

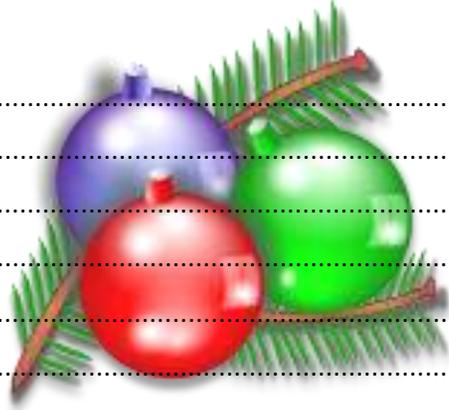
# LLAC MEMBER News and Information

6th Edition December 2013

Our last Member Communication/update was in May 2013. If you are interested in helping with this and or developing a more sophisticated newsletter please send an email to us with your contact information to [volunteer@llac.org](mailto:volunteer@llac.org)

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**Happy Holidays to all ...** On behalf of our staff, volunteers, and The board of directors we extend our best wishes to you all for a safe, happy and sober holiday season. The club will be hosting its annual Christmas Day potluck starting at 2:30. Please see signup sheets for volunteer help and food at the snack bar. Your help for a couple hours helping us serve and cleanup on Christmas day would be greatly appreciated and is a great way to give back on a day that can be especially hard for addicts and alcoholics. If you can help please send an email to [volunteer@llac.org](mailto:volunteer@llac.org).

**Le Cirque Sobre** Plans are underway for the LLLAC to be the site of the annual New Year's Eve bash to benefit Stepping Stone on New Year's Eve (put on by an anonymous benefactor of Stepping Stone, (who used to do it in South Park). The theme is Le Cirque Sobre and tickets are \$20. The club and Stepping Stone have a long and rich history of mutual support and cooperation and we are honored to have the opportunity to contribute to the success of this very popular and great event while also

bringing our communities closer together. We hope all our members will attend and/or contribute. Look for signage at club and on our website for further details.

**Thanksgiving Dinner results** Our annual Thanksgiving Dinner potluck was a great success. There was plenty of food and cheer to go around. Attendance was around 60. A little lighter than usual but fun all the same.

**Club closed for first time? in 30 years...** Oct 28-30 the club was closed for three days due to termite tenting by our landlord. This is the only time in over 30 years the club was not open for business for more than a day. A small group of 5 people came in on Sunday before and for about 5 hours stored and wrapped everything to prepare for it. Another group of 5, Board and volunteers showed up again Wednesday to clean up, unwrap and put everything in order. Thank You to all who came to be of service and help us. There are some old timers who will say this is not the first time the club has been closed. One day in the very early nineties or late eighties a Board member became frustrated with members not paying dues and chained the doors shut. That did not go over so well and the doors were promptly reopened. We don't know the effect if any on whether members paid more dues but you can bet it led to some excitement!

**PRIDE awards LLLAC a 2013 Grant** On Monday December 2 the LLLAC received a \$1500 grant from San Diego PRIDE for its work in supporting 12 step recovery in the LGBT community. This is the second year in a row that PRIDE has recognized LLLAC for its contribution to the community. Thank You San Diego Pride!

**Election Results** Every year we conduct annual elections for a week in October. 4 candidates ran for three spots. One of those 3 elected could not serve due to personal reasons. Our two newest elected Board Members are Robert T. and Tom C. On November 1 the new Board was seated and officers elected. The officers are: Goldman J. co-chair, Keith R. Treasurer, Frank H. Secretary. In the November Board meeting 2 more successors for vacant spots were named: Robert W. and Phillip G. The Board currently has one more vacancy and is looking for more female participation and candidates.

**Changes in Leadership at LLLAC** The club underwent some sudden and significant changes in the leadership between late August and elections that you may have heard about and/or have questions about. The good news is that the club is stable financially, the doors are open, and business is being conducted. The bad news is that there were some bumps accompanied by the usual expected rumors among which was that the club was in severe crisis and/or closing. The facts are: Due to personal and/or medical demands two thirds (4 of 6) of the board resigned within 10 days around labor day. The club was briefly without any co chairs or secretary and left with a Board of only 2-3 persons. The Board is required to have a quorum of 5 to conduct business and a minimum of three to maintain its nonprofit status. At the same time a manager had been hired on Aug 20 who resigned after only two weeks on the job. With such great and sudden change some confusion ensued over how to reconstitute the Board and the September Board Meeting was mistakenly cancelled in violation of the bylaws. During September some board members who had resigned, including a co-chair rescinded their resignations to

help keep the club going and resolve the crisis. Misunderstandings regarding the bylaws led to discussions about a second board meeting being cancelled in October. This put the club in a kind of constitutional crisis because the bylaws require a monthly board meeting and elections needed to be conducted and authorized at a Board meeting but the Board still had no quorum. Our bylaws provided a remedy for rebuilding the Board and a quorum. On Saturday October 19 the usual Board Meeting was held by two of the three remaining Board members. The third board member declined to attend. Action was taken to reconstitute a board and restore a quorum by exercising a power given to the board in the bylaws to name successors to vacancies. Successors were named to 4 vacancies to bring the total board to 7 with 5 in attendance. A board meeting was then held and elections were organized and authorized to begin the following week. The vacancies were filled by Patrick L. and Keith R. ( Board Members from the past who served over a long period of time with distinction) Goldman J. a member and Tom C. a member.

September and October provided some tough challenges and individuals stepped up to serve and the club is moving forward with leaders old and new committed to keeping the club on track, building a strong cooperative board and welcoming new ideas and leaders. A lesson learned here is that the Board is responsible for assuring a full and active Board. In the last two years vacancies were not filled promptly which led to an overworked few. Keeping a full Board of nine will lessen the impact of resignations which are bound to occur. Several of our current Board would like to cycle out as soon as new leaders can be found. Board service at LLLAC requires about 8 hours a month minimum. Officers should expect that and perhaps more. It might sound like a lot, but to put it in perspective, most community service like volunteering at a food pantry or homeless shelter is usually 4 hours a week. Anyone interested in Board service is encouraged to fill out a letter of intent now so you may be on file and called upon when Board vacancies arise.

**Be sure to Thank our outgoing Board Members!!** This year saw the departure of a number of Board members through resignations and/or the end of their term. All of these individuals gave of their time, energy and usually even treasure! We all owe them our gratitude for their time and efforts. Among them were some powerhouses of service and commitment bringing lasting positive change and benefit to the club and are examples to be remembered and followed. Below are those that have rolled off this year.

John F. (aka Choo Choo, Tandaleo) Served more than one term and most recently achieved the major goal of a kickoff of bingo in 2013 which was no easy task. John gave us an example it could be done and a map and plan to do this right in the future and we look forward to trying it again. He also put together a team and worked many hours this past year installing all our beautiful new ceiling tiles. John also served more than one term on the Board and was a big contributor to the success of 3 major benefits held from 2008-2010 and provided leadership on numerous other events and initiatives.

Kathy H. came in to fill a vacancy this last year and served as secretary and housing chair for only a few months. In her brief tenure she achieved at least a year of great strides in completing long outstanding housing issues working many hours herself and with volunteers and setting an example of enthusiasm and teamwork. She and her partner while also running a business took on the herculean task of coffee

at PRIDE in July achieving one of our most profitable years ever and serving up new ideas and thinking on how to do that event better.

Wesley W. was appointed to the very daunting office of treasurer in July. He jumped right in despite little availability of help, or training, for the task. During the difficult months of September and October he almost singlehandedly ran the clubs day to day operation for over 6 weeks putting in many long days and evenings.

Julie B. was appointed and served during the summer and fall bringing with her a fresh perspective and new ideas for membership, our mission, and leadership. Unfortunately for us, compelling personal reasons called her to resign in Aug. Her willingness to rescind her initial resignation and return until Oct, her advice, and decisions, helped the club through a very difficult time in Sep and Oct.

Erwin G. completed his term of three years this last October. He has been with the club through much change and many difficult decisions like the laying off of our manager in 2011 and turning the club around to be more fiscally responsible by using more volunteers. His example of diligence, calm, and thoughtful non partisan, objective decision making was an example to all. Most recently in this last year he raised funds and helped build a better relationship with The Imperial Court at two different events.

Shirley L. served two terms and over 4 ½ years as female co-chair. Her presence on the Board brought stability and continuity to the co-chairs position that hadn't been seen in years. Her determination to fulfilling her service commitment and promoting all inclusiveness and cooperation among board members set an example for others. Her service to the 3 benefits from 2008-2010 and multiple potlucks, parties and events was always visible. As Board secretary of the membership committee she organized and promoted a new commitment to building membership through membership tables at every event resulting in hundreds of dollars of revenue at each event. She also helped organize and promote the first member thank you breakfast in 2013 which was a great success. In recent months she worked tirelessly to keep things going in the difficult months of September and October. She endured great stress and huge demands on her time and energy as she tried to provide leadership and mediation as the lone co-chair amidst personalities with differing opinions wrangling over what was best for the club .

Dave S. was saved for last because he is among one of the most hard working and productive Board members in the long history of the club. He has served over three terms on the board of directors. He has served in every officer position on the Board including Treasurer, Secretary and Co-Chair. In the brief periods he was not on the Board in the last decade he served on committees or was just there to help when needed. His contribution to the club is impossible to measure and even harder to enumerate since something will inevitably be left out. Dave got QuickBooks going in 2005 after five, yes, count them, five years of hand wringing by previous boards on whether we needed it! Despite not being a computer or accounting expert he jumped in and made it happen. The impact of this is that it modernized our business, gave us more creditability with donors and assured accountability in safeguarding your funds and assets. In his second term he was secretary and housing chair and set new standards again including grant writing with Jeff W. that obtained our moveable dividers and chairs for the small room . His most recent term of the last two years started when he volunteered to be appointed to the board

shortly after our manager was laid off . He volunteered to take on the most difficult task of daily operations as the ad hoc operations manager and devoted countless hours and effort to improving our operations. He also took on other big projects like managing the installation over many days of the beautiful new low lighting fixtures that were donated for the main room. His efforts developing the serenity case and token sales has resulted in more than \$1000 per year in new sales and income for the club two years running. He obtained the large TV donation, many event and individual donations and most importantly made sure our donors were thanked and accounted for by jumping in once again with unfamiliar software to get our donor management software going. If you donated to the club in the last two years you received a thank you letter in the mail within 10 days because of Dave. Many other improvements and donations were achieved by him like our new grill, a new podium, coffee grinder and brewer and superior coffee, upgraded bathroom fixtures etc. etc. etc. The club is much richer for his service.

Thank You to all who have served.

**New no smoking policy and being good neighbors.** Our landlord has requested us to eliminate smoking on the property. We ask all our members who smoke to please be respectful of this request and dispose of smoking materials properly. Our first attempts at managing this were unsuccessful as people continued to smoke while sitting on benches outside the doors so we have been required to now bring the benches in as well. The YOGA business upstairs appears to have ceased operations but we still have another neighbor we must be considerate of. Please help us to be good neighbors.

**Club Finance\$** The last two years brought enormous change to the club as the business has been turned around from the red into the black and converted from a staff run to volunteer run operation. Pressures have been many but the results are impressive. Total expenses have been reduced from 128k per year to approximately 84k for the last two years. A turnaround of the business from one that was surviving to one that now has the potential to thrive is underway. Great strides have been made to modernize the business, improve our reputation, and improve relationships in the community and attract donors who want to join in a success story and worthy mission in the community. In 2014 we hope to make progress in fundraising, more events and building up our membership which should improve our bottom line.

Finance reports are made at each board meeting monthly and posted on the office window. Our bank account is holding steady at approx 28-30k. We expect only a small deficit this year of 4-6k as result of slightly higher staffing as a result of fewer volunteers and slightly declining meeting and membership incomes. We will also be facing an increase (3% - \$115 more per month) in our rent this year after two years of a negotiated stable discounted rent. Going forward for the remainder of our lease (5yrs) we will have 3% increases each year. Fund raising was low this year and needs improvement. This is all being worked on and we expect a more profitable 2014.

**Review of Club Status by IRS** We were informed in early May that the Internal Revenue Service was requested by the California Sates Attorney to review our nonprofit status. We contracted

with Katherine Carlson Bookkeeping to represent us with them. In late June we received a clean bill of health from the IRS. They made a few suggestions for improvement but found nothing out of order. This is very good news for us because despite an enormous amount of work that it required it constitutes something of a free audit for us.

## **New Year's Resolutions: 30<sup>th</sup> Celebration , Membership, New Leadership and ideas, Service and Fun**

One of our newest Board Members Robert T. has committed to making an effort to see that we have a celebration and is currently forming a committee. They will begin meeting promptly after the holidays on Friday nights at 6:30 at the club. If you are interested in helping, send us an email at [volunteer@llac.org](mailto:volunteer@llac.org).

New efforts will be made to reach out to members current and past to build up that base through membership promotion and online subscriptions among other things. If you would like to help the membership committee send an email to [membership@llac.org](mailto:membership@llac.org).

Our new co-chair Goldman J. has expressed a goal to get more folks involved through committees to foster new ideas and new leadership and include more members in steering the LLLAC ship. He has also suggested starting a past board members advisory committee to help maintain consistency and continuity in achieving our mission and long term goals for the LLLAC. If you are interested in participating on any of our committees drop an email to [volunteer@llac.org](mailto:volunteer@llac.org) with your ideas.

Fun and fundraising, in that order will be a priority for 2014. If you have ideas and energy to create and run events WE NEED YOU! Our facility is now even better suited to having more events like dances, shows etc. In its earlier days the club was the place to go for people in LGBT recovery on holidays and for special events. Carrying a message of fun and fellowship in recovery has always been at the core of LLLAC's "club" mission and purpose. With your help and ideas we can create events that inspire and empower newcomers, build unity in our LGBT sober community, and demonstrate that "we are not a glum lot" \*! Send an email to [events@llac.org](mailto:events@llac.org) with your ideas and how you might serve. \*BB 1<sup>st</sup> ed. P 132: "We absolutely insist on enjoying life!"