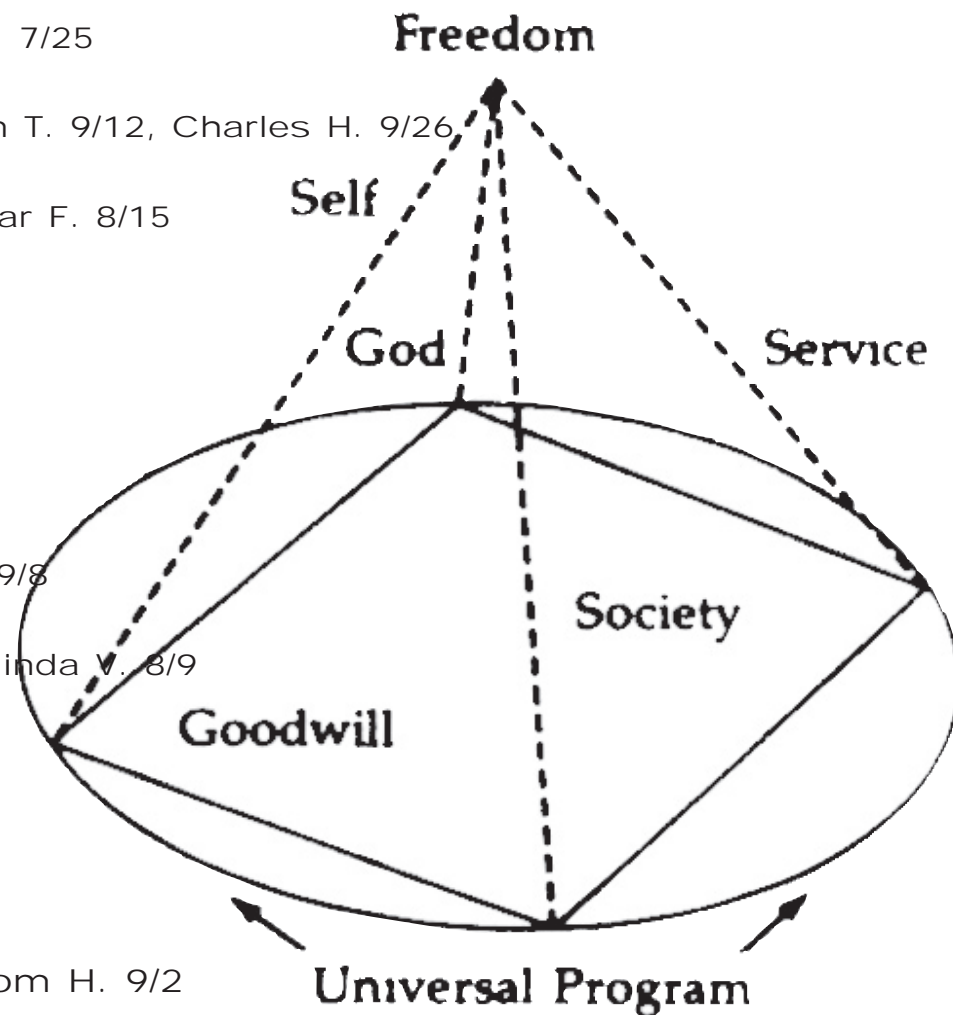


Birthdays

August / September

- 30 days Dana T. 8/29, Brian W. 8/8, Ken K. 8/27, Sergio 8/12,
Brian W. 10/9
Laura 9/4, Linda R. Shell
- 60 days Chris C. 9/3, David T. 9/21, Monica C. 9/12, Tommy T. 8/27,
Joseph G. 8/21, Ralphie R. 6/26
- 90 days Richard 8/17, Joe G. 8/2, Lynda S. 9/28, Ruben S. 6/8?,
Melissa C. 6/8, Mazi 8/13
- 6 months Pranning I. 7/12, Michael K. 8/10, Brian P. 9/17
Lito I. 6/12, Katie S. 6/31, Lorena M. 6/5, David T.
- 9 months John Paul 8/14, Mary M. 9/3, Dani D. 8/26
- 1 year Stephanie W. 8/10, Shannon B. 8/5, Julie C. 7/21,
Sandy R. 8/27, Shannon M. 8/25, Deborah L. 9/14
- 18 months Jessie O. 9/17, Lori V. 8/13, Nina W. 8/1
Calvin Y. 8/3, Lori W. 8/28, Tanya J. 6/28
Pamela L. 6/24, Erin K. H. 6/10
- 2 years Sheila 6/5, Frank E. 7/25
- 3 years Kelly D. 8/28, Eileen T. 9/12, Charles H. 9/26
- 5 years Brenda G. 8/2, Oscar F. 8/15
- 10 years Glenn L. 8/22
- 11 years Gwen A. 8/21
- 12 years Carlos H. 8/9
- 13 years Max 9/24, Stan B. 9/8
- 15 years Becky S. 9/11, Herlinda V. 8/9
Patricia M. 8/13
- 16 years Roy X. 8/2
- 19 years Floyd B
- 21 years Leslie F. 9/18, Tom H. 9/2



The Message

Sacramento Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter
October / November 2009



"Be the We!"

Plans are shaping up for Sacramento Fellowship's first Unity Day event. Tentatively scheduled for late February or early March of next year, the all day event will be a celebration of our unity, diversity, and recovery.

The Unity Day working group has made real progress in recent months. They have dedicated participation of a number of highly motivated people. Last month, one member stepped up to the plate to serve as comptroller, so we can be assured that the group will manage NA funds responsibly. You may see pre-registration fliers as early as next month if their proposed budget is approved at the October ASC meeting.

In addition to the usual meetings and workshops, our Unity Day will to showcase some of the unique talents of our members. Before meetings and meals, expect to see recovery-related performances in the form of singing, comedy, skits, video clips, and other creative expressions. We hope to have a big enough talent pool to offer a variety show in the afternoon as well. So, start rehearsing, addicts, and look

for more information on this shortly. The opportunity to break bread together can also be an important part of a celebration of unity. The H&I working group has agreed to host a pancake brunch on the morning of the event. The price of registration will include an intriguing dinner: four stations—tentatively Italian, Mexican, All American, and Soul Food—will reflect our diversity while filling our bellies.

"Be the We" was selected as our Unity Day theme. Look for it on buttons and t-shirts soon as some merchandise will be sold in advance of the event. This pre-event merchandise will help us get the word out about the event and provide the funds we'll need to put on this all-day celebration. Couldn't you use a "Be the We" button or t-shirt?

If you or someone you know would like to help with the planning and preparation for this event, the Unity Day working group meets on the third Saturday of each month at 11:15 am upstairs at Trinity Cathedral at 27th & Capitol in beautiful midtown Sacramento.

From the editor

Hello and happy fall! I hope you all are having a wonderful time enjoying the season when it cools off outside and the leaves start to turn. So much is going on in my life. School (after 25 years) is difficult and couple that with work and Family and you have my life. Don't get me wrong, it's rewarding!

So my term is up as your newsletter task leader. I encourage anyone with experience using indesign (or a similar program) to

take the opportunity to use your skills and serve this fellowship. It has been rewarding and only due to my own actions has it been overwhelming. I hope that in the future, when I can actually attend the ASC meetings I can be of service again. Thank you for allowing to be of service!

Mike G.

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Any material submitted to the Sacramento Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous (SacFNA) or any of its trusted servants including but not limited to written work, artwork, and photographs becomes the intellectual property of SacFNA. SacFNA and its newsletter team reserve the right to make any changes without notice to the submitting party. Narcotics Anonymous is not a professional organization. All material presented in this newsletter is informational and not intended to supplement or replace advice given by any medical or mental health care professional.



NorCal NA Events

| When | What | Where | Contact |
|------------------|---|--|---|
| October 3 | Sierra Sage Regional Gratitude Dinner | Boreal Ski Resort Top of Donner Summit exit Boreal/Castle Peak Truckee, CA. | Josh L 530-386-3765 |
| October 3 | Contra Costa Area Talent Show/Pasta Feed | Concord United Methodist Church 1645 West Street Concord CA 94521 | None Given |
| October 10 | Sacramento Women's Brunch | Lions Gate Hotel 3410 W. Over Street Mc Clellan Ca | Yvette C (916) 868-2943 |
| October 10 | Monthly Speaker Meeting | Oak Park Community Center 3425 Martin L. King Jr. Blvd. Sacramento, CA 95817 | Gonti N. (415) 424-5825 |
| October. 11 | 3rd Annual Men's Breakfast | Red Lion Inn Hotel 1401 Arden Way Sacramento, CA 95815 | Terry L. (916) 821-8899 |
| October 17 | Halloween Speaker Meeting / Dance Tickets \$5 or \$7 at door | Foothill Community Center 5150 Diablo Ave., | Cheri C (916) 988-4235 or Kathy S (916) 470-1630 |
| October 24 | Sierra Foothills Area Halloween Dance & Speaker Meeting | 44 Second Street, Yuba City from 6:00 PM til Midnight | activities@sfana.org |
| October 24 | The Peninsula Area presents the 22nd annual Unity Day "LAST HOUSE ON THE BLOCK EVERYONE IS WELCOME" | CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL 1400 ALAMEDA DE LAS PULGAS Belmont Ca | Jackie W. rcjackee@hotmail.com |
| October 24 | Ocloberfest Halloween costume contest, potluck, speaker | 1375 centerville lane Gardnerville, CA. | Chad P 775-291-7033 |
| November 9 | Contra Costa 2nd Annual Women's Brunch | Humphreys 1 Marina Plaza Antioch CA 94509 | Lisa 925-270-6211, Tina 925-565-6809, Ava 925- 351-6383 |
| November 25 - 27 | Peninsula Thanksgiving Narathon | 2915 Broadway Redwood City CA USA | waynette67@gmail.com www.peninsulana.org |

Thanksgiving Narathon

Wednesday, November 25 [5-10 pm] &
Thursday, November 26 [10 am-12 am]



Dinner will be served at
3:00 pm on Thanksgiving Day

75-minute meetings starting as follows:

◊ Wednesday, 11/25: 5:30, 7:00, 8:30 pm

◊ Thursday, 11/26: 10:00 & 11:30 am;
and 1:00, 4:00, 5:30, 7:00, 8:30 & 10 pm

Brought to you by A New Way of Life Group of Narcotics Anonymous with help from many area home groups who will lend their own unique flavor to individual meetings.

Join us at St. Luke's Church
7595 Center Parkway
at Tangerine in Sacramento



For more information
call Debbie at 916.308.7626 or Mias at 916.747.3019

Rumor alert! Keep your ear to the ground for details on a **post-Thanksgiving bash**. Rumor has it that Friday Night South Sac, Hump Day Hope, and the Southside Group are collaborating on plans for an event at 4445 Fruitridge on **Friday, November 27**.

Bug your GSR for details after November's ASC meeting
or keep checking our website: www.sacfna.org

Tradition 5

(continued from page 5)

that addict walking in the door by “age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion or lack of religion”, or by how nice of a body they have, I have just thrown their anonymity right in

the toilet and have robbed them of the freedom of being just another recovering addict. Together we do recover.

Gary E.

Ken's Story

(continued from page 4)

another sponsee, and then he would call me back later the same day so that we could both do what we were supposed to do. His name was Glenn, and he became my first new friend in recovery.

I was a single parent, and my son would go to almost every meeting with me. One day my ex wife snatched him and took him to Spokane Washington and had him committed to a psychiatric hospital for evaluation. I was devastated and I knew I needed to go there to see him. I borrowed my brother's car and Glenn and I drove 17 hours straight to Spokane. When we got there, we went to a meeting and they embraced us and offered their love and support. The next day, I was able to get him out of the facility on a one day pass, and I took him to a park in Spokane. He was riding the merry go round and I was sitting on a park bench thinking to God “I don't know if I can get through this one”. I heard a voice say “it's Kenn and Glenn”. It was two people from the meeting the night before. They came over and hugged me and comforted me and I knew at that moment that there was a loving God and Narcotics Anonymous would be there for me no matter what.

Since then I have had so many experiences that have no other explanation other than the presence of God in my life. I have endured really difficult times in my life. I lost my grandmother and held my father's hand as he took his last breath. When I was 13 years clean, I became very ill, and I did not think I would ever be the same. My wife has been diagnosed three times with potentially fatal diseases. On one, we waited 5 months to find out that she had been misdiagnosed. She is in remission on another, and she has been given a complete bill of health for life on the 3rd. Some of the things I have gone through have turned out ok and some have not turned out so well. As a result of these experiences, I have come to believe that God will always take care of me and things will be ok no matter what. This doesn't mean that things will always turn out the way I want, but everything will always be ok in spite of how difficult they may seem at the time. One of my favorite lines in the basic text says that “if sharing the experience of our pain helps one addict stay clean, it was worth the suffering”. I'm not sure if sharing my experience has helped anyone, but I do know how much it has helped me when others have shared their experience when I am having difficult times.

There is no way that I can share 21 years of experience in this writing, but I do want to touch on a couple of things. I do the same thing that I did when I got here. I go to meetings and I have a home group. I've had the same sponsor for 11 years, and I am so very grateful in so many ways. Most of all, he is an example

for me of the man I want to be. I continue to work the steps. One of the constants throughout my recovery has been a book study. Most recently, I have been attending my sponsorship family book study for 10 1/2 years. I also work the steps with the guys I sponsor and I do my best to pass it on the way it was passed on to me. I talk to another addict everyday, including my wife and partner of 18 years. She is my best friend and my kid's mom and my wife, but sometimes it's just about the therapeutic value of one addict helping another. I also have a lot of wonderful friends and a strong core support group. As a result of working the steps, I have had a spiritual awakening, and I have a wonderful God in my life. He is always there for me, but the more I do in all areas of my recovery, the more likely I am to recognize his presence. Finally, I try to be in service in all areas of my life. I have a core belief deep within that the best thing I can do for myself is to do something for someone else. I do my best to be of service to the fellowship, my family, my community, and society.

As a result of my participation in Narcotics Anonymous I have been blessed in so many ways. I have a wonderful marriage and an incredible relationship with all three of my kids. I set a fine example, and if asked, they would probably tell you that I am the best Dad they could ever want. I am liked and respected at work, and I get along with most people. My family loves me and they tell me often how much I mean to them. I am my Mom's best friend, and my wife and I try to include her in a lot of the fun things we do.

I don't want to go back to living the way I used to live and I never want to forget what my life was like before Narcotics Anonymous. My former sponsor told me to think of a snapshot of what using was like for me. My moment was driving around in my truck with my son looking for a place to pull over and spend the night because we had nowhere safe to go.

I know if I don't do what it takes to stay in NA, I don't get to stay. I've seen a lot of people come and go, and I've lost some close friends to the disease of addiction. I often say that almost everyone I've ever seen relapse stopped doing something they needed to do and thought it would be ok.

So I continue to do the simple things. As a result, I get to be where I am right here, right now: feeling the presence of God and filled with gratitude for Narcotics Anonymous.

Kenn C.

SACFNA Service Opportunities

| When | Position | Where | What | Time | Contact |
|---------|---|-------------|--|--|--|
| Ongoing | Help Line Volunteers | SacFNA Area | 4 hr shifts | | Contact Gary E @ 916-533-3604 or Kevin F @ (916) 716-5313 or |
| Ongoing | Postering Coordinator | SacFNA Area | Coordinate volunteers for placing small posters with SacFNA Help Line at local businesses | Coordinate with volunteers at your convenience | Kevin F @ (916) 716-5313 or |
| Ongoing | PACT Volunteers | SacFNA Area | | | Kevin F @ (916) 716-5313 or |
| Ongoing | Presentation Coordinator | SacFNA Area | Give presentations to schools and other organizations concerning Narcotics Anonymous | As needed | Contact Kevin F @ (916) 716-5313 or |
| January | ASC Chair ASC Vice Chair ASC Admin Assistant ASC Policy and Procedure Person | SacFNA Area | Provide guidance and assistance to SacFNA ASC by facilitating ASC meetings, preparing agendas, generating minutes and assuring adherence to ASC guidelines | | Contact Eric K @ (916) 284-4541 or |

A PREVIEW OF YOUR UNITY DAY T-SHIRT. IT WILL BE MULTI-COLORED



Ken's Story

It must have been sometime around 1984 when I first heard of narcotics anonymous. I was pouring my heart out to a co-worker named Sharon. We had worked together for a period of time, and so she observed some of my behaviors on a daily basis. I told her about all of the problems in my life and how things would change if only my wife would just stop drinking. When I finished what I was saying, she looked at me and said "So..have you ever thought about going to a Narcotic Anonymous meeting?" I went to her with one problem, my alcoholic wife, and left there with two problems: my alcoholic wife and the girl who just didn't understand.

I didn't think or hear about recovery for the next two or three years. Again it was another co worker who spoke of it. He said he and his wife were attending a couple's recovery group and I thought it sounded like a perfect place for me to take my wife. At the beginning of the meeting, we formed a circle and everyone introduced themselves and defined their problem. I heard people say their name followed by statements like "I'm an alcoholic" or "I'm a co-dependant" and one member who said "I'm an alcoholic and co-dependant, and an adult child of an alcoholic and a product of a dysfunctional family." Two things were immediately evident to me.

First, these people were a mess and there was nothing they could do for me and second, I was not like them at all.

I hear it in meetings every now and then to "bring the body and the mind will follow". That's kind of what happened to me there. I continued to go and defiantly identified myself only by saying "my name is Kenn." I was using every day, and lying about it to the group. One day some of the guys said they were going out for breakfast and pitching horseshoes afterwards. They said they did it every Sunday morning and asked if I would like to go. They never told me what I needed to do, but they all talked about their experience with Alcoholics Anonymous. I didn't know it then, but I was experiencing the therapeutic value of one addict helping another. Looking back it is really clear that they believed in me before I believed in myself. I continued to attend the group, I continued to use on a daily basis, and I continued to lie about it. And I heard people talk about their lives getting better while mine was spiraling downhill.

The 12 steps were displayed on the wall but I never really paid much attention. I'm not sure how it happened, but one day a couple of things just seemed to make sense. I wasn't quite sure about the powerless thing, but my life was definitely unmanageable. When I heard that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity and heard someone say that the power could be the group I could relate. I knew that when I went there on Tuesday, things would get better for a couple of days, and then they would be out of control again. I also heard someone say that "insanity is doing the same thing over again expecting different results." Hearing that statement would have a huge impact on my life a few weeks later.

My memory is kind of vague, and I'm not sure how, but I had managed to stop using for awhile. Without the drugs to kill the pain, I became really miserable. Even with a short time of abstinence my life was still totally out of control, and one night it culminated in my home. I was enraged with anger and my wife called the police. They came to my house and I sat them on my couch where I had a couple of pounds of pot stashed in the cushions. I tried to explain that if they would leave and take her with them everything would be ok. They thought

differently and cuffed me and took me to jail and charged me with felony domestic violence. I was released and about two weeks later I was again in a violent rage and my wife told me that she was calling the police again. That's when I remembered what I had heard about the insanity of doing the same thing again. I knew if I stayed there I would go back to jail. I knew I had to leave, but I really had nowhere to go. I wound up at a phone booth on Del Paso Blvd. near my house. By this time I had heard about Narcotics Anonymous and out of desperation, I called the hot line and spoke to a guy named Gary. Again, I told my story of woe hoping that he might be able to tell me how I could get back in my house without getting arrested and convince my wife to take the club off of my steering wheel. To the best of my recollection he told me that if I believed in a higher power, I might want to pray, and that if I wanted to go to a meeting, he would meet me at Sutter Hospital the following night. I walked in to my first meeting of Narcotic's Anonymous and Gary was there. It was at that meeting that I first heard the message of hope. For me it was true that I never had to use again and my clean date is May 17th 1988.

The woman who chaired that meeting was named Mary. She had been places I had never been and done things I had never done, and she shared about what it was like now and how much better her life had become because of Narcotics Anonymous. Up until then, I thought I had two options: the first was that I continue to use and be miserable and the second was to stop using and be more miserable. It was not enough for me to hear that I didn't have to use. I also needed to hear that things would get better if I didn't. That's what I heard from Mary that night and for me, that was the message of hope.

After that night, I began to attend other meetings, and I began to hear what it would take to stay clean. I heard the basics: go to meetings, get a home group, get a sponsor, work the steps, call another addict every day, develop a relationship with a higher power and be of service. I also heard about honesty, open mindedness, and willingness. I knew that I was really short on honesty, and I had a long history of not listening to anybody, so I decided it would be best for me to focus on willingness. I began to do the things suggested. I found a home group and got a sponsor. He told me to call him every day at 6:30 am. When I asked him why, he said it was because he had to call his sponsor at 6:00 am every day. He was setting an example, and passing on what he had learned.

At my first home group as a newcomer, I was treated as the most important person at the meeting. I learned by first hand experience the importance of doing what we say, and I heard about things like commitment and consistency and continuity, and I saw them in action.

When I was one year clean, I was elected secretary of that meeting. I showed up early every week to make coffee and set up the room. One week I was late and as I was driving to the meeting, I thought about how people would react when I fell short of my commitment. I seriously thought about not showing up at all, but I did. When I got there everyone welcomed me and asked what they could do to help. I truly felt part of and I knew I belonged in Narcotics anonymous. Years later I heard my friend Max describe this type of experience by saying that "the farthest I could ever fall is into the loving arms of Narcotics Anonymous".

My first sponsor told me to call someone in NA everyday. I began calling
(continued on page 6)



Tradition of the Month

...as Gary E sees it...

"Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry the message to the addict that still suffers."

Tradition 5 and Step 12 are similar in that they both talk about "carrying the message". The step is for the individual member and the tradition is for the NA group. Individuals are addicted not groups and groups do not recover however individual addicts find freedom from active addiction and a new way of life. (Basic Text pg 64)

I suppose that to be able to talk about carrying the message, it would be helpful to know what that message is. The NA message is "that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. Our message is hope and the promise of freedom." (Basic Text Page 65)

As a group, that message is carried in several different ways as that group sees fit. This is of course hopefully done in accordance with the other 11 Traditions.

Most NA groups find it helps to better carry the message of recovery to the still suffering addict by taking a regular inventory.

This inventory allows the Trusted Servants of the group to determine how they can

better carry the message. If done properly with the guidance of Group Conscience it provides an insight into the strengths and potential weakness' of that group.

Tradition 5 focuses the group's priority on carrying the message. (IWH&W Pg 163). If we were to focus on other things (money, property or prestige) addicts would die.

As individual group members we can fulfill this tradition in a variety of ways. By practicing Step 12 individually, we accomplish Tradition 5 as a group.

Greeting people at the door as they arrive for a meeting; making sure that the newcomer gets a meeting list, hotline card and some phone numbers; noticing that addict with some clean time who is still suffering and offering our support; making sure as chair people that our meetings have an atmosphere of recovery – all are ways of carrying the message. While these methods and others are on an individual basis, when put together in a group effort they offer an attractive picture of recovery.

As in the steps, the traditions also have spiritual principles behind them. Tradition 5 embodies, among others, integrity, responsibility, unity and anonymity.

Integrity comes from carrying an NA message of recovery - freedom from active addiction by practicing the principles of the

12 Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

Responsibility is shown as we show up early enough to make the coffee and get the room set up to chair a meeting.

Unity is evidenced when we work together individually and as autonomous groups for the common purpose of helping each other stay clean and carrying the un-blurred NA message. Identifying ourselves simply as addicts is an important part of our greatest strength – UNITY! Anonymity goes far beyond not talking about what Joe Blow said in a meeting. It has also to do with allowing an addict to be simply another addict seeking recovery. When I classify

(continued on page 6)