



Intergroup NEWSLETTER

Santa Clara Valley Al-Anon Family Group
<http://www.ncwsa.org/scvafg>

December 2010

Happy Holidays

SCVAFG Intergroup carries the message in a variety of ways, and could use your help!

**Service Positions
Open for 2011**

Chairperson
Alt Chairperson
Directories
Facilities
Literature
Newsletter

Public Information
Special Event

More information on page 3.

Don't Forget!!!

District 20 Speaker Meetings

These meetings take place at 7:30 p.m. on the 4th Friday of even-numbered months.

NO meeting in December

Immanuel Lutheran Church
14103 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga, CA



Have You Visited Our Bookstore?

Have you ever wondered what the top selling books are at the bookstore? The top four are Pathways to Recovery, Courage to Change, How Al-Anon works, and One Day at a Time. I've been the literature coordinator for the past year and facilities coordinator for 2 years before that. I have also been a bookseller for the past 5 years. In my time at the bookstore I have come to be quite familiar with the Al-Anon literature.



The bookstore is very important for the Santa Clara Valley Intergroup. The profits from the sales of the books help form the budget which helps fund the many services which Intergroup provides. Some of the profits help public outreach, hospitals and institutions. I've been working with the teens in Juvenile Hall for the past few months. They ask for literature to read every time I come to visit. They can only have soft cover books so I bring Hope for Today, Courage to be Me, and Alateen Hope for Children of Alcoholics.

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There are two books that have helped me the most in my recovery. The fourth step inventory workbook and Healing Our Hearts, Transforming Our Loses. The fourth step workbook dug deep into my character defects. I was able to get to the root of the majority of my problems. Fear and Trust were at the top of the list. The workbook gave me great journaling questions that led to further discussions with both my sponsor and sponsee.

For me there were 3 parts to the Healing Our Hearts, Transforming Our Loses: grief, guilt, and moving forward. This book helped me the most after the death of

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Intergroup Newsletter Email Distribution List

The email distribution list we have for receiving the Intergroup Newsletter is growing very fast. This list has been in place for almost 3 years. If you have not received a copy of the Newsletter, note it on the sign-up sheet. Your name and email will be forwarded to the person in charge of the file for distribution.



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my husband. You don't necessarily need to go through a death in order for the book to help you in recovery. There are many types of losses in our lives; divorce, loss of our childhood, or loss of communication with a friend or loved one. We all have hopes, dreams, and plans for our future. One of the devastating effects of living with alcoholism is that our dreams for the future, for the lives we thought we would have, go unfulfilled. (pg 41) We can take comfort in knowing that our grief means we're truly dealing with our loss and not denying it. (pg 8) The most important idea I got from the book was that moving forward is not about abandoning our loved one, but rather it is about not abandoning ourselves.



Next year I will be the Alateen Coordinator, so I am looking for someone who is willing to take on this very important roll of Literature Coordinator. It takes me about 2 hours a month to do the job. I go in twice a month to order books, unpack the books that have arrived, and input the information into the computer. It is a behind the scenes job, but one of the most important. Having literature available for group purchases and special events are vital to Al-Anon's presence in the Santa Clara Valley. (Please see Book-stores hours on page 4.)

–Anne C., Literature Coordinator

Today's Reminder...

I'm grateful for the Al-Anon program and all that my Higher Power has given me.

I look forward to an even brighter new year.

"I'm learning to treat myself as if I am valuable. I find that when I practice long enough, I begin to believe it."

...In All Our Affairs

Intergroup Special Event...A Success!



Intergroup's Special Event on October 23, 2010 at Christ the Good Shepherd Church was a big success! Held for for about 85 people, it raised over \$800 for Santa Clara Valley's Intergroup.

This all-day Al-Anon event, themed "Seasons of Recovery" offered a variety of meeting topics and formats for members to partake in at every level of recovery, including six topic discussion meetings, a 4-step panel discussion and featured speakers from Alateen, AA and Al-Anon. It was a day dedicated to fellowship in recovery. People early in Al-Anon could take advantage of meeting topics such as: "Accepting Powerlessness", "Sponsorship: Sowing the Seeds of Trust", and "Slogans: Tools for Every Season", while more "seasoned" members could benefit from topics like: "Seasons of Change: From Fantasy to Reality", "Weathering the Storm of Grief" and "Rustling in the Leaves: Sex & Intimacy in Recovery".

Along with a plentiful supply of refreshments, the event included a hot lunch of tasty lasagna and garlic bread accompanied by fresh salads, snacks and desserts brought by guests.

Thanks to the generosity of numerous Al-Anon groups and individuals, attendees were treated to a diversity of over 20 raffle items to choose from, including handcrafted scarves, gift baskets and more! The raffle raised over \$150.

The success of this event couldn't have been achieved without the help of the 25+ stellar volunteers and committee members who donated numerous hours planning and organizing the behind the scenes details and on-site event execution! It also benefited from 13 speakers! Thanks to all for your contribution!

CD's of the day's featured speakers are available at the Literature Depot for a suggested donation of \$6.00 per CD. Available titles are the Sex & Intimacy Workshop, 4th Step Panel and for the Al-Ateen, AA and Al-Anon speakers.

To get involved in Intergroup's Special Event 2011, please contact your Intergroup Representative, Officer or a Coordinator.

–Kelly G.



From Your Chairperson

The past two years as your chairperson has been a pleasure and a joy. I remember walking in to Al-Anon on Thanksgiving in 1992. I would not even tell you who I was. Since then you have walked this path to recovery with me. The last two years you have seen me through a difficult job loss and then the death of someone dear to me to the disease of alcoholism. In all of it, you have shown me how to love in spite of all the twists and turns of life.

If you are reading this and wondered what Intergroup is all about. Through the last two years, I've seen a group of volunteers dedicated to the message of Al-Anon. They put in their time for fun and for free so that others might find this way of life. They show up on a Tuesday night, once a month to be a part of something Greater than themselves. They volunteer at the bookstore, order literature, pay the bills, prepare a budget, go to institutions like Elmwood, Juvenile Hall and the San Jose Family Shelter.

These past two years they prepared and listened as we updated By-Laws. They gave their time and energy on weekends at health fairs. They work so we can have a directory in print twice per year. Someone faithfully put out a newsletter that gets sent to a list of about 500 people so we can stay connected as a fellowship. This year, a dedicated group of people worked very hard to put together one of the best Special Events I have attended in a long time.

There is a saying that asks if you want what we have and are willing to go to any lengths to get it, let me invite you to join this small band of dedicated individuals who have worked tirelessly to share something that changes your life and mine for the better.

As your chairperson, it was an honor and a privilege to work with such extraordinary people. Thank you for all you do to carry the message.

Love in Service, Chris

Service Positions Now Open for 2011

Chairperson...

This of course is the best position to have at IG, cuz you pretty much put out an agenda every month; you show up and support the coordinators, and run the IG meetings. There is some behind the scenes work you gotta do such as sign on the bank account, sign checks, be a "face" for Al-Anon when anyone has a question. But you do not need to have ALL the answers. I have found many resources when I don't have an answer. I had great fun doing it. And ANYONE with any experience in Al-Anon Intergroup can do it. I'll be there to support you.

The position term begins next year and runs for three years. I've seen Mark B., do this and it went really well. I did it for two years and it went pretty good too. It's only one day at a time anyway.

Alternate Chair...

Again you are the "face" of Santa Clara Valley Intergroup at the Area level. I loved doing this too because I got to be the voice of our IG whenever NCWSA had a committee meeting. I loved bragging about

all the work you do to carry the message of Al-Anon. You will be doing some travel but all expenses are reimbursed through IG. If you feel your world is getting a bit narrow, try this position and see it grow! It's only for a year until the next panel in 2012. Again I'll be glad to support anyone in this position.

Directories...

This is a vital position since some of our revenue comes through the sale of the directories. I understand it's pretty easy, if you have some tech skills to offer. The directories are due out twice a year. You also interface with a professional printer to get them all out.

Facilities...

This is also a very important position to have. This person pretty much trains and schedules volunteers to work the bookstore, picks up the mail and makes sure our IG meeting rooms are scheduled. You also interface with the staff of the Campbell Community Center for us.

Literature...

This person inventories and orders literature for us. You keep up our good relationship with WSO too.

Newsletter...

Again pretty easy. If you have experience with layouts (at least that's what Terre said) you can do this job. You do some editing as well. I loved bragging about our newsletter at the Area level and often shared it with the members. You will have a lot of support and help readily available if you need it. Newsletter comes out quarterly. If you take this position, you already have some back up folks to help you out.

Public Information...

This is pretty fun too. The pub info coordinator is the primary contact for the Unity Day event. And also connects with the public for health fairs and schools should they ask us to provide information about Al-Anon. This is how we connect with the outside world. I would recommend a committee for this position. That way more than one person can respond to the need.

Special Event...

I would love to assist anyone who would like to do this next year. Kelly and I had a great learning and growing time doing this event this year. I have an idea already about who I would like for our main speaker next year, but really cannot be in the forefront on this one. So, if you would like to help. Please contact me. I'd love to talk with you.

The only requirement to serve is willingness. The rest will be provided through your Higher Power and the loving fellowship of those surrounding you.

Please contact your Intergroup Representative or anyone of the coordinators currently listed in the directory. You can also contact Chris A. C. 408.691.3242/mrs_gratitude@sbcglobal.net; John F. 415.385.4310/johnf@luxuryproducts.com or Keara 408.202.0733/pheelnthephunk@aol.com



A Holiday Beyond My Wildest Imagination

My first holiday season in the program spiraled down into loneliness and sadness. My husband had left me. My blank calendar featured no holiday festivities this year, especially not the drinking parties of past years. Freed of the alcoholic worries, I was relieved. Yet I didn't know what to do now, and I agonized about that. Poor me!

I did know that I could attend more Al-Anon meetings. I already attended several each week. A few of the meetings hosted potluck dinners on Thanksgiving and Christmas; I could go, even if I didn't bring anything to eat.

But my higher power had another plan for me.

In November, my sponsor phoned to ask if I could give an out-of-town visitor a ride to an Al-Anon meeting. Of course I could do that.

When I dialed the phone number, a lovely lady answered. She gratefully accepted my offer of a ride to a meeting.

Later that week, I picked up Lorraine and gave her a ride to one of my regular meetings. She greeted me cheerfully, and my spirits lifted a little. On the way home, she said that she had been in Al-Anon for a long while, and missed her meetings during her travels. She asked if I could give her a ride again. Yes, I could certainly do that.

I drove Lorraine to all my regular meetings. She had come from Australia to visit her brother for a few weeks and was afraid to drive in the United States. I loved being her Al-Anon transportation. With her delightful chatter during our trips, my loneliness vanished.

As the weeks passed, she planned to travel on to the next city, then changed her plans and stayed. I worried about what I would do when she left. But she postponed her

travels again, and we continued to attend meetings together.

When Christmas approached, she asked what I had planned for Christmas day.

Nothing. No plans. Well, I could stay home and feel sorry for myself. I didn't say that, but I thought about it.

Then Lorraine invited me to Christmas dinner at her brother's house. What a treat! I really looked forward to that day.

When I arrived for Christmas dinner, I smelled no turkey, no ham, none of the usual aromas of the dinner. I wondered what we were going to eat.

Her brother had a totally different plan. He asked if I would mind going out for Chinese food.

I didn't mind at all. A Chinese restaurant would be different, a wonderful adventure.

So I had Christmas dinner in a Chinese restaurant with a lovely Al-Anon from Australia during my first holiday season in Al-Anon.

Would I have ever planned that?

No, but my higher power had plans beyond my wildest imagination.

—Carol W.

Today's reminder (from Courage to Change, March 28)

How much can God give me if I am not open to receive? When I hold onto a problem, a fear, or a resentment, I shut myself off to the help that is available to me. I will loosen my grip on something today. I will "Let go and let God."

"All I had to do was become the least bit willing to open my clenched fist a tiny, grudging bit and miracles happened. That's God as I understand Him today."

As We Understood...



Has Al-Anon Helped You?

Would you like to give that gift to your child?

Alateen is a fellowship for young people ages 12-20 who have been affected by a loved one's abuse of alcohol. The meetings, patterned after Al-Anon ideas, can help kids learn how others in their peer group have coped with family addiction and have let go of trying to control others. They learn that addiction is a disease, and that it is not their fault. By changing their way of thinking, kids can find a new way to live.

Please see www.ncwsa.org for meetings in your area. If there are no existing meetings, and you would like to start one, please contact WSO for more information.

Alateen Goes Green for NoCAC Scholarships!

Bring plastic water bottle and soda cans to be recycled for SCV Alateen Scholarships—what a great cause!

This fundraiser is open to Districts 20, 21, and 22. Bring plastic bottles and aluminum cans to the SCV Intergroup Office, or to your meeting's Intergroup Representative, or call Jay R., Alateen Recycle Person, at 408-296-2474.

Please no glass bottles, jars, or food cans!!

Bookstore Hours

Monday	5:00 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Tuesday	4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday	9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Thursday	12:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. NEW!
Friday	4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday	9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The bookstore is closed on holidays. Please call before making a trip to the bookstore.

Teleservice Needs Volunteers

Teleservice is a service that is provided by Intergroup to help those who have never attended a meeting and are seeking a meeting.

Teleservice volunteers serve for a one-month period of service, and four teleservice volunteers are needed each month.

All that is required is a phone, your availability, and a current meeting directory.

Please contact Monica W. at 408.978.7080.