

# LLAC MEMBER News and Information

3rd Edition Aug 2012

In the interest of expediency the Board of Directors is issuing this 3rd Member Communication/Update in lieu of our usual newsletter format in order to keep the membership informed to various events and business of the club. Our last Member Communication/update was in March 2012. We currently have no newsletter editor volunteer and hope someone in our membership might have an interest in taking such a commitment. If you are interested in helping with this please fill out a volunteer application at the snack bar and we will contact you. If you want more detail on anything mentioned here please see a board member and/or inquire at the snack bar to direct you to a board member.

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**One year later: Volunteer Management of the Club - STATE OF THE LLLAC 2012 - GOOD**

One year ago In July 2011 the difficult unanimous decision of the Board was taken to lay off our long time manager in order to stabilize the club’s finances. The manager’s salary and medical insurance threatened to exhaust our savings/checking of approximately 30k within 9 months if no changes were made. (After that we would have had to seek a states attorney’s/court decision to allow us to use our restricted building fund.) Management was taken over by the Board and an ad-hoc operations committee headed by Dave S. Last July we were running at a deficit of 16k for the year and drawing down our savings. This July we have a surplus of 8k we have added to our savings/checking.

We are happy to report that the club is stable, has had 9 months in the black (Sep-May) has 48k in savings/checking ( plus 640130.00 in the restricted building fund)and is in the black for 2012 so far. June was a slight disappointment with a large 2k payment for our annual insurance which resulted in a deficit of \$79.82 for the month of June. An effective change of +24k has been made from our deficit last year.

This was accomplished with great efforts on the part of Dave S. and our Treasurer Patrick L. to use more volunteer staffing, reduce and manage expenses effectively and to improve the operations and income of the snack bar and serenity case, significantly increasing revenues from what they were in 2010 and the first half of 2011. Appeals were also made to meetings and they responded by increasing their meeting rents in the second half of 2011 and early 2012. (Rents, however, seem to be declining again even while attendance is up. See section below) A significant 2 year temporary rent reduction was also negotiated with our landlord further reducing expenses. Significant savings and economies in utilities and supplies have also been realized through rigorous management efforts by our treasurer. Declining membership revenues have remained a challenge but have been helped greatly by a few dedicated volunteers on the membership committee such as Jason R. (comm. Chair), Roger and Shirley who faithfully staff our membership tables at events and raise hundreds at each event.

Going forward the club is healthy. The bleeding has stopped but more needs to be done if we want to really THRIVE. This is an exciting time for us because the potential is there to thrive and extend the hand of our community of recovery further to those still suffering in the LGBT community. New ideas are heartily welcomed and we’re trying lots of new things. This is a time you can get involved and really expect to effect change and make a difference. The current Board has worked very hard and many hours over this last year but our current volunteer base is too small to do much more. Plenty of folks are willing to volunteer to help clean or staff the snack bar but we need people to commit time and skills and join the board or run a committee and help us with administering the business, creating

relationships in the community, fundraising, attracting members and sponsors and planning our future. We need skills and knowledge and most importantly your valuable time.

(\*Please see Board of Directors Minutes and financials which are posted on the office window for more detail regarding financial numbers above. All members are entitled and encouraged to review the club financial reports and minutes.)

**VOLUNTEER – JOIN THE BOARD – RUN A COMMITTEE** There are presently 2 vacancies on the Board. We also have 6 committees that are not staffed. Depending only on the Board to run the business, fundraise, coordinate events will only yield limited results. We need more help. Many of you have seen a few of our Board members and volunteers that appear to be living at the club. The truth is that we are actually fueled by the progress we have made and the new people we see in those hours. We know from firsthand experience that the club is making a difference. People who are brand new or starting out with recovery again feel safe here. They **DEPEND** on us, still.

The story of the club has continued for almost 30 years now. It's really quite amazing. We know for a fact we can survive at least 3 to 5 more. Thriving versus surviving will depend on others getting involved **NOW** not later. Many things are in place to make great progress this 30<sup>th</sup> year but we need more help. We would like to have a huge, high profile 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala next May that reaches out to the LGBT public and our whole community and could help assure our long term future. We would also like to revive a capital campaign for our own building, because in the end, it is our rent which will put us out of business. We have an incredible story to tell that our community knows little about. A story and mission more than worthy of support. The fact is the current Board and our few regular volunteers do not have the resources and time to do it alone. We need you. There has never been a better time for positive change at the Alano Club. Please consider getting involved, now.

We would like to encourage our members to consider participating in the governance of the club on the board or thru committees. These types of commitments are complex and demanding but also provide opportunity for growth, achievement, and satisfaction like no other. These are the 'advanced class' of service commitments for those who really want to challenge themselves and 'walk the talk' of gratitude, humility and service, and **EXPERIENCE** what principles before personalities really means.

**NEW FLOOR AND PAINT AT THE CLUB** Some have asked that if the club is struggling to get and stay in the black how can we be improving the club at the same time? The Board is elected to run the business. Maintaining our facility is a business responsibility. Our carpet in the main room was in very bad shape and costly to maintain and a cost effective solution was required. Once the floor was done it was decided that further modest improvements like painting needed to be done. Over \$1400 in donations were received for the work and a large group of volunteers donated an extreme number of hours of free labor. A separate donation was made by a member for the new lighting systems. Another member donated labor, paint, and ceiling tiles for renovation of the small meeting room. Compared to funds donated the cost to the club was nominal. We are not done yet and need further donations of time and money to complete repainting of the snack bar and replacement of all the remaining carpet in the club. A donation of new ceiling tiles for the snack bar area has been proposed but not yet secured

and we would like to replace the ceiling tiles in the main room. Maintaining a clean, safe, attractive club is beneficial to our members and the public, and inspiring to our donors and supporters.

**Another Improvement - COFFEE AT THE CLUB** Coffee service has been vastly improved and is now on par with any local cafe with the introduction of a new grinder, new brewer and vacuum pots. Our coffee product which is top of the line from local award winning Bird rock coffee roasters who also recommended some of these changes to improve our coffee service. New menu boards are also under development for the snack bar area.

**EVENTS AT THE CLUB Mar-July** The **Easter Bonnet Social** fundraiser was sparsely attended but still turned a modest profit. An individual has held an Easter bonnet social at their home these last two years which may have reduced the appeal of the club's event. The Board has discussed eliminating Easter as an effective fundraiser and just executing a free holiday potluck, with Easter bonnets of course! **The Club 29<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** was celebrated with a free BBQ on Memorial Day . The turnout was HUGE at about 160 individuals. Donations and sales were about \$900. A typical days sales are around \$125-150. **The Fourth of July BBQ** was also well attended (120) and appreciated and donations more than covered the costs. We will be having another holiday BBQ/potluck on Labor Day. **MOVIE DAYS:** We attempted a number of Saturdays to present afternoon movies on our big screen TV. These were organized by the board but sparsely attended. A decision was made to discontinue these as board efforts and make them available as member efforts. If a member wishes to choose a movie and organize the event the board will assist with signage, popcorn and special pricing at the snack bar.

## **ANNUAL BENEFIT Scheduled for Aug 17 AT THE LGBT CENTER**

**CANCELLED** Earlier in the year it was decided to hold our event in August instead of May. On June 30, 2012 the Board met in an emergency session and decided to cancel the Benefit for this year. These benefits are very large undertakings with significant financial risk and there were simply not enough available Board Members or volunteers to execute it. It was also decided that those efforts were better spent focusing on immediately planning a 30<sup>th</sup> year GALA event in May of 2013. If you can help us with our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary GALA we will need you!

**Meeting rents are declining again.** Meeting rents, though substantial, only subsidize 52% of the club expenses not including the snack bar. The snack bar is self supporting and provides 100% of our part time staff salaries and contributes its remaining surplus to the club. Meeting rents are based on a 75% sliding scale. Some say this is expensive but it serves meetings especially when they shrink since they then pay less than they would if we had a flat fee. Unfortunately the 75% structure does not encourage meetings to pay a reasonable self supporting minimum or to pass the hat again. For example, recently a large meeting of 93 paid only \$32.00 for the large room. Costs associated with that number of people are high since they require air conditioning and they use significant water and paper products. Meeting rent is an area the Board is studying. Changing our 29 year old rent structure may be a necessity. Any members who have skills in excel and finance might want to get involved and help us out on this.

**PRIDE PARADE RECAP** Board member Dave S. led the effort this year for the PRIDE parade. A large truck was decorated with our banners and pride flag and we were represented well. As in previous years we are always well received with people cheering us on and shouting out their clean time from the sidelines. Unfortunately there were very few individuals who joined us this year. We would like to encourage more of our community to consider joining us. Certainly there are some who consider this a compromise to their anonymity but there is also a 'program of attraction' and 'carrying the message' that has to be balanced with anonymity. We hope next year more of our members and friends will join us. After all, alcoholism and drug addiction is the second largest health issue in the LGBT community after HIV and we 'have a solution'!

**PRIDE Coffee RECAP.** Board member Ames spearheaded this effort this year. As of this printing financial reconciliation of PRIDE COFFEE is not yet complete. We know our costs were covered with \$2900 in sales but only expect a modest profit of around 1k. This is for 4 days of intensive work and planning by 25+ volunteers. PRIDE COFFEE is a commitment we have had with PRIDE for 30 years. This year the booth looked amazing and our volunteers worked very hard at providing quality service and a great product. Thank You to all who made this possible! We were represented well by their efforts and smiles. We can also thank our coffee vendor, Birdrock Coffee Roasters of La Jolla for donating over \$400 of coffee. Coffee at the Pride festival has not been a significant fundraiser except in the few years where we had much larger café venue at the festival and raised 3-4K. We have been working to get a larger venue for 5 years but 2 major reorganizations at PRIDE in the last 3 years have impeded those efforts. We will be working harder to obtain more of a coffee venue and/or recovery pavilion over this next year but may have to reevaluate the efficacy of Pride Coffee next year if that is not achieved.

**MEMBERSHIP DRIVE** Have you seen the membership drive presentation on the club back wall or on our website? We need members and volunteers to help us staff a membership committee that can really get this going. For years our membership has hovered in the 180-200 range. We know there are many more ALUMNI and beneficiaries of the club's 30 year legacy of service out there but how can we inspire them to join us? In our current membership database we have 300 names but members come and go and membership remains very fluid. We also have members who are incredibly loyal who have made a commitment to the club and have kept it consistently for years. Some of them never use the club but want its doors open. Others actually live in other cities and states and pay their dues every month. It is very inspiring to see now that we have a database with 5 years of history the commitment many have to keeping the LLLAC going by paying \$20 or \$12 each and every month. Without our members donating dues each month the club would close. Membership is our most significant donor base.

This board has worked very hard this last year to stabilize the club and earn your support and asks that you help us carry the message that the club is thriving, changing, and improving. Do you know someone who used to come to the club but doesn't anymore? Just share your commitment and then direct them

to our website to read our history, explore our mission and consider supporting us with a onetime donation, a membership or a sponsorship on our “support us” webpage.

You can help us gather in our alumni as members or sponsors in this our thirtieth year. If half our members brought in one new member or sponsor the LLLAC would be self supporting with nearly no need for additional fundraising and with 300 members we would certainly have a lot to celebrate next May!

**DONORS and DEVELOPMENT** This has been a systemic weakness of the club for many years. For 29 years countless businesses and individuals in the LGBT community have made one time contributions of money, gift items, gift certificates, services and materials to the LLLAC. We would not be where we are today without them. Unfortunately record keeping of donors and donor relationships have not been maintained in a manner appropriate to a growing nonprofit organization. In years past we also received many complaints that donors were not thanked or followed up with. No one person or Board has been responsible for this. It has just been an organizational weakness and not consistent. One might assume with a nearly 30 year history we would have a very long list of donors in the community. That is not the case... yet.

Over the last two years we have been working hard to maintain all donors and donations in a donor program/database. Today if you make a donation you will receive a Thank You letter in the mail within 10 days. We are committed to working on development of donors in our community and the relationships that go with it. If you want to help, have experience in this area, want to get experience in this area or know donors who we should contact then please help us in this endeavor.

This is our most important initiative this year leading up to our thirtieth. We need to get our message out there to businesses, organizations and individuals this year so we can count on their support for our 30<sup>th</sup> Celebration.

**UPCOMING EVENTS** You can always check our news and events section and community calendar at [www.lllac.org](http://www.lllac.org) for latest events at the club and in the LGBT recovering community. We hope all our members will attend the **Feeling Good LGBT AA/Alanon convention** here in San Diego over Labor Day Weekend. For more information visit their website at [www.feelinggood.org](http://www.feelinggood.org) Currently we have few events planned for the rest of 2012. We will be having a labor day BBQ on Monday after the convention which ends on Sunday. There have been some ideas floated for a talent show in Oct-Nov but nothing is planned yet. We are currently focusing on launching cash Bingo on Saturdays that is open to the public. We recently obtained a license and are working on logistics. The club used to run bingo many years ago and it raised significant funds for the club. Look for further announcements on this and let us know if you can help.

**29 ¼ Years and counting down to our 30th** Planning for our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary has not yet begun. That means we are already behind schedule. If you have experience and time and want to help please help us get going. Our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is a great opportunity for us to get out there in the community and earn their support.

**FIRST EDITION BIG BOOK Raffle Tickets** are still on sale until Aug 17 at the club . All proceeds go to the club so get your tickets!

**Reminder: NEW TENANT IN OUR BUILDING – !!! NO MORE PARKING**

**!!! IN FRONT OF CLUB** Our landlord has finally leased the upstairs to a new tenant so the three spaces next to the house west of the club must be kept free. This leaves the club with only 2 spaces for volunteer and staff parking. Please help us observe this new restriction so we can be good neighbors.

**PLEASE SEE OUR CLUB WISH LIST** We have posted a club wish list whiteboard next to the restroom in the snack bar. On it we list projects/materials we are seeking donations for. Anything you can help with is greatly appreciated.

**NEW [www.lllac.org](http://www.lllac.org) WEBSITE ONLINE** Some of you may already know about this because you received an email earlier this year about a member login to LLLAC.NET. That was a mistake. As you all know our website is [www.lllac.org](http://www.lllac.org). The NET website is a development area where our new website was being built. The new website is now online. The member area is still under construction however and will be launched in the next few weeks and you will receive another email notification when it is available. The new site was designed to better represent us ,our history and mission in the community and to attract donors. We hope it will present much more up to date and dynamic information to the community, our members and donors.

**PLEASE USE OUR LONELY SUGGESTION BOX!** Our Board, Staff and Volunteers frequently receive verbal comments and suggestion from our members when they are at the club but the suggestion box located to the left of the main doors inside the snack bar is usually empty when we check it before board meetings. Please take advantage of this to give us your feedback. Your suggestions in the box go directly to the 2 board co-chairs and then the board for consideration. We are your trusted servants and need your suggestions.

**MEMBERSHIP AND SUPPORTER SUBSCRIPTIONS** On our website members may now subscribe their membership and save. We are offering incentive discounts for members to use this option since it is more convenient than paying in person, is more efficient and less costly to the club to administer and it greatly improves consistency of membership and membership income. Non member supporters also have the option to subscribe.

**Thank You to our members for reading this very long newsletter** with so much to report. We hope our pleas for your help throughout are not too strident. We more than understand that not everyone has the time to volunteer. Your service in the form of dues is just as vital and necessary and hugely appreciated. (We do still need volunteers though!) We hope all this news instead inspires you and justifies your commitment because we are changing, beginning to thrive and with a little help poised for a positive future.

In closing the Board of Directors thanks all our members for their support and efforts in keeping the LLLAC going. With our financial position stabilizing and the opportunity for much positive change we are looking forward to the remainder of 2012 and all the opportunities it may present.

Yours In Service and Fellowship,

The LLLAC Board of Directors

David S. co-chair, Shirley L. co-chair, Patrick L. treasurer, Frank H. secretary,

Robby H. director, Erwin G. director, Ames M. director