for the gift of sobriety; to carry the message of AA to other alcoholics; and to express appreciation to our

professional friends for their numerous articles, books and radio and TV interviews relating to AA in the year just past. It was hoped, in the words of a General Service Office memo circulated at the time, that the luncheons would "advance A.A.'s public relations by bringing editors, publishers, writers and broadcasters in personal contact with sources of reliable information on the movement."

Held without fail in November at New York City's Roosevelt Hotel, the luncheons were always well-attended. A typical list of invitees to the 1965 luncheon included representatives of The New York Times, McCall's Magazine, Medical World News and The Christian Science Monitor. Bill W. always addressed the gatherings, as did the late "Dr. Jack" Norris, then serving as AA's Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee chairman. A discussion period followed the proceedings, an ample selection of AA literature was available for the taking, and in 1965 Bill sent an autographed copy of A.A. Comes of Age to every guest.

The luncheons were discontinued in 1968, but the concept of gratitude persisted and expanded in scope. For decades now, A.A.s in the U.S. have set aside all of November as Gratitude Month-marking the occasion with special contributions to G.S.O. In the spirit of the

Seventh Tradition AA is self-supporting through its members' contributions, and frequently turns away money from well-meaning outside contributors. This means that the active input of every AA is vital to the life of the Fellowship.

Grateful for the sobriety they've been given and eager to pass it on, AA's are busier than ever in Twelfth Stepping and service. They are reaching out in greater numbers to Loners, people with special needs, members of minority groups and previously unreached alcoholics. It is clear from their sharing that an overwhelming number of A.A.s-along with many of our professional friends-find their own special ways to say thank you during Gratitude Month and, indeed, all year long. Writes one member: "Enclosed is a check for Gratitude Month, because I want AA to be there for all those who need it, just as I did." From another: "The enclosed check is from my own pocket, to help groups in correctional facilities like mine. Some of us are struggling to turn our lives around. We begin the process in here ourselves, and by reaching out."

*(continued)*

**WE NEED YOU!!**



**Gratitude Gazette**

Central Office

28636 Old Town Front St,  
Ste 106  
Temecula, CA 92590

**951-695-1535**

**Now accepting your submissions!**

Submit your original:

- Articles on the Steps, Traditions, Concepts, Service, or other recovery related material
- Photos, Jokes, Art,
- Poems

**Please email submissions to:**

**Temeculaaa@verizon.net**

And a nonalcoholic missionary wrote from India, "It is a matter of great encouragement and satisfaction that your AA has been a rich resource of guidance, help and light for a number of organizations dealing with problems related to alcohol. ... "

Besides observing Gratitude Month, many a member uses the AA Birthday Plan "to give back what's been given to me," as one wrote. And from another grateful A.A: "I want to say thanks today for my life and my family's--for all of us alcoholics in recovery," he wrote. "Enclosed is an anniversary check, because I want the hand of A.A. to be there for all who need it." Like him, many members celebrate their A.A. birthdays by sending in a gratitude gift to G.S.O.-usually a dollar or two for each year of sobriety.

of great encouragement and satisfaction that your AA has been a rich resource of guidance, help and light for a number of organizations dealing with problems related to alcohol. ... "

Besides observing Gratitude Month, many a member uses the AA Birthday Plan "to give back what's been given to me," as one wrote. And from another grateful A.A: "I want to say thanks today for my life and my family's--for all of us alcoholics in recovery," he wrote. "Enclosed is an anniversary check, because I want the hand of A.A. to be there for all who need it." Like him, many members celebrate their A.A. birthdays by sending in a gratitude gift to G.S.O.-usually a dollar or two for each year of sobriety.

Some groups follow this Birthday Plan by collecting contributions from members on a voluntary basis throughout the year, or until the number of dollars matches the members' total years of sobriety. On the group's anniversary, the money collected is sent to G.S.O. as a birthday contribution.

Gratitude. It's a weighty, high-dignity word, but in truth its close companions are humor and joy. As Bill W. observed early in the Big Book (p. 132), "Outsiders are sometimes shocked when we burst into merriment over a seemingly tragic experience out of the past. But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered and have been given the power to help others." What greater cause could there be for rejoicing than this?

## Service Meetings



H&I Committee Meeting	1st Monday 7:30 pm	Temecula Valley Alano Club 27470 Commerce Center Dr. Temecula, CA 92590
TVCO Board Meeting	1st Tuesday 6:30pm	Central Office 28636 Old Town Front St #106, Temecula, CA 92590
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 Visitors Welcome!	Springs Church 41735 Winchester Rd #C Temecula, CA 92590
Intergroup Meeting	3rd Tuesday 6:45pm	United Methodist Church, Murrieta 24652 Adams (At Kalmia & Adams)

**Q: Why did the accountant do so well in AA?**

**A: He was already a friend of bills.**

**Q: Why aren't people in recovery good dancers?**

**A: They lose interest after twelve steps.**

# Upcoming Events & Office News

## Mark Your Calendar!

- ⇒ Saturday, 11/10/18 "Sponsorship, A Work In Progress" sponsorship workshop. 1pm-4:30p  
Garden Grove Alano Club  
9845 Belfast Dr.  
Garden Grove, CA 92844.
- ⇒ Thanksgiving Alkathon, Unity Hall 7am-11:59pm  
Thanksgiving day. Dinner will be served at 4pm.  
Bring a dish to share!

## Service Opportunities

- ⇒ Central Office Volunteer. Shifts open M-F 10am-12:30pm, 12:30pm-3pm, or 3pm-5:30pm  
Sat shift is 9am-12pm
- ⇒ 12 Step calls—Ken is currently putting together a list of people available for 12 step calls
- ⇒ Intergroup Outreach Committee  
meets the 4th Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm at Central Office.

## Hotline Schedule

### Week 1

Mon: Just Us Girls  
Tues: Tues 10am Women's 12x12 Murrieta  
Wed: Frank P  
Thurs: Thurs Women's 10am-Lyndie Lane, Temecula  
Fri: 101 Meeting Starters Temecula  
Sa/Sun: Liberty Bells, Lake Elsinore

### Week 2

Mon: Saturday Early Risers, Temecula  
Tues: Unity Hall 7am, Sun City  
Wed: The Funks  
Thurs: Frank P  
Fri: Erica  
Sa/Sun: Mosh Pit

### Week 3

Mon: JUGS 2, Temecula  
Tues: JUGS 2, Temecula  
Wed: Grass Roots, Menifee  
Thurs: Bert  
Fri: Back To Basics, Sun City  
Sa/Sun: JUGS2, Temecula

### Week 4

Mon: Sunday 7am Attitude Adjustment, Lake Elsinore  
Tues: Searching Party  
Wed: Linda D.  
Thurs: Step Sisters Pechanga Wed night  
Fri: Women's Candlelight Thursday, Temecula  
Sa/Sun: Wild Ones, Wildomar

## August Office Activity

Phoned in: 235  
Walked in: 200  
AA Mtg requests: 200  
Al-Anon Alateen requests: 30  
Donations/Purchases: 205  
Misc: 35  
Website Activity: 3770

## Volunteers

1. Bert
2. Mark F.
3. Kelli
4. Diane S.
5. Dee Dee
6. Janice M.
7. Maricella
8. Chris
9. Your Name Here



## How Central Office Serves

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

- ⇒ We provide the Big Book & the 12x12
- ⇒ Grapevine Publications & Other Assorted Literature
- ⇒ Chips & Newcomer Packets.
- ⇒ Meeting Schedules
- ⇒ Information for other Central Offices

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 is there to support the groups and the individual members of our fellowship.

We make and distribute your meeting schedules and we publish the Gratitude Gazette. 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. Being self-supporting means not only paying for your rent and coffee, but also paying for the services you receive through Central Office.

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

# A.A.'s Legacy of Service

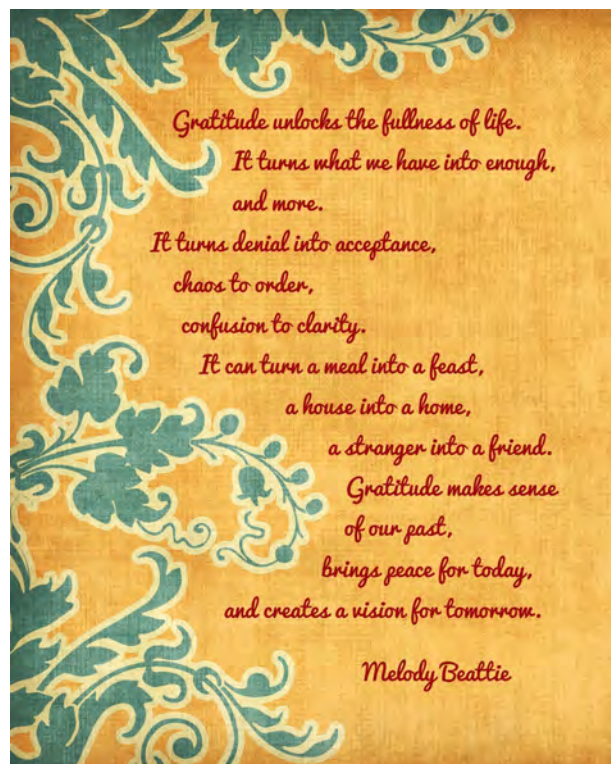
By BILL W. as printed in the pamphlet P-44

Our Twelfth Step—carrying the message—is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer—ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service.

Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship.

"In order to keep it, you must give it away"





# Group Contributions

*For November 2018*

Tem. Del Rio Survivors	\$1,200.00	Murrieta TVCO Intergroup	\$55.00
Tem. Serenity Circle, Mon-Sat 7am	\$1,000.00	SC Living the 12 Traditions Mon 7pm	\$50.00
Unity Hall Umbrella	\$750.00	Wildomar IVH Fri 7pm Step Study	\$50.00
Murrieta ABSI Mon-Sat 7am Group	\$198.42	Tem. Pechanga Sr. Ctr Step Sisters 7pm Wed	\$35.00
Unity Hall Sat. Freeway Flyer/ Birthday Meeting	\$180.00	Liberty Bells	\$25.00
Tem. Hill Recovery 8am Early Risers	\$168.00	LE The Meeting Place Early Birds 7am	\$20.00
Meniffee Grass Roots Sunday 9am	\$101.05	LE The Meeting Place Attitude Mod. Sun 7am	\$20.00
Tem. Del Rio Survivors #2	\$100.00	Tem. Pechanga Sr. Ctr Mon Madness Mon 6pm	\$20.00
Winchester Outlaws 6pm Sunday	\$83.30	LE The Meeting Place Attitude Mod. Sun 7am #2	\$5.00
Tem. Recovery Road Crew	\$67.00		

A word of thanks goes out to all of you who donate your time, your money, your resources and yourself.

When you give of yourself, you get out of yourself. None of us would be here without the willingness and gifts from each other.

*Thank you for all you do!*

## hope

/hōp/



*Noun*

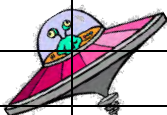
1. a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen.
2. a feeling of trust

Synonyms: expect, anticipate, look for

## Is Your Group Active?

Below is a list of active & inactive groups with Central Office.

[illegible]

29	Tem Just us Girls TUMC	CHRISTINE		Active	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X		
30	Tem sisters in sobriety wed 4:45	MICHELLE		Not Active			X	X	X	X	X	A	A	A			
31	Temecula Monday Night Men	CODY		Not Active	A	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	A	A			
32	Tem Del Rio Wed Wmn Prim Pur	CARRIE		Active							X	X	X	X			
33	Tem Del Rio Veterans Mtg Wed	JULIE		Not Active							X	A	A	A			
34	Tem Del Rio Tuesday 12 noon	PETER		Active							X	X	X	X			
35	Tem Del Rio Thursday 12 noon	JULIE		Active							X	X	A	A			
36	Tem Pechanga step sisters wed nite	KELLEY		Active	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
37	Tem Sunday Serenity Hour 6pm	GLENN	BRAN-DON	Active	X	X	X	X	A	A	X	A	X	X			
38	Tem World Famous Speaker	GERI		Not Active	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	A	A			
39	Tem Wed Breakfast club	CAT P		Active			X	X	A	X	X	X	X	X			
40	Wildomar Grape St Friday 12X12	JIM		Active	X	X	X	X	A	A	X	X	A	X			
41	Wildomar Pigs on Sunday at Grape	TRAVIS		Active	X	A	A	X	X	X	X	A	A	X			
42	Wildomar Wild Ones at Grape	KIM		Active	X	X	A	A	X	X	X	X	X	X			
43	Tem Del Rio Tues 830 candle-light	JOHNNY		Active								X	X	X			
44	Tem Del Rio Sun young alcoholics	CRYSTAL		Active								X	X	X			
45	Serenity Fri 10am womens BB	MISSY		Active								X	A	X			
46	Tem Del Rio Survivors	FITZ		Active							X	X	X	A			
47	Tem Recovery Road Crew	TODD		Active									X	X			
				45 Active Meetings													
		53		69 Registerd IG Meetings													
				283 Meetings in the schedule													

## Don't Stay Alienated!

If your group is not represented at our Intergroup meetings, your meeting is disconnected from the Valley as a whole. Please contact the Central Office for more information on how to get connected!



**"My drinking has me feeling a little alienated."**

—Stephen S., Exeter, N.H

Reprinted from the AA Grapevine, January 2014