



# Intergroup NEWSLETTER

Santa Clara Valley Alanon Family Group  
<http://www.ncwsa.org/scvafg>

March 2011

## 2011 Officers and Coordinators

Thanks to all those volunteers who fill service positions, and welcome to the incoming officers and coordinators for 2011.

### Officers

Chairperson..... Bruce T.  
Alternate Chairperson..... *Service opportunity*  
Secretary..... Terri M.  
Treasurer..... Rhonda D.  
Alateen Process Person..... Keara F

### Service Board

Service Board Member..... Cecelia S.  
Service Board Member..... Craig D.  
Service Board Member..... *Service opportunity*  
District 20 *Acting Rep*..... Catherine A.  
District 21 Alt-Rep..... Gary  
District 22 Alt-Rep..... Teresa B.

### Coordinators

Alateen Coordinator..... Anne C.  
Alateen Alt-Coordinator..... *Service opportunity*  
Archivist..... Margaret S.  
Directories Coordinator..... Debbie M.  
Directories Alt-Coordinator.... *Service opportunity*  
Facilities Coordinator..... Dava F.  
Facilities Alt-Coordinator..... *Service opportunity*  
Financial Coordinator..... Linda G.  
Financial Alt-Coordinator..... Rick A.  
Institutions Coordinator..... Mary F.  
Institutions Alt-Coordinator.... *Service opportunity*  
Insurance Coordinator..... Bob B.K.  
Insurance Alt-Coordinator..... *Service opportunity*  
Literature Coordinator..... Mike R.  
Literature Alt-Coordinator..... Kathleen O.  
Newsletter Coordinator..... Meredy A.  
Newsletter Alt-Coordinator.... *Service opportunity*  
Public Info. Coordinator..... Josephine L.  
Public Info. Alt-Coordinator..... A'anna A.  
Special Event Coordinator..... Chris A.C.  
Special Event Alt-Coordinator..... Cecelia  
Teleservice Coordinator..... Monica W.  
Website Coordinator..... Brett W.

## Alateen, I Am Forever Grateful to You

Before I began going to Alateen meetings, I was a lonely and depressed teenager. Only 16 years old at the time, I was working to survive the pressures of trying to fit in with my peers and the fear of having no peace at home.

I had just moved to Sunnyvale, California, from Buffalo, New York, and had begun attending Homestead High School. I had no real friends and no one to really relate to since all of the kids at my school seemed to be rich, with most of them driving to school in fancy cars and wearing designer clothes. Before moving to Sunnyvale, I had no desire to drive and in fact was surprised when I learned that Homestead did not have school buses but provided public bus passes to students instead. Where I had come from, all of the kids took the school bus to school even if they owned a car and had a driver's license.

Although my mother and I lived in this upper middle class area, we were still poor. My mother had a good job, but the only rent she could afford provided us with just a one bedroom apartment. Most of the time, we would often bump heads because neither of us had any privacy since we shared the bedroom. We also had no car so public transportation was our only option. During the week, my mother and I would get along. Our home during the week was peaceful and loving, but every weekend that love would turn to hate and that peace to anger.

I did not understand what an alcoholic was until I began going to Alateen meetings. I did not think my mother was one since she would only drink light beer on the weekends. I never saw her touch any of those hard liquors. My mother was the sweetest, most loving person you could know when she wasn't drinking. But like day to night she would change whenever she had a beer. She would have the music blasting with no concern for the neighbors, smoke in the house with no concern for me or my allergies, and drink so much until she passed out. Every Sunday, she would end her week broke because every penny she had remaining after paying bills would be spent on beer.

My mother was an angry drunk, the type that wanted to fight whenever I did not agree with her. I instead stood up to her. Since she and my father had a bad relationship in the past, whenever she would drink and he would call or come over to pick me up she would end up starting an argument or blaming everything on him. She would curse him out in front of me or blame him for all of her misfortunes. And since I was the closest thing to him that was there, she would just take out all of her anger and rage on me instead. She would call me names, fight me physically, throw my things in the garbage, spit on me, call the police on me, and kick me out of the house.

At 16, I was very depressed and would think about ways I could end my life. We lived by the Caltrain station, so I often thought about throwing myself in

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## Financial Notes

While literature sales to groups were down in 2010, Intergroup still provided more than 10,000 of pieces of literature to the groups and institutions in Santa Clara Valley. Again this year, literature inventory was well managed during the year so that costs were kept in line with revenues, resulting in a positive contribution to operating income. Although information about meeting times is now available online, meeting booklets continued to be in high demand, and Teleservice continues to field hundreds of calls each year helping people new to Al-Anon find meetings in the Valley.

Group contributions were considerably higher than planned and helped contribute to the \$1,920 net income for the year. In January of 2010 we were able to fund 17 Alateen scholarships from both 2009 group contributions and the proceeds from the sale of recycled cans and plastic bottles collected and donated by group members. With the contributions from all resources in 2010 we will be able to fund a similar number of scholarships in 2011.

Total assets as of 12/31/2010: \$32,637

Total liabilities as of 12/31/2010: \$670

(Assets include a certificate of deposit with a balance of \$14,697 at December 31, 2010, with a maturity date in 2012. Use of the funds in this CD is restricted as these funds are considered to be part of the "prudent reserve" established by Intergroup in 2007.)

— Tom K., Treasurer 2010

	2010 Actual	2010 Budget	2011 Budget
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Literature Sales	29,034	36,000	31,500
Meeting Directories	3,065	3,800	3,200
Group Contributions	6,992	6,000	7,000
Group Contributions – appeal	959	1,175	1,100
Group Contributions - institutions	1,087		1,000
Special Events	1,621	1,000	1,300
Insurance Reimb from Groups	1,156	1,400	1,400
Alateen Scholarship Contributions	1,727		
Interest & Other Income	173	40	135
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>45,815</b>	<b>49,415</b>	<b>46,635</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
Literature Purchases	19,895	25,900	22,680
Rent - Bookstore & Intergroup Meetings		13,000	13,368
Directory Expense	1,642	2,700	1,900
Insurance Expense	2,512	2,600	2,250
Institutions Literature	272	75	1,000
Advertising - Teleservice Listing	318	360	322
Alateen Coordinator	167	500	360
Special Events Expense	961	400	500
Telephone	1,063	800	900
Facilities Office Expense	492	500	500
Other Expenses - total	3,405	2,580	3,855
<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>30,727</b>	<b>49,415</b>	<b>47,635</b>
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>15,088</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

## Insurance Coverage for Meetings

The simplest of things are sometimes the hardest of things to do. There are over 100 meetings in Districts 20, 21, and 22. It is very nice that all of these sites support Al-Anon by permitting us to use the facility. Legally these sites must require the group to maintain an additional liability insurance policy. To help support this need, Intergroup has purchased a policy that provides this coverage for all of the meetings in Districts 20, 21, and 22. This is the third largest expense, behind literature and office rent.

Your Intergroup pays for this cost three times per year, and thus on the books it has a large deficit on the balance sheet. In order to help defray this cost, and abide by Tradition Seven ("Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions"), it is hoped that any group that is capable can contribute to the cost of the insurance policy by contributing **\$31.00 per year** (which has not gone up for a few years). If a large percentage of meetings can contribute, we can keep the cost very reasonable.

The coverage that is supplied to each meeting is:

\$1,000,000.00 liability  
 \$500,000.00 damage to premises  
 \$20,000.00 medical/person

These limits are generally accepted by our host sites. So, once again I ask each group to help defray this cost by bringing it up at your business meeting and getting a group consensus to help support this item.

It is also important to realize that the meetings that are covered are only the normally scheduled meetings, these being your weekly meetings, group, and Intergroup meetings. If a special meeting or event is held in our area, these are in addition to the standard meeting cost and a special form needs to be filled out so that the insurance company can be notified at least a week prior to the meeting. This will be an additional rider on the policy and will carry an additional fee.

Your support in addressing this issue for all the meetings that you attend is greatly appreciated. Thank you, in the spirit of Al-Anon.

— Bob BK, Insurance Coordinator 2011

*Intergroup Newsletter* is published by SCV AFG four times per year, in March, June, September, and December. Deadline for the June 2011 issue is **May 31**. Send Al-Anon news updates, group information, and stories of your experience, strength, and hope to newsletter coordinator Meredy A. at [sapphoon@gmail.com](mailto:sapphoon@gmail.com).

# We Were Powerless *Step One Stories*

## Work in Progress

Finished projects are such a delight. They give me such a sense of completion and accomplishment. I just love to say "There! That is done!" However, Step One is not like that for me. Almost every day I find some situation, person or institution over which I can only exclaim, "I'm powerless." I need to work Step One on a daily basis and sometimes several times a day.

After many twenty-four hours it has become almost a habit to say Step One and it is usually a big comfort. For me a quick reminder of my powerlessness is the slogan "Let go, let God!" I find this works for the drunk I love, for the suicided relative, for the sister who is ill, for the part-time jobs that show up, or don't, for rainy days, for any need in my life. Although "I can't," short form of Step One, works very well, I do like to follow that up with "God can, I think I'll let God," Short form of Steps Two and Three.

– C.C., *Santa Clara*

## The Flying Spoon

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable.

In other words, "I didn't cause it, I can't cure it, and I cannot control it." The day I walked into Al-Anon that could not have been any clearer. It was Thanksgiving. I had not had dinner and we had been driving all day. Because

of the circumstances related to the dynamic of alcoholism in both me and my spouse at the time, I had picked up a spoon and thrown it across my kitchen in a raging fit. In that fleeting moment, I realized that I was the one who was out of control. I had been going to some meetings but still could not grasp the concept of alcoholism as a disease. Somehow, I always thought alcoholism was a moral dilemma and I had the wisdom to solve it.

That fretful night proved me wrong. All my efforts to control, manipulate, or manage another person's behavior, thoughts, or feelings brought me to that spoon flying across the room. I was defeated. Thank God!

There is also some comfort in this step. The words "we" and "our" tell me that there are others who have been at this same impasse; they too were "lonely and frustrated," as our opening says. I was not alone in the disease of alcoholism. There was comfort knowing that, at an Al-Anon meeting, I was sitting among comrades. Someone has walked in my shoes.

In Step One, I am relieved to hear that, because I have no power to manage the life of another, I am now free to seek a new direction in my own life. With help from a sponsor and a loving fellowship, I can move on to through the rest of the twelve steps with an open mind to discover what I am all about. Thank you, Al-Anon, for this freedom.

– *Chris A.C.*

## Coming Events

### Pleasanton

#### Luck of the Program!

March 19, 2011

2:00 pm

Trinity Lutheran Church

1225 Hopyard Rd.

Potluck – bring a dish. Scavenger hunt, speaker meeting.

\$7 Al-Anon, \$5 Alateen.

Contact: Alicia H., (408) 710-3313



### Seaside

#### This Side of Heaven in 2011

#### NCWSA Al-Anon-Alateen Convention

April 29–May 1, 2011

Embassy Suites

Monterey Bay – Seaside

1441 Canyon Del Rey

Meetings, workshops, entertainment, fellowship. Spanish & AA participation. Volunteers still needed.

Registration: \$20 advance, \$30 at door. Reserve own room by March 31.

Contact: [convention@ncwsa.org](mailto:convention@ncwsa.org)

### Santa Clara

#### Men's Recovery Day

May 7, 2011

8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

1957 Pruneridge Ave.

A day of men's Al-Anon fellowship. Speakers, workshops, barbecue.

\$10 by April 1st, \$15 after. Includes lunch.

Drop off check at "In Company of Men" meeting (Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.) or mail to Sean M., 130 Happy Acres Rd., Los Gatos 95032



### Westminster Woods

#### 2011 Alateen Sponsors R&R

September 16–18, 2011

Occidental, CA

Fifth annual NCWSA Sponsors Weekend for Alateen sponsors and prospective sponsors. Training, speakers, sharing, rejuvenating & recommitting.

Contact: Carla G., (925) 586-8021, [sstopt16@att.net](mailto:sstopt16@att.net)

## Forever Grateful

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front of a train to end the emotional pain I was feeling. When my mother would kick me out, I often had no one to stay with. Since I had no friends and my father was living in a rehab house himself, I would get on the 22 bus that ran all night, where I would cry myself to sleep.

After my mother began attending an alcohol treatment program and AA meetings, I started going to Alateen meetings. I met the two Alateen sponsors after attending a Saturday morning AA speaker meeting with my mother. They both invited me to attend their Heart to Heart Freedom meetings on Thursday nights in Mountain View. There I met a girl who was my age and who was also attending my school. I also met other teenagers who I considered upper class and who had parents and other family members that were alcoholics and drug addicts. Teenagers who I never thought I would relate to.

I was able to attend two of the Northern California Alateen Conference (NoCAC) annual weekends because of SCV IG scholarships. We stayed in a hotel over a weekend, Friday night through Sunday afternoon. I attended Alateen speaker meetings after every meal, three workshops, all meals, a banquet, and AA, Al-Anon, and Alateen major speaker meetings followed by a dance. I met other teenagers from around California who were going through the same type of emotional pain, stress, and shame that I felt. I made friends with people who would help me build strength and self-worth!

Whenever my mother relapsed and began kicking me out again, I had two friends in my life who allowed me to stay with them and who drove me to school and picked me up every day for a month until my dad got us into a shelter. My two sponsors helped me during the most stressful time in my life, and for that I am forever thankful. I've stayed in touch with them all these years.

For my last year in high school, my

dad and I lived in a homeless shelter until I graduated. Although I wasn't able to continue attending my Alateen meetings as often as I wanted to, the people I met and the things I learned stuck with me.

I no longer had that desire to give up on life but instead strived toward obtaining strength to deal with the stress and the pain. I became thankful for all of my trials because I was able to learn and grow from my experiences. I learned to stop hiding what I was going through, but instead to use it as my testimony to help others who were going through similar things.

Since leaving Alateen, I continued on to college in Southern California. There I obtained my BA degree in music. I now am pursuing an MA in nonprofit management and a law degree in entertainment because I have a dream to open a free program that helps students who want to begin a career within the entertainment field. Also I want to teach music to hearing-impaired students.

Although my mother is still a practicing alcoholic today, living in a homeless shelter, and my father is still attending NA meetings, I am still here standing tall.

At 16, I was a lonely and depressed teenager; today I am a strong and happy 25-year-old woman who loves her parents. I am who I am because of my experiences, and I thank Alateen every day for saving my life.

– S.C.



## 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!**

## Share Your Step One Story

Each of the twelve steps is a multilayered experience that opens itself up to us as we open ourselves to it.

Has your work with Step One given you an experience, insight, or growth in understanding that you would like to share in a few words? Add your thoughts to those of others and we'll publish them together.

It can be as short as you like. One to two hundred words would be great. As an example, this blurb is exactly one hundred words long.

If you'd prefer to write a longer article, we'll publish it as a stand-alone feature.

## 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.
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.

If you are interested in serving as a bookstore volunteer, please contact Dava F. at (408) 934-0104.

## 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, and four Teleservice volunteers are needed each month.

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

Please contact Jackie C. at (650) 967-4198.

## District 20 Speaker Meetings

District 20 speaker meetings take place at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Friday of even-numbered months except December (February, April, June, August, and October).

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
14103 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga, CA