



Carry The Message

The Monthly Newsletter of the Live & Let Live Alano Club

October, 1997

4th Annual Halloween Celebration

By Jere H.

Drag out your costumes and your good spirits the evening of October 25 for this year's 4th Annual Halloween dance. The dance committee is planning an eerily good time for us from 8 - 12 pm at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center at 1916 Normal Street. Tickets can be purchased from committee members or from the LLLAC coffee bar and are only \$5.00 in advance and \$7.00 at the door.

As for this year's tricks and treats, the Halloween dance is shaping up to be wicked fun, featuring a stage show orchestrated by the bewitching Ms. Tracie X. There will also be dee-jay entertainment and door prizes. Prepare yourself for some surprises as well, including prizes for the best costume in many unusual categories!

Kris F., LLLAC's Club Manager, explained that the dance was being held somewhat early this year to accommodate the Center's Halloween event, which is happening the weekend of the holiday. This is LLLAC's fourth Halloween dance, and Kris F. recalls that last year's party was a "howlingly good time".

A bake sale will be held sometime before the dance (the date will be posted in the Club) to help defray the cost of the event. Additionally, there will be a traditional Pumpkin Carving party, from 1 to 4 pm on Friday, October 25, and all entries will be used to decorate the dance. The Halloween dance is the LLLAC's important October fundraiser, and its funds help keep the LLLAC's doors open to the recovery community.



A Twelve Step Story

by Michael N.

I could not control my drug use. I tried to control it by using with different people to trying different amounts to mixing drugs, and so on. I would blame others when sometimes I wouldn't get high. And there were even times when I said, "Okay, that's enough - I need to quit", but that would only last a day or two and I was usually sleeping for those times.

I started off sniffing crystal meth and I needed to sell it to support my habit. At one point, I used to put people down for slamming it in their veins, thinking that I was so much better than they were. But only a few short years later I was off and running doing the same thing and daring anyone to do more than me at one time.

I ignored the progressive nature of my disease, because I felt a sense of power when I had drugs, and

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Carry The Message

The Monthly Newsletter of
The Live & Let Live Alano Club

A decade of Service to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender
Recovering Community
Located at 1730 Monroe Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116
Telephone: (619) 298-8008

The Board of Directors: Co-Chair: Scott J.; Co-Chair: Colleen S.; Secretary: Carleen H.;
Treasurer: Jo S.; Membership: Jack S.; Rules & Regulations: Wayne R.; Member at Large:
Terry I.; Member at Large: Open

Statement of Purpose:

—The Live and Let Live Alano Club is to provide continuing support for recovering alcoholics, addicts, members of 12-step programs, and their friends and families, in a relaxed and caring environment free from alcohol and other drugs.

—The Club accomplishes this purpose by providing information for the recovering alcoholic, addict, or 12-step member, and by furnishing meeting and conference space for Alcoholics Anonymous and other 12-step Recovery programs. The Club does not provide counseling services, or any formal referral services. Individual members may sometimes be able to refer those in need to appropriate area service agencies.

—Fellowship—the exchange of ideas and general support—is an important part of any alcohol, drug, or 12-step recovery program. The Live and Let Live Alano Club serves in this aspect by providing social activities and special events in an alcohol free and drug free environment without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, religion or lack of religion, political affiliation, or marital, financial, or military status.

—As a private membership-supported club, the Live and Let Live Alano Club is not part of Alcoholics Anonymous; however, the Club's Board of Directors and daily operations are guided by the 12-steps and 12-traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

—Intending to be inclusive, the Club was founded in 1983 to provide its services and facilities with a special outreach to the gay and lesbian community, with the knowledge that for some people, being Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender and alcoholic or otherwise addicted is a special challenge preferably shared with others of similar orientation.

—One does not have to be an alcoholic, an addict, a member of a 12-step program, or have any particular sexual orientation to be a member of the Live and Let Live Alano Club; therefore membership in the Alano Club does not indicate anything regarding those areas.

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 any and all materials submitted as we deem necessary.

The Newsletter Committee:

Jere H.; Jim L.; Tim G.

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Publication Deadline: Advertisements and other submissions must be received no later than the **21st of the month** for inclusion in the next month's issue.

Advertisements - Submissions Information: Please contact Jere H. by telephone at (619) 224-7824 or by email at Jkhalligan@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 BEG OF YOU! 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!

"THANK YOU" VOLUNTEERS

THANKS TO:

Bruce, Jeff J., Walt D., Kathy M., Maria O,
Kathy P., Wanda R., Rogelio, Kristina,
Jim E., J.C.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Jo S., Scott J., Jeff J., Maria O., Lindy D.,
Rhonda W., Will C., Becky & Ginger,
Karen, Michelle B., Waye R., Chris V.,
Jere H., Rhona G., Alyssa M.,
Di & Carlos R., Carleen H., Colleen S.,
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Keetek S., Gary J., Randy R., Brian D.,
Jordan D., Summer K., Jim L.,
Gail & Frank.

EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Jeff F., Robert M., Joey B., Matt H., and
All the Contributors who have made the
Club Newsletter the best ever!!!

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WITHOUT YOU!!!**



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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
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 and 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
3:00 PM	Second Saturday of Each Month LLLAC Open Board of Directors Meeting
1:00 PM	Second Sunday of Each Month Newsletter Committee Meeting

A Twelve Step Story, continued from Page 1

I looked down on the idiots with problems around me. It took several trips to jail before I even realized that my life was really unmanageable. But it took a lot to make me admit I was powerless. I was like a bungee jumper with too much rope: I kept hitting my bottom and bouncing up for more. Only after hitting my head one too many times did I understand that I could not keep on going on like that. It was then I came to start understanding that there is actually a power greater than myself and I could ask for help before, not after, the cuffs were slapped on my wrists.

Before I quit, I was scared that, when I gave up the drugs, I would be faced with the emotional roller coaster of feelings that I had managed to stuff so far down in myself, and that I would have to give up my so-called friends that I hung out with or that stuck to me because they knew that they could get high around me. I bounced in and out of the NA rooms for a while with the intention of quitting, but as soon as I got home I found myself once again weak and wanting to get high. At times I wished I could have the love for myself as much as I had for my next fix.

Eventually, I had to stand back and examine myself and ask, "What is the matter with Michael?" I then understood that I have the disease of addiction and by the grace of God I am not alone: there are many of us in different shapes, colors, and of all ages. That is where the concept of "one addict helping another" comes into play in my mind. And if the other addicts can quit, then it may be curable and not just arrested for the moment.

At least nowadays instead of picking up a rig, I pick up that telephone and, for once in my life, I am doing a smart thing. At times I pray for the willpower not to use and for me it works, so I guess there is someone up there looking out for me, even though he still has not revealed the winning lottery numbers.

I now try to go to as many meetings as I can so I can get the full meaning of what the addiction was like for others and the way they handled it. Meetings also make me say to myself, "See, you were not the only one who was doing this, so don't feel so foolish." I can now look at my character defects and work on improving them rather than worrying about others' addictions. I have to take care of myself, not them. If they go out, all I can say is "Welcome Back!" with a big smile if I see them again.


I know that I am powerless over most things in my life, but at times it brings up my behavior of being obsessive with things I do and it is in a good way at times now since I am not trying to use it in my drug use. The compulsive behavior does still get me in trouble at times with my retail spending sprees. I am at least able to channel out the getting and using of drugs on a day-to-day basis.

During my addiction process, I lost almost everything I had, from material possessions to emotions to my relationship. All that was lost because of my stupidity to think that I could control my drug use. Once I was able to make up my mind to stay clean, I got honest with myself and with others in my support group and I was able to listen to their advice

Continued on Page 5

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CLUB MEMBERSHIP

by and for members

Award Recipients

The August Service Award Recipient was the Pride Coffee Exchange Committee! The club is proud of the work done by the team who staffed the coffee exchange at the Festival. We did great!!! Sure, there was a problem with the electricity, and a few control issues, but the bottom line is we had lots and lots of fun. And we grossed over \$4,000, of which a sizable chunk went to the Pride organization and smaller portions to other recovery organizations.

Congratulations to the September Service Award recipient: Walt D.!!! Walt's recovery work has been exemplary, including performing lots of volunteer work, major contributions to the Pride Coffee booth effort, and serving the club and recovery community every Saturday evening by working at the coffee bar. The Board recognizes the quality of Walt's recovery efforts and we want to thank him. So congratulations to Walt, September Service Award recipient!

Dipping Club Membership

As of the September Board meeting we had slightly over 130 active paid-up members. This is a significant drop from the beginning of the summer when we had over 160 active paid-up members.

As we've all heard before, a low membership account directly threatens the club's ability to keep its doors open. So we've had to ask, "What is wrong?" We aren't looking for fault or blame, but asking, "What can we do to win people back?" I had hoped to get some good feedback from the membership survey, but only about 40 members participated.

Why is this so important? From a financial viewpoint, membership dues are a significant portion of the funding that keeps the club's doors open. Furthermore, with fewer members, each member has to do more to keep the club in operation, and vice versa. While we hope everyone contributes in their own way to the club's success, we recognize that not everyone is able to do everything. Having a larger

pool of members makes it easier to find someone who can perform a given task or duty in support of the club.

Membership is Best Deal in Town

It benefits us all to convince everyone who uses the club to become members. The cost is very reasonable: \$15.00 per month. For the same price as a few specialty coffees at Starbucks or a medium-priced meal in a restaurant, you get a clean, well-kept, friendly and supportive atmosphere in which you can work on your recovery. And you get serious discounts at the coffee bar. Frankly, this is the best deal in town.

There has been talk of increasing the membership dues, but the Board has put that off for the time being and is keeping the dues structure the way it is. The obvious solution to our dipping-membership levels is to convince more non-members to join, and to convince lapsed members to become current. Our goal is not to become an enormous bureaucracy—it is to keep a simple organization going so we can be there for all of our brothers and sisters who need our support when they decide that alcohol and drugs no longer work.

Well enough of the pulpit pounding. Have a good month. I hope to see—but not recognize—you all at the Halloween Dance.

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NEWS NOTES

Board Elections

The LLLAC Board of Directors will hold its elections on October 18, 1997. Club members in good standing can vote that day during club hours by filling out a ballot at the coffee bar. Board member Jack Schaefer, who is not currently running for re-election, pointed out that voting "gives club members the ability to determine how the Board will be composed and, in effect, what direction the club will take. Every member should exercise his or her right to vote." Members elect candidates to board membership generally; the board then elects specific officers from within its ranks. Five board members will be elected this year to serve two-year terms, and four current board members are up for re-election. More information about the candidates and the election process can be found on the easel in the Club.

Newcomer / Sponsorship Workshop

The LLLAC will host a workshop on sponsorship and newcomers' issues on October 18, 1997, from 9 - 11 am. This event will give participants an opportunity to hear ideas on how to choose and benefit from a sponsor, as well as to learn AA lingo and find out how to become involved in service work. The event is sponsored by AA District 19/Imperial Area and is free of charge. For more information, please contact Teresa V. at 576-8254.

Lambda Recovery Weekend

There may still be a few slots remaining for the Lambda Recovery Weekend (November 14-16). LRW is a celebration of recovery held at the beautiful and spiritual Camp Cedar Glen in Julian, California. LRW seeks to enhance unity and under-

standing in the lesbian and gay recovering community. The first LRW was held last fall and was a tremendous success. For more information, contact Kenny B. a/k/a Julie McCoy at 293-3971.

Pumpkin Carving

The Club will once again host a pumpkin carving party the Friday before the Halloween Dance, October 24, 1997, from 1pm to 4a pm. The pumpkins will be used to decorate the Dance. Euray P. will again lead us in this fun and creative event.

Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be held at LLLAC October 11, 1997 at 5:15 pm. All are welcome, and encouraged, to attend. Board meetings are regularly held the second Saturday of each month at that time.

since 1917

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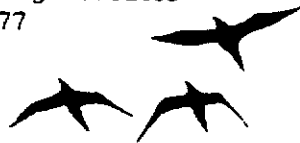
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Scott A. Jones
Director

A Twelve Step Story, continued from page 3

without biting their heads off.

One thing I am sure of today is that I cannot control my drug use, and I am unwilling to stop when I am active in my addiction, so this makes me very willing to do whatever it takes to keep clean.

I am now able to be honest about what it takes for me to stay clean, even though at times my addict mind tells me to lie, that everything will be fine. That is when I talk to my higher power and ask him to please help me not pick up that day. So in a way, I guess I have surrendered to a power greater than myself, which is remarkable. I am now able to say, "I, Michael, am an addict", and that is a big step and that is the first step to me.

It feels like a great burden was lifted when I was able to admit this after so long of carrying it around. I think God must have sent me my sponsor, because she gets me to laugh at even my most personal and even stupid ideas of going out to use. I still have major trust issues and paranoia, but with her it feels like we have known each other forever.

This has not been an easy road for me to travel, but "poor old me"! Even today I constantly crave using drugs just one last time. I think just one more time will not hurt me. When I feel like that, I need to pull my head from my ass, get real with my life and continue with my recovery. I also have to remember where I have been and where I am not willing to return.

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COMMUNITY 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 more by letting our advertisers know you saw their ad in our monthly newsletter.

A.A. Central Office
(619) 265-8762

Alanon Family Services
(619) 296-2666

Auntie Helen's
4028 30th Street
(619) 299-8747

Being Alive
(619) 291-1400

The Corner Clubhouse
2852 University Ave.
(619) 683-7423 Fax (619) 683-7428

David's Place
3766 Fifth Avenue
(619) 294-8908

Detox
(619) 232-9343

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

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

**Gay and Lesbian
24 Hour Information Hotline**
(619) 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

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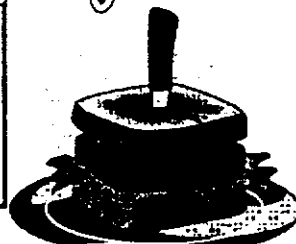
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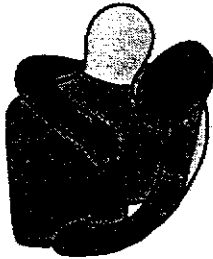
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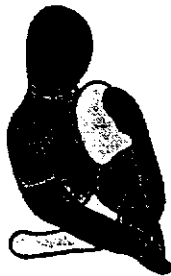
A SPECIAL HUG



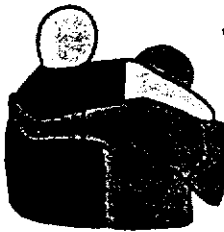
There is a certain kind of hug that's very important to me. In the best sense of the word, I "need" these hugs. They sustain me, renew me, and give me peace.



This hug is more than an acknowledgement and more than a greeting. This hug is not sexual, but it is very intimate. It is holding another human being. It is holding another life force. It is holding another one of God's manifest creations.



This hug is a total letting go of all else. It is letting go of past and of future. It is letting go of all that is extraneous. And it is totally, completely and indivisibly, Here and Now.



This hug is a pure and simple outpouring of my humanity, and an openness to receive the humanity of another human being. And when I do it right, I feel Joy, I am at Peace, and I Know why I'm alive.



artwork by Susan Rioschen

Kent Bleasom © 1987

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