

CARRY THE MESSAGE

LIVE & LET LIVE ALANO CLUB NEWSLETTER

A DECADE OF SERVICE TO THE GAY, LESBIAN,
BISexual, AND TRANSGENDER RECOVERING
COMMUNITY.

The Monthly Newsletter of the Live & Let Live Alano Club

January, 1998

Happy New Year!

The Twelve Steps and the New Year

by Tim G.

As I attended meetings and social functions throughout the holiday season I heard so much talk of the difficulties which we alcoholics and addicts experience in these supposed times of great joy. Often I felt that we must be a terribly "unique and different" group of people the way we talk about ourselves, as though the rest of the "non-recovery" community thoroughly enjoys the "kodak moments" and other holiday events, without exception.

As this was only my second sober holiday, I felt a bit helpless in my desire to change the way the holidays have always gone for me. And the helplessness had little to do with the fact that I had been hospitalized for acute depression in late October and that it would be pretty close to Christmas day before a new diagnosis of bipolar disorder would be reached; that it would be past Christmas day before I was balanced on my new medication. To be honest, as I've learned to do in this program, despite the fact that I had anticipated spending the holidays all by myself, without my beloved who lives over 6,000 miles away, I began thinking it was my meetings which were

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Carry The Message

The Monthly Newsletter of
The Live & Let Live Alano Club

A decade and a half of Service

to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Recovering Community

Located at 1730 Monroe Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116

Telephone: (619) 298-8008

Visit us on the World Wide Web: <http://theproud.net/community/sd-lllac.org/>

The Board of Directors:

Co-Chair: Colleen S.; Co-Chair: Scott J.;

Secretary: Carleen H.; Treasurer: Jo S.-L.;

Members at Large: Amy G., Jack S., John S., Kevin C.

There is one Member At Large position available. Could that be you?

Disclaimer:

The production and publication of this monthly newsletter is made possible by the advertisers who appear in each issue. Advertisement and/or any other inclusion in this newsletter in no way indicates sexual preference or recovery status. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily the opinions of the Live & Let Live Alano Club, its Board of Directors, its membership, or the newsletter publication staff. We reserve the right to edit submitted articles as we deem necessary.

The Newsletter Committee:

Jere H.; Jim L.; Tim G.

ADVERTISING RATES

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Business Card Size | \$ 5.00 |
| 1/4 Page Size | \$ 7.50 |
| 1/2 Page Size | \$10.00 |
| Full Page Size | \$15.00 |

(All rates are per issue.)

We hope you will find our rates quite reasonable. In making your decisions, we ask that you keep in mind that by advertising here, you'll be supporting one of the most targeted recovery organizations in San Diego County. To place an ad, please contact us at the telephone numbers and email address shown below. You'll be glad you did.

Publication Deadline:

Advertisements and other submissions should be received by the **21st of the month** for inclusion in the next month's issue. Items submitted after that date may be included, at our discretion, if (a) we have not yet gone to print; (b) there is space available in the issue and c) inclusion of your item will not require major changes in the forthcoming issue. In other words, we'll work with you, if you'll work with us.

Advertisements - Submissions Information:

Please contact Jere H. by telephone at (619) 224-7824 or by email at Jkhaligan@aol.com. Material may also be left in the Newsletter Box at the Live & Let Live Alano Club. For information in general, about the Club or the newsletter, you may also call the Club at (619) 298-8008.

WE REALLY DO NEED YOUR HELP! Please support the Club and the newsletter by writing something (a 12 step story, some poetry, thoughts about recovery or anything which you feel is fit for print). As this is YOUR club, this is also YOUR newsletter. Help us to be sure to meet YOUR newsletter needs. Know of a business or a friend in business who can use some cost-effective advertising? Give them a copy of the newsletter and suggest that you'd love to see them advertised here, where recovery is our way of life!

Volunteers,
Thank You,
Dears!



THANKSTO:

David S., BJ, Ed G., Chris V.,
Cindy L., Walt D., Kathy P.,
Robb N., Bobby Z., Maynor,
Kathy M., Helen S.,
and Kristina.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The New Years Even Dance
Committee: Tom, Galdriel, Bev,
Denise, Lugene, Doug, Carlos,
D. Irene, Grif, Jere, Jimm, John,
Drew, and Coleen.
You did a great job!!!

EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The wonderful people from our
Board of Directors who kept
the Club open all night on
Christmas Eve for our
Alkathon; Kevin C., Jack
(Rainbow) S., Scott J., Carleen H.,
Jimm C.

EXTRA EXTRA THANKS TO:

Everyone who contributed to our
Christmas Day dinner. Yum, yum,
yum.

LLLAC WISHLIST

Here are just a few things which the
Live & Let Live Alano Club is in dire
need of. If you can help, please do!

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 Todd B., and William B.

HOLIDAY CLUB DECORATIONS

Special Thanks to Club Manager, Kris F., and Tracie X, for the wonderful Holiday Tree and Club Decorations. It couldn't have been more tasteful and festive!

Hello Everyone,

I decided to write in and share something that happened to me recently. It is a part of my life that has begun to heal and transform since I have been in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. In 1975, I lost my Dad to a heart attack after having been a real disappointment to him for a few years. We had a lot of unfinished business when he died. His sister Alberta then accused me of causing his heart attack by breaking his heart.

I drank and used drugs around this topic, all with the idea that more was always better. The reality was I drank and used suicidally without fear, because I did not care about living. But time goes on and years later I walked into the Alano Club on 4th Avenue.

Through working the steps, I looked at my Dad's part and my part and came to an acceptance of the situation. But it all still hurt when the subject came up. And each time I would either buck up or shove it down, because I didn't know what else to do with the feelings. I worked the steps on it and wrote letters to both of them. But the "buck up and shove it" method was always my backup when all else failed, and I couldn't get rid of the guilt, shame, remorse and "could of - would of - should of" stuff. The last couple of years, though, I have been thawing out emotionally, as they say. I am noticing a different perspective to work with, and readdressing myself. I've also gained some spiritual guidance from a Higher Power that I didn't have before.

Last week, right before Thanksgiving, I asked Creator to please tell my Dad that I love him and that I miss him. I had plans to go play pool that day, but the bar on Adams Avenue was closed, so we walked across the street to Retreads to look through antiques and other old stuff. On a piece of furniture, a picture of an old car caught my eye. But as I looked closer, I realized it was a picture of my Dad, his sisters and my grandmother. In searching further, I found more family pictures and realized that Retreads had picked up Alberta's estate. I feel strongly that my prayer to Creator was answered.

There was one picture of Alberta that I had left there, still feeling bitter and resentful towards her. But on my way to my Sunday morning meeting, the thought came to mind that this was perhaps Alberta's way to mek peace with me. At least this was the continued message for me. So, after I shared this with my sisters, I went back to the store and retrieved the last picture of Alberta.

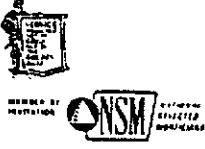
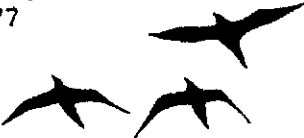
We work as honestly as we can on our steps. But emotionally we may heal slowly. It may be that other healing needs to happen first, before we can start in on an old issue that is painful.

This Thanksgiving weekend was a big step towards my healing. I feel relief from this, for the first time I believe I can put it behind me. This is the miracle of the program. If I had drank or used, I would have missed the miracle. So I am glad that my path is sober.


Love you all,
 Julian.

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS: Correspondence may be submitted for publication in the LLLAC Newsletter by placing them in the box in the coffee bar. Please include a phone number with your letter. Letters will be printed if space permits, and may be edited for length and/or clarity.

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Scott A. Jones
 Director



Christ's New Creation Community Church
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So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away: see, everything has become new! 2 Corinthians 5:17

Reverend Donna Eubanks
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HOURS Monday - Friday: 8 am - 9 pm
Saturday: 8 am - 6 pm Sunday: 9 am - 5 pm

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SAN DIEGO FEELING GOOD 1998
PANCAKE BREAKFAST,
SPEAKER MEETING

AND WHITE ELEPHANT AUCTION.

"Beyond Our Wildest Dreams"

9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Saturday January 31, 1998.

Guest speaker Patty O. from Laguna Nigual will share her experience, strength and hope beginning at 10:30 AM. Please join us at St. Didacus Church, 4772 Felton Street (just north of Adams Avenue). A \$5.00 Donation can be made through any San Diego Feeling Good Committee member, or for more information call Suzy K. at (619) 502-6825 or John W. S. at 294-3308.

San Diego Feeling Good has committed themselves to ensuring that this will be the best year ever. Please join us at our first event of the year and make this year a year "Beyond Our Wildest Dreams." Also, remember to register for the 1998 round-up. Pre-registration is still just \$20.00. This year we will be celebrating at the fabulous Wyndham Emerald Plaza Hotel, September 4, 5, 6. Registration forms can now be found at your very own Live and Let Live Alano Club.

The French Flower Market

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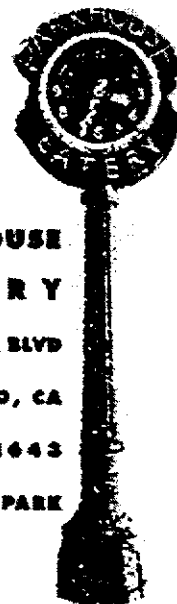
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by Jere H.

Garage Sale

The LLLAC will hold its next Garage Sale on January 31, 1998. There has been a lot of newly-donated items which will be up for sale. Come rummage through the merchandise and find your hidden treasure! If you're interested in helping out with the garage sale or have items to contribute, contact Kris F. or Carleen H.

Step Study Open Enrollment

The renowned Mission Hills step study begins again this month on Tuesday evenings from 7 pm - 9 pm at the church on the corner of Ft. Stockton and Jackdaw. The meeting, in which participants work the 12 steps together, is open for the first few weeks and then closes for the remainder of the year, encouraging a safe and familiar atmosphere among members of the step study.

Successful Holiday Events!

The New Year's Eve AA meeting and dance were a resounding success, providing a safe and fun place for recovering San Diegans to ring in the New Year and raising money for the continued operation of the Live and Let Live Alano Club at the same time. The Christmas Eve Alkathon was also a success. Round-the-clock meetings were held at the LLLAC and a sober time was had by all! Special thanks to LLLAC staff members who decorated the club with impeccable taste! Finally, according to Johnna H., members of the gay and lesbian recovery community were well represented at this year's San Diego New Year's Eve alkathon at 6th and Pennsylvania Aves, both in the planning and execution of meetings. Thank you to all who participated in the holiday events and volunteered their time!

New Board Member Jimm C.

Congratulations to Jimm C., who was elected to the LLLAC board of directors by executive vote on December 13, 1997, to fill the vacancy created by Terry I.'s resignation. Thank you to Terry I. for all her service to the LLLAC, and good luck to Jimm C.!

St. Valentine's Day Dance Planning Committee

The Planning Committee for the St. Valentine's Day Dance meets on Saturdays beginning January 10, 1998 at 4:30pm at the Club. Jack S., Board Member, is the contact person. This is a great way to get involved and meet new people!

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Alcohol is a product of amazing versatility. It will remove stains from designer clothes. It will also remove the clothes off your back. If used in sufficient quantity, It will remove the furniture from the home, Rugs from the floor, food from the table, Lining from the stomach, vision from the eyes, And good judgement from the mind. Alcohol will remove good reputations, Good jobs, good friends, happiness from children's Hearts, Sanity, freedom, spouses, relationships, Mans ability to adjust and live with his fellow Man, And even life itself. As a remover of things, alcohol has no equal.

Author Unknown

I ASKED GOD

I Asked God for strength, that I might achieve. I was made weak, that I might learn to obey. I asked for health, that I might do greater things. I asked for riches, that I might be happy. I was given poverty, that I might be wise. I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men. I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God. I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life. I was given life, that I might enjoy all things. I got nothing that I asked for—but everything I had hoped for. Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered. I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

Anonymous

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perpetuating my sense of powerlessness, as they just didn't seem to support my making any positive changes. I say this only to point out that, even in Alcoholics Anonymous, where we tend to think ourselves enlightened when compared to the general populace, we sometimes get a wee bit carried away with the negative, and spend much of our time making self-fulfilling prophesies. Of course, recognizing that we are all suffering from the disease of alcoholism and a variety of other addictions, I'll just "keep coming back" anyway, as AA is where I get to be around others who are just like me.

It wasn't at all consciously that I decided to apply the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous to my dilemma, but today, in retrospect, I can see that that's really what happened for me. As my holidays begin with Thanksgiving Day, I must acknowledge that I had a good Thanksgiving because I spent it with my brothers and sisters at the Live and Let Alano Club. There I got my foundation of gratitude, which helped to carry me through the rest of the "season". "So," you say, "how did you apply the Steps to your holidays?"

As the rest of the holidays approached, and my desire to have a different Christmas and New Year kept growing, I must admit that I began to play "devil's advocate" in my meetings, where, despite what other people shared, I declared quite frequently that I refused to buy into this illusion that my holidays had to be bad because of my disease (alcoholism, addiction and/or depression). Though I often felt nervous as hell as I made my declarations, and feared for my life that none of you would ever speak to me again, I kept doing it over and over again, and I began getting stronger in my own belief. In retrospect I think this was an application of Steps One, Two and Three, wherein I "admitted my powerlessness over the holidays"; "came to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to 'happy holidays'", and then "made a decision to turn my will and my holidays over to the care of God as I understand Him", understanding thoroughly that my higher Power wants me to be as happy as possible all the time.

As I began looking at myself and my part in the prior holiday blues, Steps Four, Five, Six and Seven came into play. First I "made a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself" (oh, yes, I probably took some of your inventories as well), to find most definitely that my own thinking about the "season" was a major contributor to the sadness of my past holiday seasons; "admitted to God, to myself, and to a lot of other human beings the exact nature of my wrongs (yes, and their wrongs, too); and then became "entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character, the true "bah-humbug" spirit I've carried for many years; and "humbly asked Him to remove my shortcomings", i.e., "Please let me have a happy Christmas season, God."

Steps Eight, Nine and Ten made perfectly clear that the first one on my "Amends" list was to be myself, in that I had for so many years condemned myself to having the worst of holidays, even in times when I was with my loved ones and family, the house was decked from front to rear, and money was not a problem. I could only "make direct amends" to myself and those closest to me by changing my way of thinking and feeling about the whole matter. And as the days before Christmas passed, I realized that I had become so fully ingrained in having bad holidays

that it was necessary to "continue to take personal inventory, and when I was wrong, promptly admit it", and then try to change it. As I began writing Christmas cards and, later, buying a few small gifts for select people, I realized that I was being "painstaking about this phase of my development" and I was truly "amazed before I was halfway through", as I was having a tremendous amount of fun.

As for Step Eleven, I continued to "seek through" my version of "prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with God, praying only for" the happy holidays I knew God had willed for me and "the power to carry that out."

Only my New Year's Day brought Step Twelve home for me, as I became aware that I had truly "had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps". I felt deep in my heart that 1997 had been a truly wondrous, even miraculous year for me. Yes, we all have our ups and downs, our lefts and rights, and a lot of variations and combinations in between. Yet I was able to look back and see that "The Promises" are certainly coming true in my life, as that which I considered "good" about last year far outweighed what I considered "bad"; that most of what I considered "bad" ultimately had good results for me. And this is my attempt to "carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all my affairs".

As I pass from the old year to the new, the one thing I am certain that I want to have continue in my life is my sobriety. In this way, for me there is no "old" or "new", but what I hope will be just a continuation of what has already begun in my life. I hear from those of you who have gone down this path before me that things will always change in my life if I stay sober, and that I can stay sober as long as I don't pick up that first drink.. And though this is traditionally a time during which the general populace does some self examination and makes new resolutions to better themselves in the year ahead, I look forward to continuing to "practice the principles" which we in recovery get to do all year long. To wish myself and all of you a "Happy New Year" is not at all inconsistent, in that, even if your 1997 was the best of the best, 1998 can still be "happy" and even better. Perhaps for this alcoholic all I really need to acknowledge is that sobriety is the better way of life, and that, by staying sober, I'm pretty much guaranteed a "Happy New Year".

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Club Benefit of "Oh Mary" at Diversionary Theater

Our very own Wayne T, the playwright of "Oh Mary" at the Diversionary Theater, will have a benefit performance for the Live & Let Live Alano Club on Sunday January 18, 1998 at 7:00 pm. Diversionary Theater Tickets are for the is event are available at the theater.

Newsletter Committee Added Features

The newsletter committee is thinking of adding a new feature to the newsletter where we publish a list of those members willing to be temporary sponsors for newcomers. Please let us have your feedback on this idea, or any other feature you would like to see in the newsletter, by putting your comments in the newsletter box in the coffee bar.

San Diego Feeling Good 1998 Needs Speakers, Tapes

San Diego Feeling Good Program Committee is looking for out-of-town speaker gay and lesbian speaker tapes, preferably with a way to contact the speakers if possible. If you can help with this project, please contact Program Committee co-chair Teresa V. at 619-576-8254.

No More Minutes in Newsletter

Due to space constraints, the minutes of board meetings will no longer be published in the newsletter. Copies of the minutes can be read at the Live and Let Live Alano Club.

Time Crosses Hands

*I'd lost my slim white light in such a surly darkness
I'd contrived, elithering so fast into a slurry
of booze I soon forgot who ever was I upended or
where I'd slipped. And death was in some hurry!*

*A blizzard scratched thin fingers at my door,
insisting I offer it shelter, if only
to freeze my last intentions in deapair,
by leaving me shivering, breathless where*

*I'd lapsed. Outside in snow. A void. When I revived,
the clock in emergency craved for 3 a.m. I wept
release from dying.. An effortless crosswave swept
me past for present. And I was on a beach. Awake!*

*Years have passed me other hands. Are you still wired
to the ground? Cross your hands in mine. You are so
tired.*

By Richard Yallance Janke, January 8th, 1998

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Schedule of Meetings
The Live & Let Live Alano Club
1730 Monroe Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116
Telephone: (619) 298-8008

MONDAY

11:45 AM Sober Nooners AA Discussion
5:45 PM Free to Be AA Discussion
7:00 PM Alanon Discussion
8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous NA Discussion

TUESDAY

11:45 AM Sober Nooners AA Discussion
5:45 PM Free to Be AA Discussion
8:00 PM Sex and Sobriety AA Discussion
8:00 PM Sober Sisters (Women only) AA Discussion

WEDNESDAY

11:45 AM Sober Nooners AA Discussion
5:45 PM Free to Be AA Discussion
5:45 PM Overeaters Anonymous OA Discussion
8:00 PM Hope Without Dope NA Discussion
8:00 PM There Are Those Too Sanctuary
(Dual Dx:NA/AA/Psych.Disorder) Discussion

THURSDAY

11:45 AM Sober Nooners AA Discussion
5:45 PM Free to Be AA Discussion
5:45 PM AA Comes of Age AA Book Study
8:00 PM Butts Out AA Discussion

FRIDAY

11:45 AM Sober Nooners AA Discussion
5:45 PM Free to Be AA Discussion
8:00 PM Sobriety and Miracles
(Leather/Fetish Meeting) AA Discussion

SATURDAY

10:00 AM Nicotine Anonymous Discussion
10:00 AM Women's Meeting AA Discussion
11:45 AM Sober Nooners AA Discussion
2:00 PM How and Why NA Discussion
6:00 PM As Bill Sees It AA Discussion
8:00 PM Two Bit Speakers AA Speaker
8:15 PM Intimacy & Sobriety (Men Only) AA Discussion

SUNDAY

9:00 AM Women's Meeting AA Discussion
11:00 AM Straight Shooters AA Discussion
5:00 PM We Agnostics AA Discussion
6:00 PM Beautiful Beginnings AA Speaker &
Discussion
8:00 PM Principals Before Personalities NA Speaker &
Discussion
6:00 PM Second Tuesday of Each Month
AA District 19 General Service Reps Meeting
5:15 PM Second Saturday of Each Month
LLLAC Open Board of Directors Meeting

I Am A Miracle

The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves.

Alcoholics Anonymous, page 25

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SAN DIEGO RECOVERY RESOURCES

The following organizations are just SOME of the multitude of resources which are available, to both members and non-members alike, throughout San Diego County. We also encourage our readers to consider our advertisers as resources in much the same way. We invite you all to Carry the Message just a wee bit further by letting our advertisers know you saw their ad in our monthly newsletter.

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299-8747

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291-1400

The Corner Clubhouse
A Division of Professional Community Services
2852 University Ave.
683-7423 Fax (619) 683-7428

David's Place
3766 Fifth Avenue
294-8908

Detox
232-9343

Feeling Good 1997
P.O. Box 3999, San Diego, CA 92163

The Gay and Lesbian Community Center
1916 Normal Street
692-2077 or (619) 692-4297

Gay and Lesbian 24 Hour Information Hotline
294-4636

Gay Men's Spiritual Retreat
P.O. Box 34035, San Diego, CA 92163

N.A. Central Office
(619) 584-1007

Safe Space
3305 Adams Ave #10
(619) 282-3453 phone & fax

Stepping Stone Residential Recovery Services
3667 Central Ave (at 40th) & 3425 Fifth Ave. (at Upas)
(619) 584-4010