



## My Brother's Keeper

*Alcoholics Anonymous not only saved my life, but it allowed me to meet my mother*

An adoptee, I had always been curious about who my mother was, but never attempted to find her because I was so absorbed in drinking. In 1995, I contacted the state where I was adopted and received a form to fill out. I was told that if my mother had filled out a similar form, we would be reunited. I never mailed in the form. There was a thirty-five dollar fee, and that was thirty-five dollars less I would have to spend on drinking. My sobriety date is April 1, 1997—the last time I was put in jail. I was in jail for violating probation when I failed a drug test. After serving a ninety-day sentence, I went to a twenty-eight-day treatment facility. I had been around AA before but this time, after ten years of drinking, I finally had had enough and “become willing to go to any length” to stay sober. For the first time in my life, I did what I was told to do. When I got out of treatment, I joined a home group, got a sponsor, did everything my sponsor told me to do to the best of my ability, and became involved in service work.

The Promises began to come true pretty quickly. In July 1999, my wife and I bought a house, and while we were unpacking our belongings, I came across the adoption form I'd received in 1995. I filled it out and mailed it in, along with the thirty-five dollars. My perception of the situation had changed completely. In my years prior to AA, I wanted to find my mother for all the wrong reasons, selfish reasons. Now I mailed the form with no expectations and without any fear of what I might or might not discover.

Less than a week later, I received a phone call from the state adoption registry. A woman told me my mother had been looking for me since I'd turned twenty-one years old. She then nonchalantly gave me my mother's name and phone number. I was surprised to learn that my mother and I had the same area code! All kinds of questions went through my mind, including “Do I already know her?”

Immediately, I called my sponsor, his sponsor, who is a friend and coworker of mine, and my wife. I was excited and scared at the same time. My sponsor told me to “relax and take it easy,” and to pray. I prayed for God to direct my thoughts and actions and for his will to be done. I had waited for twenty-eight years for that moment. God gave me the courage and the strength to dial my mother's number. If I had mailed in that form in 1995, I would have gotten the same phone call from the adoption registry, but I would have been too scared to call.

My mother answered the phone and at first neither of us knew what to say. We talked for several hours. She told me how she had given birth to me when she was sixteen and how her family had forced her to place me with adoptive parents. She was full of guilt and remorse. I finally convinced her that I was not angry or resentful. I assured her that I was raised by wonderful parents who loved me unconditionally. She told me she had thought that I might be either dead or in prison. She had no idea how close to the truth she was.

She also told me about the rest of my family. After I was born, she stayed with my father and four years later they had another child. I have a full brother four years younger than I. My parents divorced when my brother was a baby, due to my father's alcoholism and drug and emotional problems. My father, whose family has a history of alcoholism and various other problems, died in 1995 at age forty-five of cirrhosis of the liver.

# Calendar Events

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**January 30 - February 1, 2015**

### **40th Annual San Fernando Valley Convention**

Warner Center Marriott  
Woodland Hills, CA  
[sfvaconvention.org](http://sfvaconvention.org)

**February 6-8, 2015**

### **20th Annual Thailand Roundup**

Royal Cliff Hotel  
Pattaya, Thailand  
[aathailand.org](http://aathailand.org)

**July 2-5, 2015**

### **2015 International AA Convention**

Atlanta, GA  
[aa.org/lang/en](http://aa.org/lang/en)



To find out what else is going on, you can:  
Visit Central Office at 1137 #B Pacific St, SLO, or  
Call us at: 805-541-3211, or  
Visit our website at [sloaa.org](http://sloaa.org)

## **A.A. Birthdays and Announcements**

*Birthdays for the month of December:*

Mike A., Los Osos	4 yrs
Michelle, Los Osos	5 yrs
Charlene K., Los Osos	6 yrs
William, Los Osos	14 yrs
Sherrie M.F., SLO	16 yrs
Cathy G., Los Osos	29 yrs
Paul L., Morro Bay	30 yrs



*If you are celebrating a birthday, send the details to us:*  
[nnleditor@gmail.com](mailto:nnleditor@gmail.com)

*Deadline for birthday submittal is the 18th of the month*

## **NEWSLETTER ARTICLES NEEDED**

Do you have a story, cartoon, etc. that is AA related that you want to share? Email it to us at:

**[nnleditor@gmail.com](mailto:nnleditor@gmail.com)**

We welcome all submissions but only publish those that are about recovery and AA.

## SERVICE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

### **Central Office Board of Directors Meeting**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, 8:15am, Central Office  
1137 Pacific Ave., #B, S.L.O., CA. 93401

### **Intergroup Central Office Rep. Meeting**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, 8:45am, Central Office  
1137 Pacific Ave., #B, S.L.O., CA. 93401

### **22nd District General Service Rep. & Comm. Mtg**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, 10:15am, Alano Club  
3075 Broad St., S.L.O., CA. 93401

### **Hospitals and Institutions Mtg + Bridging The Gap**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 6:40pm, Alano Club  
3075 Broad St., S.L.O., CA. 93401

### **District 22 Convention Committee**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, 12:00pm  
560 Higuera St., Suite E, S.L.O.

### **7th Tradition Mailing List**

#### **General Service Office**

P.O. Box 459  
New York, NY. 10163-0459

#### **22nd District**

P.O. Box 1891  
S.L.O., CA. 93460

### **Central Coast Central Office Intergroup (CCCOI)**

P.O. Box 12737  
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93406

### **Central California Area Assembly Area 93**

606 Alamo Pintado, #140  
Solvang, CA. 93463

### **Hospitals and Institutions (H&I)**

P.O. Box 12737  
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93406

## **Service Opportunities at the Central Office**

Our Central Office provides AA-Approved Literature and general information to alcoholics, the public and the groups of San Luis Obispo County. We are entirely staffed by volunteers ... **Would you like to be of service?**

We maintain regular business hours Monday through Saturday with our **Office Volunteers** who work a 3-hour shift every week or every other week. We also have an answering service who contact our **Call Forwarding Volunteers** who are available by phone when the office is closed.

**Our goal** is for anyone who is looking for help for themselves or someone else to be able to talk to an alcoholic 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

If you'd like more information or would like to volunteer **please call 805-541-3211**. Six months continuous sobriety is required and training is provided.

**To volunteer** to be on the Central Coast Central Office 12th step list please call the office at 541-3111 and leave a message for the Office Manager with first name, last initial, phone # and email address (optional). Or send an email to [CCCOIManager@gmail.com](mailto:CCCOIManager@gmail.com) with the same information and a return email will be sent to you with details. Thank you for your service!

## My Brother's Keeper (cont'd)

I went to meet my mother the following weekend. I was nervous and didn't know what to expect. At the reunion we cried and hugged one another. That day, I met my mother, grandmother, brother, and a cousin. I felt amazingly comfortable around my new family, as if I had known them all of my life.

My brother and I are exactly like; we even look alike. He also has had troubles with addiction. At the time I met him, he was being court-ordered to go to AA meetings and other rehabilitation classes. I wanted to take him under my wing and share my experience, strength, and hope with him. He seemed to be very receptive, and my expectations grew.

My wife, three children, and I had a wonderful weekend with my new family. I didn't see my brother again until four months later. He had stopped going to his court-ordered classes and AA meetings. He was arrested and put in jail for ninety days. He then went to a treatment center for twenty-eight days. Everything that was happening to him was so similar to my last days of drinking. I had renewed hope for my brother based on countless letters and phone calls between us during his confinement.

Five days after getting out of treatment, my brother failed another drug test, and I was asked to appear in court on his behalf. Reluctantly, I went to his hearing. This was the first time that I had gone to a hearing where I wasn't the defendant. I prayed for God to speak through me and for his will to be done.

The judge addressed me by saying "I have done some checking up on you." I had just gotten off felony probation a month earlier and had no idea what the judge might have heard about me. He said that he had heard good things about me (which was a new thing to hear about myself in a courtroom) and jokingly asked my brother if we were sure that he and I were brothers. He told my brother that he had an "invaluable resource" standing beside him and if he was smart he would heed my advice. The judge gave my brother another chance, even though I had told him that my brother belonged in prison.

My brother has terrorized my mother and the rest of the family for many years. Now I've been able to tell them about my experiences and what worked for me. The parents who raised me pretty much cut me off toward the end of my drinking and that definitely sped up my willingness to change. My wife and kids had also left. I had no one left to manipulate. Thank God I was arrested. I believe I wouldn't be alive today otherwise.

It is now nine months since I met my new family. We visit each other often. I talk to my mother and grandmother on the phone at least every other day. My relationship with my adoptive parents has become even stronger. They are happy for me, and even want to meet my mother. I have also met my paternal grandmother and have a good relationship with my father's family. I seem to be their family counselor too.

My new family has never seen me drink, and I am a completely different person than I was only a few years ago. Today I am a junior in college with aspirations to become an alcohol addiction counselor. If I had mailed in that form in 1995, I would have seen my father on his deathbed, but I don't believe that would have made me stop drinking. I would have said, "That will never happen to me." Five years later, I know it was God's will for me to find my family when I did. I would have been useless to them five years ago. Now, thanks to AA and my Higher Power, I can be of service to my family. I can give and expect nothing in return.

My brother is awaiting sentencing and will be spending some time in prison. He has definitely helped me stay sober. Hearing his excuses, self-pity, and blaming of others for his problems reminds me of myself only few years ago. We are just alike. He doesn't think so, but he didn't know me when I was a practicing alcoholic. I can only show him by example, pray for him, and be there for him. I love my brother and would do about anything for him. But I can't get him sober or make him change.

Mark W., Dothan, Alabama



## Co-founder Quotes

*It was discovered that when one alcoholic had planted in the mind of another the true nature of his malady, that person could never be the same again. Following every spree, he would say to himself, "Maybe those A.A.'s were right." After a few such experiences, often before the onset of extreme difficulties, he would return to us convinced.*

*In the first years, those of us who sobered up in A.A. had been grim and utterly hopeless cases. But then we began to have success with milder alcoholics and even some potential alcoholics. Younger folks appeared. Lots of people turned up who still had jobs, homes, health and even social standing. Of course, it was necessary for these newcomers to hit bottom emotionally. But they did not have to hit every possible bottom in order to admit that they were licked.*

### Central Coast Central Office Intergroup Officer Election Results

#### Incumbent:

*Mike M. - Chair*

*Terry R. - Vice Chair*

*Judy G. - Secretary*

#### Outgoing:

*Keith M. - Chair*

*Mary M. - Secretary*

*Don C. - Vice Chair*

*Wayne N. - Communications Chair*

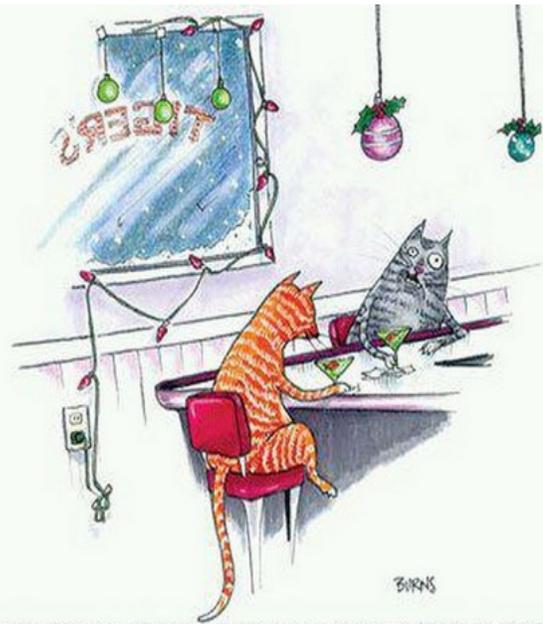
#### Incoming:

*Gina S. - Treasurer*

*R.J. C. - Member at Large/Literature*

*Jim L. - Web Chair*

*Bob R. - Communications Chair*



"So they bring a tree in the house and put all these shiny, dangling things on it, then freak out if I go near it ... This is why I drink."

### AREA SPEAKER MEETINGS

#### **Five Cities Speaker Meeting**

2nd Friday, 7:00pm Potluck, 8:00pm meeting  
564 Mesa View Dr., Arroyo Grande

#### **Fellowship Speaker Meeting**

Every Friday, 7:00pm, United Methodist Church  
1515 Fredricks St., San Luis Obispo

#### **Middle House Speaker Meeting**

Every Sunday, 10:00am (Pastries/coffee at 9:30am)  
2939 Augusta St., San Luis Obispo

#### **Sunday Night Speaker**

Every Sunday, 6:00pm, Lutheran Church  
4500 El Camino Real, Atascadero

#### **SATURDAY SPEAKER MEETINGS**

*Week*

#### **South County Speaker Meeting**

8:00pm, St. John's Lutheran Church  
959 Valley Rd., Arroyo Grande

#### **Morro Bay Speaker Meeting**

7:30pm, St. Timothy's Parish Hall  
962 Piney Way, Morro Bay

#### **Saturday Night Live**

7:30pm, Mountainbrook Community Church  
1775 Calle Joaquin Rd., San Luis Obispo

#### **Cambria Speaker Meeting**

8:00pm, Santa Rosa Catholic Church  
1174 Main St., Cambria

#### **Easy Does It Speaker Meeting**

7:00pm, St. James Church,  
14th & Oak St., Paso Robles