



## Carry the Message

July/August 1996

1730 Monroe Avenue, San Diego, CA 92163 \* (619) 298-8008

A Decade of Service to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual,  
and Transgender Recovering Community

### Upcoming Events

- July 20:** Pride Recovery Dance. A Feeling Good '96 and LLLAC fund-raiser.
- July 26:** Pride Rally!
- July 27:** Pride Parade!
- July 27 & 28:** Pride Festival and Coffee Exchange. Proceeds from the Pride Coffee Exchange go to LLLAC, Stepping Stone, and Feeling Good.
- August 11:** Feeling Good Picnic and Dog Show.
- August 30 & 31, September 1:** Feeling Good Roundup - 12 Years of Freedom!

### LLLAC Membership Meetings

What are they? They are your chance to give us your input about the Club - changes, improvements, problems you see. They are also for you to find out what you can do to help the LLLAC. Two of this year's meetings have already gone by - - Have you attended? There will be a meeting in July. Ask at the coffee bar for the date.

### **! July Birthdays !**

<u>Belly Button</u>	<u>Sobriety</u>
Allan R.	Calvin E.
Bree K.	Chris S.
Cyndi S.	Debbie L.
Gary K.	Ernie S.
Jeffry S.	Jeffry S.
Jim F.	Ken A.
Joey B.	Lawrence L.
Kyle J.	Lawrence M.
Leon H.	Mark Q.
Patrick L.	Michael L.
Robby H.	Michael L.
Scott S.	Nicholas P.
Suzen P.	Robby H.
Victoria F.	Robert G.
	Robert T.
	Timothy M.

### **! August Birthdays !**

<u>Belly Button</u>	<u>Sobriety</u>
Bob B.	Eva L.
Brenda H.	Helen S.
Cathy Sue D.	Jill R.
David B.	Joseph L.
Dawn D.	Kimberly B.
Dean C.	Linda L.
Debra M.	Linda B.
Donna G.	H. Magnum
Gary S.	Madelyn W.
Gary S.	Mark F.
Helen S.	Mark R.
Jill R.	Melissa B.
Jerry W.	Pam D.
John C.	Rosa L.
John P.	Ralph E.
John W.	Tom M.
Mike M.	
Mark R.	
Michael L.	
Ted P.	
Tom M.	

### Our Pride by Nick L. Napier (reprinted with permission)

In celebration of an eternity of growth, please allow us to introduce ourselves: We are family - the sons and daughters born and raised to believe in the red, white, and blue, and the freedom it so proudly represents. We are your relatives, neighbors, coworkers and friends; standing side by side in this great chain of diversity. We are the artists, technicians and laborers dedicated to pursue, create, and implement new ideas that may one day enrich and enhance the live around us.

We are Americans, and we are gay. Historically, our natural sensitivity has been mistaken for weakness. To many, we are labeled as sissies, cowards, and perverts.

Sissies, because we love beauty; Cowards because we choose reasoning over violence; Perverts because we have the capability to

love and the courage to walk down the path of difference.

We do have our problems, but to compare a few of us to the masses would be like us saying that all straight men assassinate Presidents and that all straight women drown their children. Our pride does not lie in the fact that we are gay. Our pride is instilled in us, like you, because we are people. We are the colors of America. Throughout history we fought and fell beside you to ensure that our flag still continued to wave. We doctored your sick and dying, and we have never been ashamed to shed our tears to comfort you.

Our pride is not just a parade. Our parade is a symbol that we exist and have survived the prejudice, guilt, and shame that society has taken on itself to offer us.

Our flag is not a replacement for Old Glory. Our flag is a statement to ourselves and to the world that pride, like trust, is a personal, treasured, sacred part of our lives. Our pride is also dedicated to the memory of those who have left us, for our pride is honest in saying that we did not cause A.I.D.S. - we are the ones working hardest to find a cure - for all people.

We are not gay Americans, we are Americans who happen to be gay. And yes . . . we are Proud.

**Declaration of Self-Esteem,**  
by Virginia Satir

I am me. In all the World,  
there is no one else exactly  
like me.

Everything that comes out of  
me is authentically mine  
because I alone chose it. I  
own everything about me; my  
body, my feelings, my mouth,  
my voice, all my actions,  
whether they be to others or  
to myself.

I own my fantasies, my  
dreams, my hopes, my fears.  
I own all my triumphs and  
successes, all my failures  
and mistakes, because I own  
all of me.

I can become intimately  
acquainted with me. By  
doing so, I can love me and  
be friendly with me in all  
my parts. I know there are  
aspects about myself that  
puzzle me, and other aspects  
that I do not know. But as  
long as I am friendly and  
loving to myself, I can  
courageously and hopefully  
look for solutions to the  
puzzles and for ways to find  
out more about me.

However I look and sound,  
whatever I say and do, and  
whatever I think and feel at  
a given moment in time is  
authentically me. If later  
some parts of how I looked,  
sounded, thought and felt  
turn out to be unfitting, I  
can discard that which is  
unfitting, keep the rest,  
and invent something new for  
that which I discarded.

I can see, hear, feel,  
think, say and do. I have  
the tools to survive, to be  
close to others, to be  
productive, and to make  
sense and order out of the  
world of people and things  
outside of me.

I own me, and therefore I  
can engineer me. I am me  
and I am okay.

**The "Blossoming of Sobriety,**  
by Dick T.

To me, I see my growth in  
sobriety as a sort of  
"blossoming." Observing  
myself (Step 11), and taking  
everyone else's inventory  
(infamous Step 4), I

realized that each of us is  
like a newly flowering bud.  
When I first got to the  
program I was anxious and  
totally lacking in patience  
- Those who know me will say  
"So, what's changed?"

Well, when I was a child  
and reasonably sober I loved  
flowers. I was in such a  
hurry to see them bloom, I  
prayed them open. They  
turned brown, wilted, and  
died real fast.

My "blossoming" came as a  
result of my fellow  
A.A.er's, who watered me  
(with coffee), nurtured me  
with ideas (from the Big  
Book), and gave me sunshine  
(love). Like any individual  
blossom, I opened in my own  
good time to my own proper  
size and glory. I am so  
glad that no one forced me  
to bloom on their schedule.  
There are a great variety of  
recoverees in A.A., just as  
there are many different  
types of flowers in the  
world. None of them,  
flowers or persons, should  
be forced if they are to  
achieve their personal best.

\*\*\*\*\*  
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Live Alano Club (LLIAC) or  
of its Board of Directors.  
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688-952

Being Alive  
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The Gay and Lesbian  
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Stepping Stone Day Program  
3425 Fifth Avenue  
295-3995

Stepping Stone Recovery Home  
3767 Centre Avenue  
584-4010 or 584-9000

The Corner Clubhouse  
A Division of Professional  
Community Services  
2852 University Avenue  
683-7423, FAX 683-7428

Auntie Helen's  
4028 30th Street  
299-8747

**"There Were Times" by Anon.**

There were times, when you had "no  
time!"  
But you "took time," for me.  
Time when you had "too many cares"  
of your own.  
Still, for me "you cared," and  
didn't leave me all alone.  
You are always there to help me,  
with "interest" and "concern."  
With all the "sadness" in my life,  
like a "Candle" your "love" burns.  
You are the one whose shoulders  
I cry on, anytime, night or day.  
There are no words to say  
"Thank you," or no amount of  
"gold!"  
May "God Bless You," and return to  
you,  
"His Love," "One Hundred Fold."  
"All My Love," and thanks for being  
my "Special Angel."

**Clean, Sober, and HIV Positive**  
by Paul Harris  
(reprinted with permission)

As if the HIV/AIDS community doesn't have enough to be concerned about, including HIV prevention, research, disease management and AIDS services, there is a different problem which demands its attention: alcohol and drug addiction.

In the gay community, which has been so drastically permeated and devastated by HIV, there has long existed the twin problems of alcohol and substance abuse. The number of gay men who suffer from drug addiction (some claim 25%) is believed to be much higher than that of the general population. Based on the few statistics available, it also seems likely that gay men who abuse drugs and alcohol are more likely to contract HIV because they are at greater risk of engaging in risky sexual behavior.

Another reason that alcoholism and drug addiction are problems in the HIV community is because intravenous drug use is now a common means of contracting HIV. This means that many who are already battling substance abuse find that they must also battle the AIDS virus.

Others with HIV can be tempted to turn to drug and alcohol abuse as a way to avoid facing the disease. Because of the severe social stigma attached to HIV, because isolation becomes a factor for many, and because there is no known cure for the virus, some people use drugs or alcohol as a means to escape the reality of HIV in their lives.

The good news is that many HIV-positive people are facing their drug and alcohol addiction as they attempt to pursue a productive, healthy and high quality life following diagnosis. They know that substance abuse taxes the body to begin with. When

magnified by an immune system weakened by HIV, it can have even more detrimental effects.

Although many HIV-positive people are actively seeking to control their addictions, for some it can take a while. Greg, a 38-year-old man living in Manhattan, was diagnosed in 1984 but took three years before he could finally stop drinking with the help of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.). "I tried everything. I went to a health farm, created rules and limits for myself, but I never stuck to them. Nothing seemed to work. Then finally in the summer of 1987, I just realized that I had had enough and couldn't stop drinking on my own. That's when I joined A.A." Since then he hasn't looked back. today his T-cell count is higher than it was a decade ago. "I can't prove anything, but I think I would either be dead or very ill by now if I was still drinking and drugging." he said.

"Today, I am a participant in life. I've run eight marathons in the past 43 months. I travel. I've never been more productive. Life has never been better."

Peter is a Cuban-born hotel manager who has been living with HIV for 10 years. He pointed out that one of the central themes of recovery, taking life literally "one day at a time," is helpful in dealing with the virus. He noted that being sober makes him more aware of doing things that are detrimental to his well-being. He said, "It also allows me to be more aware of what's going on scientifically and of the options available to me."

Paul is a successful 40-year-old practicing attorney in Washington, D.C. Not that long ago he was selling crack to finance his own drug habit, while working as a lawyer. In the old days he would sometimes go up to four or five days without food or sleep while

on one of his crack binges. Today, he has been clean and sober for over six years. For him, "A.A. is the best support network around and has helped me not to feel alone. Today I feel better about myself. I have an attitude of hope about HIV and work out in a gym four or five days a week."

Some people, once they come to terms with their addiction, totally turn their lives around to such an extent that they become leaders within their communities. One such person is Fred Bingham. After he stopped abusing drugs and alcohol he co-founded an organization called DAAIR (Direct AIDS Alternative Information Resources), an 1,800-member group that focuses on the nutritional aspects of AIDS. He has testified twice before Congress on dietary supplements, and has lectured to numerous organizations and institutions.

Tom Duane, who is also HIV positive, has been in recovery for 12 years. He is a member of New York City Council and was a 1994 candidate for a U.S. congressional seat. He is very blunt about the effects of his abstinence from alcohol. "Every day I am alive is because I am sober. If I had still been drinking I know that I physically wouldn't have been up to the demands of running for, and serving in, public office."

A professional who has observed hundreds of people living with HIV/AIDS over the past few years is Robert Stafford of the Manhattan Plaza AIDS Project. He notices that people in recovery confronted with an HIV or AIDS diagnosis have "a far greater sense of self-responsibility, accountability, conscience, a value system, and a sense of self-nurture -- all necessary in living with the illness.

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**HIV Positive, cont.**

In contrast, many people not in recovery need far more looking after, requiring management of their lives for them." He noted that people in recovery had a much greater quality of life than their still drinking/drug-using counterparts, "in large part because they already had a reference of how to deal with a major life problem."

Eric Stamm, who is coordinator of AIDS services for the Actors Fund, encourages his clients to look at ways in which they can boost their immune function. Halting alcohol and substance abuse is at the top of his list. He tells clients point blank, "Your number one AIDS survival task is to control drug abuse, especially that of cocaine. It has been clearly shown that cocaine stimulates HIV activity." He has observed that a certain spiritual approach to life has healing qualities. "Substance abuse definitely affects a person's ability to process emotions -- and should be avoided."

**To Those Searching For a Way**  
*How do you tell if you have a problem with alcohol or drugs?*

The answer is relatively simple. You need to honestly decide if alcohol or drugs cost you more than money. If so, you've got a problem. For example, if your drinking or drugging has cost you a job, your health, a relationship, your home, or your self-respect, then you have a problem.

*What do you do if you think you have a problem?*

Many people have been able to give up their addiction by using what are called 12-step programs. The most famous of them is Alcoholics Anonymous, founded in 1935, which has literally millions of members around the world. Over the years it has spawned dozens of similar

organizations that focus on a particular addiction -- Narcotics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, etc. Because these organizations operate on a basis of "attraction rather than promotion" they never advertise, although their phone numbers are listed in the phone book. One of the cardinal rules is that of anonymity, to protect anyone who attends a meeting.

If you go to a meeting, nothing will be expected of you. The program operates totally on a first-name basis. In large cities there are often gay meetings of A.A., some "club houses" where meetings of gay members take place and even A.A. meetings specifically for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Some people have found it helpful to go to a drug or alcohol rehabilitation center. There is a rehab center aimed specifically at gay men and lesbians called the Pride Institute with facilities in Minnesota, Los Angeles, and New York. Since 30-40% of the people who enter Pride are HIV positive, the Pride Institute is also expert at dealing with issues related to HIV/AIDS.

Many people with HIV and also those in recovery find support in self-help or daily meditation books, such as The Color of Light.

The message from those who are HIV positive and have faced their problem with alcohol or drugs is clear: If you have an addiction, seek help. From experience, they say that your health and quality of life will improve.

**About the Author**-- Paul Harris is a writer who lives in Manhattan, New York. He has written on a wide variety of subjects, from sports to the arts, for journals ranging from Body Positive and Genre, to Running News. He has been diagnosed HIV positive for over a decade.

**San Diego Recovery Resources**

Stepping Stone Residential Recovery Services -  
3767 Central Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92105-2506  
(619) 584-4010

Stepcrest  
3425 5th Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92103  
(619) 295-3995

Live and Let Live Alano Club  
1730 Monroe Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92116-3955  
(619) 298-8008

AIDS Foundation San Diego  
140 Arbor Drive  
San Diego, CA 92103  
(619) 686-5050

Being Alive  
3960 Park Boulevard  
San Diego, CA  
(619) 291-1400

The Lesbian and Gay Community Center  
3916 Normal Street  
San Diego, CA  
(619) 692-4297

**Pride Parade**

This year the Live and Let Live Alano Club, Stepping Stone, Feeling Good '96, and the Gay Men's Spiritual Retreat are marching in the parade together. Each organization will carry their banners. We will also be showing our unity, strength, and numbers by having the Recovery, Pride, and Liberty flags, as well as the 55 American State and Territory flags carried within our group.

**San Diego Feeling Good Update - July 1996**

The 1996 Feeling Good Committee is continuing to prepare for the Labor Day celebration of recovery for your enjoyment. The celebration will begin on August 30rd and continue through September 1st. The theme this year is:

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S.D. Feeling Good, Cont.

"Twelve Years of Freedom." There's a fabulous logo with which to adorn your t-shirts and coffee mugs. The speakers will be: On Friday night - Robert K. from L.A.; on Saturday night - Edie C. from Sacramento; on Sunday morning - MaryAnn M., also from L.A. Registration flyers can be found at the Alano Club. If you would like to volunteer in any capacity before or during roundup, please call either Carol (296-0197) or Dominic (298-5545).

To the Live and Let Live Club by Nick P.

I was privileged to represent the Live and Let Live Alano Club for Stepping Stone's "Lighting the Way for 20 Years, A Recovery House for Gay Men and Women," their 20th Anniversary Gala held June 7th, 1996.

What made this more special for me, is that I was one of the eleven people (nine gay men and women, a straight man and woman) who had a Dream that it would be nice to have a recovery house for gay alcoholic men and women.

I was sober for just over one year when we had that Dream come true. Stepping Stone Recovery House was at 23rd and B streets across from the Gay and Lesbian Center. There were only about twelve people at the first meeting which was July 12th, 1975.

I will be 21 years sober in July, but I don't say this to impress you because I took it one day at a time. I've been through all those years, and I would not change anything for the world. I hope Stepping Stone has twenty more good years. I also pray to my Higher Power that I live to see the 25 year anniversary gala. After all, I will only be 72 years young in

In closing, I want to thank the Live and Let Live Alano Club again for selecting me to be their representative. I shall be forever grateful.

MUSICALLY YOURS

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Mac Daddy Weathered the StormVerse One:

He remembers when kids were good.  
Now he thinks it's good, sometimes, when they're bad.  
He's seen a lot of shotgun weddings.  
Now he kind of admires Murphy Brown.  
He's seen the world go to war two times.  
Now he wonders what we're fighting for.

Chorus:

Mac Daddy weathered the storm.  
Now he's comin' out the other end,  
Knowing what he knew.  
Mac Daddy weathered the storm.  
Now he's comin' out the other end,  
Knowing what we knew all along ...  
... That people are all the same ...  
... and nothing good happens without change.

Verse Two:

Buried Gladys long ago.  
Now he says thank heaven for little girls,  
For they make the nicest women.  
Bounced his grandkids on his knee.  
And stuck around to see them graduate.  
He's been around the block a few times.  
I think I can trust him to teach me how to walk.  
Still as sharp as a tack ...  
... And twice as biting?

Repeat ChorusVerse Three:

Such a lucky man as this will surely go on and on.  
To leave his mark on four generations.  
And I will bring him chocolates and cigars, for as long as he'd have me.  
Seems such a meager price for a smile, and priceless stories.

Repeat ChorusElegy (for Kathy & Lynette)Verse One:

Oh- wild desert rose has the smile faded so quickly from your eyes?  
And oh- has it grown cold, in your heart where you live?  
And the flame, it can flicker but, it can't die yet  
You have miles and miles to go.

Chorus:

Wild desert rose...  
The pain it comes quickly but, just as quickly it goes.  
When your heartbeat subsides...  
There's a pain in my heart for my Wild desert rose.

Repeat ChorusVerse Two:

Oh- and I can't deny, that the pain,  
It cuts through you just like a knife  
And no ... NO! I can't come inside ...  
And take away the pain to the place where you hide.  
As we try to find comfort midst these four wailing walls.  
You have miles and miles to go.

Repeat ChorusVerse Three:

Oh- wild desert rose ...  
There's a better place for you once you leave my side,  
And I pray - oh I pray that I'll see you there.  
As the light, it comes to take away my fair desert bride.  
And the flame, it may flicker but it won't die yet,  
You have time to let go.

Final Chorus:

Wild desert rose ...  
The pain, it comes quickly but, just as quickly it goes.  
When your heartbeat subsides ...  
There's a change in my heart for my wild desert rose.

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**SCHEDULE - SCHEDULE - SCHEDULE****The Live and Let Live Alano Club**

1730 Monroe Street  
 San Diego, CA 92163  
 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 (Discussion)

**Tuesday:**

11:45 am - Sober Nooners (AA Discussion)  
 5:45 pm - Free to Be (AA Discussion)  
 6:00 pm - AA District 19 General Service  
 Representatives Meeting  
 (2nd Tuesday every month)  
 8:00 pm - Sober Sisters (AA Discussion -  
 Women Only)

**Wednesday:**

11:45 am - Sober Nooners (AA Discussion)  
 5:45 pm - Free to Be (AA Discussion)  
 5:45 pm - Overeaters Anonymous  
 8:00 pm - Hope Without Dope (NA Discussion)  
 8:00 pm - There Are Those, Too...  
 Sanctuary (Dual Diagnosis - AA/NA  
 Discussion)

**Thursday:**

11:45 am - Sober Nooners (AA Discussion)  
 5:45 pm - Free to Be (AA Discussion)  
 5:45 pm - Nicotine Anonymous (Discussion)  
 7:00 pm - Open Board of Directors Meeting  
 (2nd Thursday every month)  
 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 - Women's Meeting (AA Discussion -  
 Women Only)  
 11:45 am - Sober Nooners (AA Discussion)  
 6:00 pm - As Bill Sees It (AA Discussion)  
 8:00 pm - Two-Bit Speakers (AA Speakers)  
 8:15 pm - Intimacy and Men (AA Discussion -  
 Men Only)

**Sunday:**

9:00 am - Women's Meeting (AA Discussion -  
 Women Only)  
 11:00 am - Straight Shooters (AA Discussion)  
 3:00 pm - SCA (Spanish)  
 5:00 pm - We Agnostics (AA Discussion)  
 6:00 pm - Beautiful Beginnings (AA Speaker  
 / Discussion)  
 8:00 pm - NA Discussion