

# THE GRAPE-SC- CIN

Intergroup Newsletter  
grapesccin@gmail.com



## Santa Cruz County Inter- group

5732 Soquel Drive, Soquel, CA 95073  
M-F 9 am–5 pm / Sat 10 am–2 pm  
24-Hour Hotline 831-475-5782  
www.aasantacruz.org

## JULY 2020

**LINKS TO VIRTUAL LITERATURE:** Free Grapevines: <https://www.aagrapevine.org/we-are-here-to-help>  
<https://aasfmarin.org/meeting-forms> (the meeting format, readings, plus prayers)

**DONATIONS are needed!** Please support AA Santa Cruz Central Office by making a donation to <https://www.paypal.me/intergroup923> Indicate in the Note section if it is from a group or an individual. Mail checks to office.

### SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

#### STEP UP for SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES:

- (contact Magi R. for more info@ [magiruizlove@yahoo.com](mailto:magiruizlove@yahoo.com))
- **WEBSITE** Committee Chair: updates website, supervises several volunteers who are creating new website
  - **RECORDING SECRETARY:** Record minutes at Intergroup Council every 1st Wednesday and Steering Committee every 3rd Wednesday. Send typed minutes from Intergroup Council to Central Office email, Newsletter email prior to third Friday. Send typed Steering Committee minutes to Central Office to be printed prior to Steering Committee meeting. Position-re-elected in February 2021.
  - **BYLAWS** Committee Chair: Work with bylaws committee to edit bylaws as needed. Attend Intergroup Council every 1st Wednesday and Steering Committee every 3rd Wednesday. Submit changes to state. Position re-elected in February 2021. Eligible to serve up to 2 terms.
  - **AREA REP's** for Watsonville/La Selva Beach (till 3/21), Downtown Santa Cruz & San Lorenzo Valley
  - **BIRTHDAY SPEAKER MEETING:** The Birthday Speaker Meeting Committee meets on ZOOM, the 4th Thursday 7/23; 9/24; (3rd) 11/19. Volunteer at [bsmcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:bsmcommittee@gmail.com) or call Kathy C. 831 423-1934
  - **24 HOUR DIVERTER HOT LINE:** No shifts open {Volunteers to answer phone calls (diverted to your personal phone) when Central Office is closed., usually a 2 or 4 hour shift, once per month.) Leave message for Scott B. @Central Office to relay your interest 831-475-5782
  - **H&I:** Zoom mtg. on 4th Wednesday (Only 2 – 4 hours, once a month commitment; sobriety requirement varies with facility. If you have any questions visit [www.handisc.org](http://www.handisc.org) or phone Central Office to relay your interest 831-475-5782 Currently in person visits closed.
  - **CENTRAL OFFICE:** Help Keep Central Office Open. Pick up a Desk Shift: T, 1-5; . One year sobriety preferred. Only one volunteer and one customer allowed at a time. Call ahead if wanting literature. (831) 475-5782- Bob@Central Office, 5732 Soquel Dr., Soquel; or email-info
  - **BRIDGING THE GAP:** Under SIP, meetings are cancelled.
  - **PI / CPC:** Zoom 2nd Sat @9am contact Central office for link.(Help inform students, probation officers, doctors and others about AA.,service literature racks and staff tables.)

### NOTICES

#### BIRTHDAY SPEAKER MEETING—

- **7:00 pm, July 4: BIRTHDAY SPEAKER MTG-** Speaker: Rick K. 39 years, San Ramon. Host:Grateful and Gay group)
- **Upcoming Dates and Speakers:**
- **FUNRAISER 7 pm, 7/11 Intergroup Speaker/Talent Show**
- Speaker: Jimmy Speed 7:50- Talent Show Flyer will be attached.
- **Intergroup Activities Committee Needs Your Help** - Plan the next year of Santa Cruz fellowship. Contact Grey S. (831-535-3539)

#### UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS— t

##### Santa Cruz County Intergroup Council Meeting

**1st Wednesday July 1, 7:30 pm** - open to all

**Sat. July 11, 9 am-** PI/CPC Committee meeting

**Wed. July 17, 7:30 pm: Intergroup Steering committee, meeting (closed)**

**3rd Tue. July 21, 6:00 pm: Bylaws committee meeting if we have Bylaws committee chair by then!**

No birthday Speaker Meeting committee meeting this month

**Wed. July 22, 7:00 pm: HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE**

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The SIP continues, but individual groups are discussing possibly reopening in person meetings, following the guidelines of their location's protocol, county guidelines for meetings of spiritual groups, as well as the county health department guidelines, and taking a group conscience Our intergroup chair sent out the county website: <https://www.santacruzhealth.org/HSASHome/HSADivisions/PublicHealth/CommunicableDiseaseControl/CoronavirusHome/PublicInformation.aspx>

## INTERGROUP COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF June 3, 2020

These minutes have not been approved.

This meeting was hosted on Zoom. Documents made available during meeting through Zoom Chat and emailed to members prior to meeting.

CALLED to ORDER 7:35 p.m.

### OPENING CUSTOMS

• Serenity Prayer • Preamble • 12 traditions • Sign-in sheet (send Magi info via Zoom chat, email, or text) • 7<sup>th</sup> tradition (Paypal link posted in Zoom Chat) • Introductions

BIRTHDAYS: Misty 3 years, Tara 16 years, Grey 4 years

### REPORTS

#### VIRTUAL MEETINGS AD-HOC COMMITTEE - Murias

• Going well, talking about shifting duties related to controlling/updating virtual meeting list back to Website Committee soon

#### GENERAL SERVICE LIAISON – Murias

• Post conference assembly this weekend via Zoom. Delegate report at next week's district meeting. New York office still in huge deficit, has used \$4 million of prudent reserve, tell groups that they could use support, donations can be made online on [contribution.aa.org](https://contribution.aa.org). Has heard that some churches are inviting/urging meetings to return, talked with member of city council, learned that churches are permitted to have half of room capacity, Magi will discuss resources and guidelines she has found in regards to meetings reopening in Chair report

#### CHAIR—Magi

• Discussion on meetings reopening, some things to consider – staying in line with traditions, by following health codes and guidelines it would mean that some people would have to be turned away from meeting if the room is at capacity, how does opening a meeting back up affect AA as a whole, if meetings are reopening and not following safety guidelines from county this could poorly reflect on AA as a whole, anonymity concerns with contact tracing required if any members test positive for COVID-19, anonymity concerns with hybrid meetings. Bob share he had spoken to New York office, they said it is up to each group to have a group conscious in regards to reopening, as long as they are following all safety guidelines put in place by county health officials. Watsonville Fellowship has reopened, capacity of 12 people at meeting, they are following guidelines from county and got clearance from Mayor, police, and city council as long as they are practicing social distancing, limiting attendance, and thoroughly cleaning before and after each meeting they are not ready to have advertised or shared that they are reopened in order to try to limit attendance and lessen the amount of people having to be turned away. Other members know of some meetings downtown that are meeting in person, Damien clarify that SC Fellowship has not sanctioned or approved of meetings in parking lot. Mary share she had received a document with guidelines about reopening meetings as well, will send to Magi. Magi will be sending all documents mentioned to members so they can bring back to their groups in order to start discussion about reopening or have as guidelines for whenever group decides to reopen. Apologizes to group about not doing more research on group reopenings up to this point, will be looking into more info and forwarding sources once they are found. Motion made by Phil in regards to We Agnostics meeting description change was tabled at steering committee so it will be discussed during New Business for members to bring to their groups. Researched some options of how to sign attendance cards for members attending virtual meetings, some suggestions found were to have the secretary or host provide their number so they could text confirmation of attendance, some meetings using online templates, some meetings using honor system and members are signing their own meeting slips, it all depends on what each group is comfortable with and what their group conscious is on subject. Was contacted and asked if it was possible to have phone list of all intergroup members sent out, Magi checks to make sure all members are comfortable with their phone number being shared with other intergroup members, no one opposed. Magi will compile list and send out in follow-up email very soon. Trying to get in habit of sending out follow up emails more following each Zoom meeting with minutes and all other pertinent info from meeting so all members can have available to them

VICE CHAIR—Marianne •no report

#### TREASURER—Ken

• has not been able to access financial reports, encrypted files not opening anything understandable, Magi is able to open reports, will send to Ken from now on to see if that helps fix tech issues. Bob printed out report but forgot to pick up, doesn't have in front of him so doesn't have exact numbers. April was low income month due to decrease in group donations and literature sales, also paid taxes so more expenses than usual. Magi share that groups can add note in Paypal donations which says which group they are contributing in part of which will help Bob and Ken keep track of group donations. Can also use notes section to say if you are contributing in regards to birthday speaker meeting, intergroup 7<sup>th</sup> tradition, etc. Will help track where income is coming from.

#### OFFICE MANAGER—Bob S.

• Been getting lots of calls from people hearing rumors about meetings being open, Bob not able to give answers since he hasn't heard of meetings being open, asks reps to let him know if meetings are reopen, if they are "formally" or "informally" meeting, if they are trying to limit attendance, etc so he can be better informed. Need volunteers at office Tuesdays 1-5 and Wednesday 1-5, been going into office more often so can cover some shifts but still looking for volunteers that can reliably take shifts.

#### BIRTHDAY SPEAKER MTG CHAIR—Kathy

• Asks reps to help spread word about using note section on Paypal to specify donations to BSM, June BSM this Saturday speaker Allison G. from Salinas with 31 years host Mid County Women's Big Book Study Group, July BSM will fall on July 4<sup>th</sup>, going on as planned, not rescheduling, speaker is Rick K. from San Ramon with 29 years, contacted James from Grateful and Gay group to try to get readers for meeting because she was unaware Brandon was intergroup rep for meeting, Brandon says he will find volunteers for readings at July BSM, Kathy planning to reach out to Erin C. from Area 8 to coordinate host group for August. Should be recording speaker this Saturday unless there are technical issues, Bob says he has not received any recordings, Kathy says Molly sent recordings and will send recording from Saturday after BSM

#### BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIR—OPEN

TELEPHONE DIVERTER CHAIR—Scott B. • all shifts filled

#### ACTIVITIES CHAIR—Grey

• upcoming event July 11<sup>th</sup> 7pm FUNraiser, speaker Jimmy S with over 20 years, talent performances will start around 7:50, singing, dancing, acting, comedy, etc, looking to recruit talent/acts for entertainment portion of event. Contact Grey 831-535-3539 or Joseph 415-240-8046 to sign up to perform. Contact Grey if interested in joining committee. Magi will be including link to event in follow up email along with all other documents discussed tonight

#### NEWSLETTER— Mary

• Asks area reps and reps to ask meetings for ideas/plans about reopening, send to [grapesccin@gmail.com](mailto:grapesccin@gmail.com) email, Damien share he could also use stories of how meetings are adjusting to shelter in place, virtual meetings, their plans to reopen for archives, email to [santacruzdistrict06archives@gmail.com](mailto:santacruzdistrict06archives@gmail.com). Had hip replacement surgery scheduled for April, was just rescheduled for June, will need help preparing newsletter to be sent by snail mail, Brandon offered to help, Damien also available to help, Brandon and Damien will coordinate a time that works best. Apologies for not using BCC on last newsletter

#### WEBSITE COMMITTEE CHAIR—Porter

• Called webmaster Mark, waiting for call back. Heard he is willing to help with maintaining current site and with finishing building new site. Magi share she was able to talk with Mark earlier in the week and he sounds ready to help once given codes or sign in info for new site. Bob clarify that Mark has been webmaster all along, never stepped down and no one else was ever elected. Magi clarify that if new webmaster were to be elected it would happen at steering committee.

#### H&I LIAISON – Mitch(absent)

#### CRUZYPAA LIAISON – Quinn(absent)

#### OLD BUSINESS

• Open positions: Bylaws Committee Chair, Recording Secretary, Area 1 rep, Area 7 rep, Area 11 rep. No one available, positions still open

#### NEW BUSINESS

• Adding “Secular” as descriptor option for We Agnostics meeting: Magi share what was discussed at steering, motion was made by Phil, wants to add ‘Secular’ as descriptor option(similar to how women’s, closed, chip meeting, etc can be used currently), would help people find meeting if they are searching by meeting type if from out of area or new to AA. Some members of steering committee were uncomfortable using word ‘secular’ to describe a meeting of AA since their understanding of the word meant ‘non-spiritual’ and AA is a spiritual program, Magi shared documents from NY office that use secular to describe non religious meetings, share article about secular meeting that sued local intergroup area when their meeting removed from meeting list because it was listed as secular. Rick A. clarify that group is not discussing opinions on motion at this time, that we are giving background information and clarifying for understanding, and each rep should bring this information back to their meetings to get a group conscious. Each rep will come to next council meeting with group conscious from their meetings, will discuss and vote on motion next council, no vote happening at this time. Some members say they did not receive last email with info about motion, Magi will resend to everyone so they can reference when going to collect group conscious.

#### AREA REPORTS

Area 1: OPEN –

Area 2: Rick A – been going to meetings, all meetings in area have virtual meetings, one group choosing not to post info for meeting on website, lots of reps in attendance tonight

Area 3: Maryanne B.– left early, no report

Area 4: Jack – been going to meetings, some don’t have virtual meetings, planning to go early to women’s meetings to make report or check in with secretary beforehand

Area 5: Nicole – left early

Area 6: Randy – absent

Area 7: OPEN -

Area 8: Erin C. – left early

Area 9: Holly – been going to meetings, attended Sober Slugs they do not have rep, asks if she is responsible for recruiting rep, Magi clarify area reps can encourage group to get rep, ask why they don’t have rep, try to help them find rep, or make reports if they know meeting doesn’t have rep, Sober Slugs meeting typically does not have rep because they rotate all positions each quarter, past area rep committed to attending Sober Slugs more frequently to make intergroup reports. Has some men’s groups in area, asks if any male area reps want to help and she can attend the women’s meetings in their area, Magi recommend Holly and Jack get in contact and coordinate switching off meetings

Area 10: Steve A. – left early

Area 11: OPEN–

#### TAKE BACK THESE ITEMS TO YOUR GROUP:

- Open positions: Bylaws Committee Chair, Recording Secretary, Area 1 Rep, Area 7 Rep, Area 11 Rep
- Group conscious about using ‘Secular’ to describe We Agnostics meeting

Meeting closed with the Serenity Prayer.

—Submitted by Magi R., (interim) Recording Secretary

## AA Responses to COVID 19

In response to our questions about how groups are responding to the pandemic, the Grapesccin received several thoughtful emails about their investigations into the County health department regulations, and regulations from parks and state beaches. Aptos Grange meetings are working on it, and we understand one or two outdoor meetings have started meeting in groups of under 12, masked and sitting in own chairs with their own drinks. However, until they inform Central office, nothing will be changed on the website. Many groups are not ready to leave Zoom.

The following essay is a lovely description of acceptance and making the best of things with the wonders of Zoom, and keeping our home group’s spirits up!!

It's Founder's Day 2020 weekend, when AA celebrates 85 years since co-founder Dr. Bob got sober. I wonder what Dr. Bob would say about our virtual AA meetings? Probably, "Let's don't louse this thing up!"

I'm feeling super grateful as I listen to the Ohio based foundersday.org conference while I write this. The encouragement and hope that one alcoholic can give another is priceless. The steps, traditions and concepts are keeping our program alive and well for new alcoholics. During this pandemic era, we have had newly sober alcoholic/addicts join our virtual meeting as their first ever AA meeting and gain continuous sobriety. I find this incredible.

The initial shock of the implications of this pandemic were pretty astounding, our world has been rocked! Once I understood that we would have trucks delivering essential supplies to the stores, and we wouldn't have to go all Rambo to survive, I settled down a bit.

Within a week of our 7am daily meeting place shutting down, when suddenly our nearly 100 members had no meeting place! Who would have thought that such a thing would happen? Not me! Luckily, we had a member start us up on Zoom for our first experience at virtual meetings. I found this calming to see familiar faces, hear their laughter and their virtual hugs are the next best thing to being there in person. Soon after, service positions opened up for our virtual meeting and I was one of many who learned how to be a host. Initially, I found a zoom international AA conference link to share, and a couple of weeks later, the WEBY-PAA conference link. Great speakers and a wonderful lift to experience!

My homegroup's activities chair is a commitment that I take seriously. We had big plans before this pandemic showed up! We had a softball team just getting into our practices when the school closed the school grounds. Now our gloves and hats are on hold for another day. On Wednesday's we typically had alternating events of bowling, playing pool or miniature golf. Those events have been replaced by *Wigged Out Wednesday's* where we can wear wigs for fun and laughs. We hosted a *Easter Hat competition* for prize money where we had some laughs and more fun. The next big event was our *MayDay Mask-erade* competition! More participants with this event made it another joyful experience. We got daring on *Memorial Day*, and decided to do something memorial. We held a *flash mob* at a local shopping center parking lot! The song chosen by our activities committee was "*Come Out and Play*" by the Offspring! You may know it as "You Got To Keep Em Separated!" It was GREAT to see some of our group in person even though we couldn't get close enough for a hug in order to remain in compliance with local laws at the time. It was totally great for those of us who danced in the parking lot by Target!

Our annual picnic is typically a big deal with so much family fun. After being a pain in the County Parks representative's neck, and then finally coming to terms that we could not change our picnic to a date later this year, we settled for a similar date next year. Instead of our picnic, this year, we are having a *Pandemic Era Costume Party and Speaker Meeting*! Cash prizes for Best Group costumes, Best Couple's costumes and Most Outrageous costume. Winner's certificates are already made. One of the speakers is from out of state and the other is in New Zealand. A good friend introduced me to the zoom meeting where they attend, and I am super excited for this event next Saturday night! Participants will receive a certificate commemorating their participation at this virtual party during this unusual time.

After all, fun in sobriety is as essential as working with other alcoholics, and makes life so enjoyable! May your sobriety be full of service and joy!

-Maryanne B. – Santa Cruz, CA

## Personal Reminiscence

Meg Ryan taught me to drink vodka - it's true. When I was in my early twenties, my fascination with movies grew and grew. I was worried about alcohol use in both of my parents, my sibling and several friends. One lazy Sunday when the sky was gray and my mood was black, I went by myself to see a matinee of *When a Man Loves a Woman* (starring Meg Ryan and Andy Garcia). Meg played a mother with a drinking problem. Her young daughter (Tina Majorino) was witness to the destruction that alcoholism can create as it slowly wrecked her family. I was very empathetic to the story and left the theater deeply disturbed. I knew that parts of this movie would stick with me for years to come.

A short time later, I turned twenty-one and I managed to forget the lessons Meg had tried to teach me. My own disease began to hit its stride and others started to notice. Drinking became a daily habit, the place and the hour ceased to matter. I managed to graduate from college and hold onto a job and a relationship. I started to lean on that relationship harder than I should have, and I expected others to pick up the tab more and more. Eventually, I was asked if I wanted to go to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings or fight over bottles. I choose AA, but I had not yet given up drinking. I strung together a few months of sobriety along the way and even collected a one-year sobriety chip. I felt that someday I would be normal and recovered-enough to resume social drinking and not be addicted.

As my relationship was just about to fall apart, I scheduled a trip to Europe with the idea of secretly drinking in the back of my head. By this time, I had told most of my family and friends that I was in recovery. My mother joined me in Scotland and was not at all surprised that I accepted a sampling of whiskey or a glass of wine throughout the trip. When we returned to London and mom got on the plane home, I found an AA meeting. I remember sitting in that British basement overwhelmed by guilt and vowed that when I returned from Europe, I would give my one-year sobriety chip back.

On the plane trip home, a memory about my family crept into my head. My sister and I were young, not even ten years old when my mother had to pull over while driving to throw up on the side of the road. My sister thought the vomit was blood, and that my mother was dying since she had gotten sick on red wine. Our mother somehow got us home. The man she was dating at the time appeared in our kitchen and angrily poured out all our mother's pretty bottles of liquor. It was a long trip back from London to San Francisco, and *When a Man Loves a Woman* came back into my memory. I remembered the scene when Meg Ryan became violently ill while in the shower, collapses and her little daughter found her passed out on the bathroom floor. The celluloid daughter thought her mother was dead. After the England trip, I gave the one-year chip back and left the rooms behind me for over a decade thinking that I had learned my lesson, and I could control my drinking on my own.

In my next relationship, drinking was a part of the deal. Wine tasting and cocktails on weekends and vacations were the norm. I thought that I could handle the stuff; I did handle it (more or less) for ten years. Years of embarrassing myself at parties and drinking more at home on the sly ensued. I gained weight and I moved from job to job, never lasting anywhere more than a couple of years. Finally, another relationship was going sour. My binges with booze simply went underground. My liquor of choice was vodka, so around this time the part of the movie where Andy confronted Meg came back to me:

“What were you drinking?” Andy asked.

Deeply hung-over Meg answered, “Vodka. So you couldn't smell it.”

I got on the internet and found out that unlike whiskey, rum and tequila, gin and vodka are hard for people to detect unless you have consumed mass quantities. Some people are like bloodhounds with alcohol and I took my chances. I thought I was smart enough to never get caught. I would get up early in the morning and have a drink before work. I started going to work earlier and earlier. Often, I would hang out in my car and have sev-

eral drinks, but never more than four. Cheap, cold vodka with a splash of Red Bull was my preference. I would try to make it to lunch but sometimes I would need a drink at break. Three more drinks at lunch was usually sufficient until quitting time. On my commute home, I celebrated with a few more. I would sometimes have to stumble around a store for an hour or so to sober up before I finally went home. I somehow made it through five years of this routine half alive.

My relationship was not great, and I was holding onto my job by a thread. Two co-workers warned me that they had noticed alcohol on my breath and my boss told me that there had been complaints. After some difficult discussions with my spouse, I humbly I went back to AA and asked for help. I found a sponsor and started working the steps. One night at a meeting, my sponsor smelled rum on my breath, and I saw the disappointment in his eyes. Another night, he asked me for a ride to a meeting and I turned him down because I was worried that he would smell the booze that I had been drinking in my car before our meeting. Eventually, the dishonesty became too much, and I stopped lying to everyone. I decided upon rigorous honesty and finally told my spouse and sponsor the truth. I had to go to a hospital to detox and go through an outpatient rehabilitation program.

I have not yet faced watching *When a Man Loves a Woman* and Meg Ryan's painfully realistic portrayal of an alcoholic. I have been busy working the steps of my program, going to meetings regularly and checking in with my sponsor. Occasionally, I have a moment of gratitude that I made it through another day without a drink. Sometimes I talk to my higher power and say how many days of sobriety I have or ask for guidance or just that I am doing good. Often, it is enough just to be thankful. Someday I hope to thank Meg Ryan too.

B.B



A scenic photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The ocean waves are gentle, with white foam washing onto a sandy beach in the foreground.

Santa Cruz Intergroup Presents  
**The Birthday Speaker Meeting**  
Hosted by the Grateful & Gay Group

**Rick K from San Ramon, California**  
with 39 years

Saturday, July 4, 2020  
7:00 pm - 8:15 pm Pacific Standard Time

Zoom ID: 831 555 2468  
Password: 8675 309

or just dial: (669) 900-9128

A scenic photograph of a sunset over the ocean, identical to the one above. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The ocean waves are gentle, with white foam washing onto a sandy beach in the foreground.

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SANTA CRUZ INTERGROUP  
PRESENTS

The  
Speaker/Talent  
FUN Raiser

Saturday, July 11, 2020  
7PM

Speaker:

Jimmy Speed

Talent: singing, dancing,  
poetry or comedy  
7:50pm

Zoom ID: 884 1346 8878 Psswd: 654419

Sign up with Erik B: 831-535-3539

Grey: 415-240-8046 or Joseph: 831-247-0549