

# LLAC MEMBER News and Information

5th Edition June 2013

Our last Member Communication/update was in Dec 2012. 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.

## Contents

The club really needs your help....REALLY.....	1
When is the Big 30 <sup>th</sup> Year Bash? .....	1
Bingo at LLLAC.....	2
Potluck BBQ on memorial Day May 27 .....	2
Club in need of a new Treasurer ASAP! .....	2
Club Finances .....	2
Review of Club Status by IRS.....	3
Upcoming Events .....	3
Have you tried our coffee lately?.....	3
PRIDE.....	3
We need your opinion on new Mission Statement .....	3
The Good News and The Bad news..... An Editorial from LLLAC Executive Secretary Frank H... ..	4

**The club really needs your help....REALLY.** We need 3 board members including a treasurer. We need volunteers with computer skills to help us with our membership and donor programs and other tasks such as flyers and excel spreadsheets for the business. We especially need a brave enthusiastic person who can develop and coordinate events for fun and fundraising. We need volunteers that commit a minimum of 2-3 hours each and every week for 6 month terms.

**When is the Big 30<sup>th</sup> Year Bash?** On May 3, 2013 the club turned 30. In past years part of the job description of the Manager was to organize and put on an anniversary party. Unfortunately the business of the club has been so demanding on few board members that we have been unable to organize an event. Some attempts were made starting last December but we had such poor turnout at

gala committee meeting that it was shelved. There is still hope however that we could still develop something. Our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated with a gala in January 7 months after the event in 2003. There is some discussion about an event in the Oct-Jan timeframe but nothing has been declared yet. If this is something you think is important then let us know how you might help.

**Bingo at LLLAC** For some months Board Members Robbie and John F. (Choo Choo) have been working hard to get Bingo off the ground. The plan as originally conceived when we applied for a Bingo license last July may have been flawed when we decide to run it on Wednesday nights. It has been suggested the late start time of 7:30 was a factor. After 4 games biweekly on Wednesday nights we realized that we may have to rethink Bingo and perhaps run it instead on Saturdays. Attendance was too low on Wednesdays to sustain prize levels. We are not cancelling it altogether but simply putting it on hold until we can rethink our strategy and gather enough volunteers to run it on a weekly basis. If you would like to help or have bingo experience please let us know. Check our web site for further Bingo announcements.

**Potluck BBQ on memorial Day May 27** was well attended by over 100 individuals. It is great to see our community come to fellowship on holidays when so many find holidays to be triggers for using. Having a safe place to go like the LLLAC on the holidays is an invaluable service provided through the generosity of our members and supporters.

**Club in need of a new Treasurer ASAP!** We are currently seeking someone in our membership to take this commitment. Preferably someone with experience in bookkeeping and QuickBooks. We had two candidates in this position since last October when our previous Treasurer Patrick finished his term. Those two candidate could not fulfill the position due to personal reasons and Patrick filled in until February. Dave, our co-chair and Frank our Secretary are filling in with the help of a paid bookkeeper until the position is filled. This is a critical position that needs to be filled asap. If you know of someone who is willing to try yourself please let us know asap. We will be employing a bookkeeper for a number of hours a month to help us with the books until this position is filled so it is extremely important we find a volunteer as soon as possible to reduce those costs.

**Club Finances** For the first time in four years the club ended a fiscal year (2012) in the black. The surplus was modest (approx \$3104) but it proved with good management and cost containment the club's income should be able to meet its expenses. Unfortunately 2013 is not looking so great because we continue to see declines in membership, meeting rents and other income which if not improved will lead to a deficit this year. As of this printing our year to date expenses and income show a surplus of only approximately \$1170. With fewer people helping on the Board and as volunteers we will also be forced to spend more for staff and services this year. In 2011 we were able to negotiate a 2 year discount in rent with our landlord but starting in 2014 our rent will increase with annual increases following each year. Our rent is the main limiting factor that will determine how long the club will remain in business.

The picture is not completely bleak but unless we have help in fundraising, increase our income streams, and get more help in general the club will experience a slow decline with a lifetime of 3-4 years.

**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 have contracted with Katherine Carlson Bookkeeping to represent us with them. We are currently working with Katherine to assemble requested records and materials for a review in late June. Katherine's preliminary conversations with the IRS Agent did not indicate that they were looking for any specific issue and that this was a routine nonprofit status review. We expect no surprises and are confident everything is in order.

**Upcoming Events** Current upcoming events are a BBQ **potluck on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July** We will provide hamburgers and dogs and will start serving at 2:30 pm.. We are also forming committees for the **Pride Parade and Pride coffee** at the festival. Look for committee meeting times at the club and on our website.

**Have you tried our coffee lately?** For years a common complaint has been that our coffee was just no good. It has been kind of a holy grail to improve our coffee over the last decade. We have changed coffee vendors a couple times but that did not seem to make much difference. In this last year however we took a radical approach and purchased a new brewer, a grinder and vacuum coffee pots. We think we have finally succeeded with the selection of a new coffee provider: Industrial Grind. They have helped us also with their expertise on preparation and service to give us the best coffee and espresso we have had in years. If you haven't tried it please do we think you'll be pleasantly surprised. Each week we'll be featuring our two usual blends, French and regular and another blend that changes weekly. Purchasing your coffee at our coffee bar really helps support the club. If you have any suggestions on how we can do better in this area please let us know.

**PRIDE** Is coming. July 12-14. This year's PARADE float committee has met a couple times and hopes to make a big splash at the parade in honor of our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. For years the club had large contingents at the parade carrying the message of freedom from addiction. Even with smaller contingents in recent years the reception has always been warm and extremely enthusiastic from the sidelines. This year's float will be able to accommodate individuals on the float that may have difficulty walking the route. We hope to have as many and diverse a crowd as possible to show that people from all walks of life get sober! Please consider getting involved.

PRIDE COFFEE at the festival is something we have done since 1983. Please use signup sheets at the club to sign up for a shift or two. We especially need baristas to cover four 3hour shifts on Sat and Sun. The first planning meeting for the PRIDE COFFEE committee will be Saturday June 15 at 2:00pm the club.

**We need your opinion on new Mission Statement** Our original mission statement was actually our purposes as stated in our original documents of incorporation. You can see those online at our website under the about us section. Here is a portion:

*The object and purpose of this corporation shall be:*

*A. To provide information on alcoholism and on methods of recovery with special emphasis on and outreach to the lesbian and gay community.*

*B. To provide asite for meeting and conference facilities.*

*C. To promote public involvement.*

*D. To provide a meeting place where alcoholics may meet to exchange ideas, receive counsel and fellowship.*

*E. To provide social activities in a non-drinking environment*

After that the club had various lengthy statements of purpose. Our most recent Mission Statement was written in 2003 and reads:

*Our mission is to provide a safe, clean and sober environment, for individuals in twelve-step and other recovery programs, as well as their friends and family, to gather for support, community, and personal growth. In recognizing that issues of alcoholism and other addictions, arise more often among the Gay, Lesbian, Transgender, and Bisexual population, our focus is to serve this community.*

A small group, including myself as your secretary have been researching and working on a more effective mission statement that uses active language that can inspire volunteers and donors to action in achieving our mission. Advice we have found states that a mission statement should say what you do, how you do it and what the benefit is. Our new mission statement under development is as follows:

**We are THE community center for LGBT 12 step recovery in San Diego. (13/125)**

**Our mission is to foster a community center to help others, to help themselves, achieve freedom from addictions, and establish useful, happy, and productive lives through fellowship, 12 step recovery, and service. (33/71)**

**We are volunteers, paying forward our own recovery by maintaining a landmark center in the LGBT community for meetings, recovery information, public outreach, and events that celebrate, champion, and support a clean and sober way of life. (37/71)**

**Because statistics show much higher rates of addiction among LGBT persons our focus is to serve them while our motto and name, “Live and Let Live” are an invitation to all persons LGBT or otherwise who are interested in clean and sober living. (43/125)**

Let us know what you think by sending your opinion via email to [membership@lllac.org](mailto:membership@lllac.org)

**The Good News and The Bad news..... An Editorial from LLLAC  
Executive Secretary Frank H...**

This is the primary purpose of our newsletter: To keep our

members informed. Of course we would all like to have all good news but that is not realistic. The good news is that the club is open for business and looking great and our finances right now are okay. We can pay the bills. The club has great potential to change and grow and find new donors and members in its 30th anniversary year. The bad news is that the club as a charitable service organization is in a big crisis of leadership and service and we need to ask for your help AGAIN. We do not have enough people to help. Despite massive efforts on the part of a few board members, staff and very few volunteers over the last two years to clean up the club physically and business wise we have less involvement in service than we have ever had in our history. The actual number of board members and regular dependable volunteers that have run the club at any given time over the last 2 years has probably been about 3 or 6. A larger number have helped on single projects or events and have been invaluable, but the heavy lifting of keeping the club open every day with the services and standards our members expect has been done by too few. This is far too small to be sustainable in the next few years and many of these most active persons are seeking to retire to plain old member status. This lack of upcoming volunteers poses the big question of whether our 30 year legacy of a volunteer charitable service organization is nearing its end?

Take a look at our old newsletters and you'll see for over three decades a vibrant community of individuals gathering at the club, creating events and social activities and meetings that carried a vital message to people that recovery and fellowship in our community was a good and desirable replacement for the forlorn and isolated lives they led as addicts. For years the club was a mechanism to carry a much more powerful message of recovery and fun in recovery that any one individual could do. It was also not the club board or staff that made these things happen, it was the members!

Here at our 30 year anniversary we are at a turning point. The Board and volunteers of the past few years are out of gas. Sadly we have been so short of time and resources we have been unable to organize even a basic event to honor our anniversary and most importantly the efforts of all those over 3 decades who made this club possible for us today. Our Board has been very fluid since elections in October with multiple appointments and resignations. We now have 3 vacancies on our board. We are in a crisis of leadership, vision and service. It is up to the members initiative to decide where the club goes from here. The club needs dedicated and devoted Board members who will donate 4-8 hours a week, every week, to provide leadership in keeping with our history and traditions. We also need volunteers who will commit to 6 months on a committee and really help where it is needed. We need volunteers who have business skills and those who want to learn those skills. Most of all we need people that check their ego at the door and work together and figure things out and stick with it no matter the frustrations. What we do not need and cannot afford is Parlor Generals and Field Deserters.

In many ways the club is in great shape with terrific potential. The facility is clean and well maintained and very presentable in a way to make it attractive to donors. Our business affairs and systems in place are even more in accordance with what donors and business people expect of a viable nonprofit. We are more flexible and open to change than we have been in a decades. New flooring in our rooms is far more conducive to hosting events, dances etc. If interested members or even meeting groups step up and host events like a monthly dinner, a dance, a movie night, an open mic/cabaret night, late night meetings or sobriety birthday parties/watches or "insert your idea here" then we might see some change back to what the club has been in the past; a valuable recovery and fun resource.

There are some that say in the community that the club is no longer relevant. LGBT people in recovery no longer need a safe haven or sober community center/meeting place. Perhaps they are right, but is it a nice to have? Does it matter that for 12 hours a day, every day anyone struggling in our community for another 24 hours has a safe place to go instead of using? Is it useful in carrying the message of recovery to the LGBT community in a bigger way than an individual might? Can it be a place that nurtures fellowship with the other organizations, and a hub that helps sustain and grow a stronger LGBT recovery fellowship in San Diego? Is it not valuable and worth preserving even as a “nice to have”? Would it really be missed that much if it went away?

If the current trend continues and individuals no longer engage in service at the club we might have that answer in a few brief years when the LLLAC goes away.

Yours In Service and Fellowship,

Executive Secretary Frank H.