



The san Fernando Valley Area

Never Alone News Letter

September / October 2017

IRAN NA

by Sharhyar

My name is Shahryar, and I am an addict. I am the type of person that always liked to be noticed. I always hung out with friends who were older than me, and whose habits were illegal. There was a strange feeling inside me that made me unhappy about everything I had. Every action I was taking in my life was trying to make me an addict. At first, I begin to use drugs for enjoyment, but after years of use, it became more of a sickness. I became a dangerous addict who tried to find drugs in all circumstances. I lived to use, and used to live. I was a professional thief, and a perfect parasite who stole possessions from those people I held dear to me. I went to prison for using, and drug possession. I decided to give up using drugs, but couldn't. I decided to then get married in hopes that it could help me change, but it was the wrong plan. Eventually, everybody left me! My parents, my friends, and my lovely wife too. I was desperately alone.

Thankfully, I received the message of Narcotics Anonymous (NA) from a dear friend. I didn't believe at this point that an addict could be clean and get clean because I had tried in the past and failed. I then attended an NA meeting. I don't know what happened, but it was a beautiful night, and I had never felt a feeling this beautiful before. During my addiction, the closest people to me didn't want me around anymore. That night, a miracle happened, and all my dreams that felt unreachable all of a sudden felt possible and that my dreams could become a reality. That night at the meeting, someone hugged me, someone who didn't even know me. A kind hand squeezed my hand, and bestowed upon me unconditional pure love. This all happened without me even asking for it. I did what the other members suggested and started to go to meetings regularly. I chose a sponsor and worked my steps. I was able to change my behavior after working the 12 traditions of NA. Nothing is as precious as an addict's recovery and the ability to help other addicts recover. I begin to help others too.

I decided to start making amends with my sponsor's guidance. I decided to first make amends with my sister. I will never forget this experience. My family forgave me, and after 4 and a half years clean my wife came back home to me. One year later, my son was born and was the greatest gift God has ever given me. My son will be 6 years old soon, and I will have 12 years clean I appreciate NA. I owe my life to Narcotics Anonymous. The best gift in my life is when I share my recovery with another addict. To be of service to other addicts is my way of paying back NA for what it has done to me. I have committed to the NA way of life for life.

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September 2017

1	IBEW Courage to Change Marathon 630pm
2	Website Committee 12pm
7	Freedom Behind the Wall Subcommittee 7pm
8	Convention Subcommittee 7pm
9	Wild Recovery Meeting 845am
9	Service Works 11am
9	San Gabriel Valley 24 th Birthday Party 6pm
10	Phone lines Subcommittee 11am
10	SFV Area Service Committee 2pm
11	H&I 730pm
13	Public Information Subcommittee 7pm
17	Activities Subcommittee 5pm
21	Newsletter Subcommittee 5pm
29-30	Spanish Speaking Convention CAHHCNA XII 2pm Friday & All day Saturday

October 2017

1	Spanish Speaking Convention CAHHCNA XII all day
2	H&I Subcommittee 730pm
5	Freedom Behind the Wall Subcommittee 7pm
6	Convention Subcommittee 7pm
7	Website Committee 12pm
8	Phone lines Subcommittee 11am
8	SFV Area Service Committee 2pm
11	Public Information Subcommittee 7pm
14	Wild Recovery Meeting 8:45am
15	Activities Committee 5pm
19	Newsletter Committee 5pm

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THE NEVER ALONE NEWS LETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE NEWS LETTER SUBCOMMITTEE OF SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (CHAIR: ANA J.: VICE CHAIR KORELLE C.: LAYOUT DESIGN EDITOR DALE L.) WE WELCOME COMMENTS AND SUBMISSIONS AT SFVNEVERALONE@NASFV.COM

Wild Recovery Hike & Meeting

Wild Recovery SoCal is a group of recovering addicts who meet on the second Saturday of each month to share the message of recovery. Instead of meeting in the same room once a week, we meet monthly in beautiful settings in and around Los Angeles. Hike Information: • Gather at the trailhead at 8:45 AM. We hit the trail at 9:00 AM sharp. • You might want to stop at the Buckhorn campground to use the facilities before you park. There is one toilet about a third way into this hike. • Dogs are welcome, but must be kept on-leash. Be sure to bring water for them and come prepared to pick up after them. • This is a non-smoking trail, hike, and meeting.

Come prepared with... • At least 2 liters of water • Sunscreen – even if it's not hot • Snacks • Proper clothing and footwear: Layers that you can remove when you heat up from hiking and can put back on when we stop for the meeting; hiking boots or trail running shoes are recommended; sneakers with some grip will do. Consider: • Bringing a friend • Bringing a light weight item to sit on during the meeting • Downloading All Trails or another GPS app to your smartphone.

For more on Wild Recovery SoCal, contact Jenny or Pam at (818) 997 3822, ext. 825 or 826 • Ask about joining our FB group! • Save the date and stay tuned for details of our next hike: October 14, 2017! • Check out our website: wildrecoveryso.com

Freedom Behind the Walls Sub Committee

The FBTW subcommittee is in desperate need of men to be of service by sponsoring addicts incarcerated in state prison. There are currently 19 men waiting. This commitment only takes about an hour of your time per month. Everyone can afford to give back an hour of their time especially to carry the message to the addict still suffering giving back what was so freely given to you. MEN! Please step up and take at least one. Volunteers must be willing to work the twelve steps of N.A. with them through the mail, have a minimum of 2 years clean, and have a working knowledge of the twelve steps. It is completely anonymous and all mail is sent to a post office box.

FBTW meets on the first Thursday of the month at 7 pm. For the address of the meeting or for more information please contact the chair, Scotty S. (818) 942-5576

Working the program



Never Again need to worry

“A True Warrior”

By: Anthony V.

What is darkness? What is light? What is the definition, of a true fight? Swings and misses, devastating blows? Or someone who overcomes their hardships and woes? Life's a bitch, and that's how it goes.

We lose a lot, during the duration of life. Clean or loaded, nothing is ever 100% alright. It's how we rise after we fall. That defines our character, the warrior within us all. Do you answer when your number when is called? Do you suit up and show up, to those who stand tall? Or do you cower and hide, when shit hits the wall?

I got clean to stop losing everything that I have. Turns out being clean, I've lost my home, my Grandma and my Dad. In a 10 month span, I've lost love, money, everything in between. Is this what they meant, when they said "living the dream"? My thoughts scattered, I can barely breathe. Ending life, is what seems to be reality. But through this darkness, I search for light. This is the meaning of a true, hard fought, fight.



**Narcotics Anonymous meeting
every Tuesday 6pm**

1401 Noth Lake Ave Pasadena, CA 91104

Contact Jeff for more info 909-283-9325

(Sign language interpreters provided)



Page Two

The Gift of Never Alone

by Dale L.

On Jan 24, 2016, I sent my first story **Convict to Freedom** to the "Never Alone" Newsletter and included this note:

My name is Dale L. and I was told you were in need of stories for your paper. My home group is "The All in an Hour Meeting" in North Hollywood, where I am the chip person. I am an ex-con who spent 25 years in prison for murder. I now volunteer at least 6 hours a day 5 days a week with the Department of Restorative Justice, giving back and making amends. My job is reviewing for Insight and Remorse, so I do a lot of reading, writing and some public speaking. A better life than anything I could ever hope for with 6,851 days clean, one day at a time. If you don't want to print a story from someone like me, I understand.

And I received this warm welcome back:

A. Thank you very much! You are an inspiration. I appreciate your submission. Amanda H.

This is very inspiring! Thank you for taking the time to share your experience, strength and hope. Of course, we will run this in our next issue! Lee M.

A with Amanda's encouragement, I became a regular staple of this newsletter, looking forward to being a part of something as big as SFVNA. I would go to meetings and people were always asking, was that your article in the newsletter, you're the only Dale I know. I found it an excellent way to express my feelings and thoughts with others and to feel good about myself. Who else but a bunch of addicts in recovery would welcome a convicted murderer into their lives so warmly? And to think I was afraid my first story might be rejected because of my past and it was my past, my experience, strength and hope that people needed to hear.

A I was lucky enough to meet Amanda a few months later at **Spirit of St Joes** and all I could think was Wow! Not only smart, caring and sympathetic, but gorgeous and taken. This woman is the embodiment of NA, all of its concepts, precepts and principles in one package. I see the girls she sponsors and they all have this glow in their eyes when they say, "Amanda is my sponsor."

I now have 7,414 days clean and enjoy a wonderful friendship with Amada H. and Rudy F.

A year after my first story and Amanda says Dale, do you know Publisher, I have a new commitment as chair of H&I and I need someone to take over as editor for the newsletter. I told her I had looked it over and if she gave me two hours, I would have an adequate handle on the program. She passed the torch on to me and I was, "Oh my God, what have I gotten myself into."

(The Gift of Never Alone Continued)

A The Answer came in two beautiful packages, I was soon email buddies with both Ana J. chairperson of Never Alone and Korelle C, co-chairperson. These women came into my life with so much to offer and a love for the program that only compares to the amazing Amanda. These women instill a thrill of being on a winning team. We throw ideas back and forth by email and await the excited response knowing on this team, nobody ever drops the ball because the game "Lets Meet This Deadline" is just to fun. Both of these women gave me cakes for my 20th birthday and like Amanda turned out to be smart, caring sympathetic, gorgeous and taken.

A From taking a chance with my first story in Never Alone, I have gained a family of the most awesome women in Narcotics Anonymous. My life is full of new opportunities and an awareness of the opportunities coming up in NA. Getting involved and being of service is always rewarding and one of the best ways to insure a daily reprieve from our addiction. I'm 61 and get to enjoy inspiration and adoration from my new friends Ana and Korelle. Our guiding thought is always, I couldn't do this without you.

Thank You Ana and Korelle for being such an inspiration in my life today.



H&I NEEDS YOU.....

Do you have 1 year clean?

Do you want to give back?

Do you enjoy being of service?

Please join us the 1st Monday of the month at 7:30 pm

6451 St. Clair Ave North Hollywood, 91606

Chair: Amanda H. 818-481-8961

Vice Chair: Julie F. 818-930-9545

Addiction & Service

by Korelle C.

Addiction is incurable, progressive and fatal
An addicts worst enemies are procrastination and apathy
We can beat procrastination and apathy by being of service and by being involved in the program and with other addicts

"You will get all you want in life if you help enough other people get what they want."

~Zig Ziglar

Being of service helps addicts stay clean. Here are some great ways to be of service:

- Give an addict a ride to a meeting
- Answer a 12 step call
- speak on a panel
- reach out to a newcomer
- give a fellow addict a hug and hello

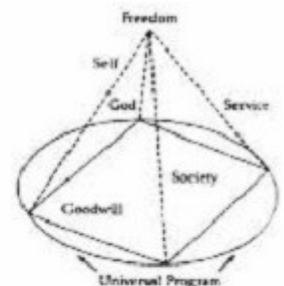
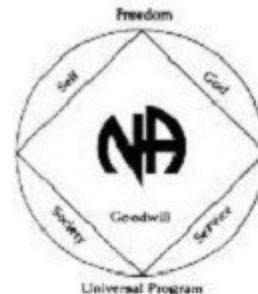
Take a commitment at a meeting- (clean time requirement for the below commitments varies between meetings and their individual group's guidelines)

- Secretary- Facilitate the meeting, make sure all commitments are covered, and ensure a leader/speaker is lined up for every week
- Set up/Clean Up- Come early and help set up chairs and prepare room for meeting- clean up afterwards
- Coffee- Come early and make coffee for meeting – also maintain coffee supplies (Coffee, cups, creamer, sugar, stir sticks, etc.)- reimbursed by treasurer/meeting for all outside costs
- Chips/Keytags- Celebrate milestones in recovery with a chip/keytag and a hug and recognize your fellow addict.
- Literature- Come early and set up literature, give report at end of meeting, Clean up/Sell literature at end of meeting (store literature for meeting during rest of week)
- GSR (Group Service Representative)- Report to Group what is happening in NA, any announcements regarding the area and NA as a whole all the way up to world level, announces activities, communicate ways to be of service, votes on behalf of group, attends the Area Service Committee meeting once a month, donates 7th tradition monies on behalf of the group, and picks up any meeting literature needed.
- Cakes- Celebrate annual milestones for addicts 1 year or more clean with cake, candle and song. This commitment requires the trusted servant to buy the cake, plates, silverware necessary for celebrating clean time birthdays before meeting. Receipts for supplies and cake can be turned over to the meeting treasurer for reimbursement
- Treasurer- handles all 7th tradition monies for meeting, pays rent, reimburses trusted servants for costs pertaining to their commitments (Coffee, GSR, Cakes)
- Greeter- Greet all meeting attendees- usually done outside or at door prior to meeting start time- Say hello, give a hug, and introduce yourself

(Addiction & Service continued)

Join one of the sub committees listed within the SFV meeting directory- Most subcommittees meet once a month

- Activities- They plan all events for the SFV of NA (Dances, Picnics, ETC.)
- Phone Lines- They answer all the phone lines and help suffering addicts struggling with addiction or looking for a meeting- they even assist in helping addicts find rides to meetings
- Public Information- Help outside public entities know about NA
- Freedom Behind the Walls- Sponsorship for people who are incarcerated and unable to attend meetings. 2 year clean time requirement with active working knowledge of steps
- Newsletter- published usually every 2 months, this committee puts together the NASFV newsletter "Never Alone"
- Hospitals & Institutions- Carry the message- 1 year clean time requirement to have a panel, 6 month clean to speak on a panel.
- SFV Convention Committee- Volunteer for one of the subcommittees (Hospitality, Registration, Operations, etc.) and be of service during the annual SFV area convention of NA held every January



The 4 sides of the NA symbol

1. SELF- True to self
2. SOCIETY- All people
3. SERVICE- Give service
4. GOD- Our higher power

The diamond square represents goodwill.

The circle represents universal program

The entire symbol represents freedom

NA started in 1953

DON'T BE AFRAID OF YOUR FEARS
THEY ARE NOT THERE TO SCARE YOU
THEY ARE THERE TO LET YOU KNOW
THAT SOMETHING IS WORTH IT

~C Joybell C

Grateful for Recovery

A New Life and a New Perspective

By Julie F.

I had been on and off self-medicating for about 12 years and in the end my drug use and mental illness had spiraled out of control. Finally, after many hospital stays for overdose, 51-50 holds for psychotic-episodes, rehabs, detox facilities and mental hospital I was diagnosed bi-polar and began treatment and proper medication for the bi-polar, but it did not treat the addiction. Without treatment for my addiction I continued to spiral downward. After losing everyone including my then 2-year-old daughter and everything I had with nowhere else to go my parents took me in on one condition, I must attend N.A. meetings and follow the program along with staying on my bipolar medication. So, I did that but when I went to N.A. I was unwilling and full of attitude never accepting I had a problem. I went to meetings, got a sponsor and worked some steps because I was told to but never really opened up because I forgot how to be honest and I did not want to feel my feelings. After about 7 months, I relapsed and that was ugly, embarrassing and eye-opening. I felt lost, scared, broken and alone and this time there was no one to blame but me. This is when I had to accept that I WAS to blame and I WAS an addict who had mental illness. I became willing to do things someone else's way. That relapse was a gift of desperation; I had no self-worth, no self-esteem and no clue how to live. I began to listen, take direction and learned to be open minded to become someone different and do things different. Accepting I was an addict and accepting the bipolar diagnoses was when I began to take the power back in my life and learned I always have a choice and I started to choose to do the right things. I started to grow, believe in myself, believe in God, worked the 12 steps and began to also forgive myself. The 12 steps taught me many things: acceptance, patients, unconditional love, trust, willingness, and believing in God and staying in his will for me not my own. I started to slowly get my life back a job, car, friends, family and began the process in family court to get my daughter back. Over the last 2 years the court battle has been ugly but because of the growth and things I have learned and my faith in God I have walked through that with dignity and grace and with the light at the end of the tunnel finally in reach and complete 50/50 with no stipulations or court ordered check in dates to have to attend anymore and the beautiful relationship her and I have has made my

faith and belief in myself that much stronger. A new positive action I practice today is having integrity, doing the right thing even when nobody's watching. This is something that not only feels good but allows me to sleep well at night. I also continue to do the work necessary to keep me clean and that got me to where I am today. I continue the steps, now sponsor women that are new just like I was, I'm of service to N.A. and the vice chair of H&I which is the committee that helps by taking meetings to hospitals and intuitions where addicts are that cannot get to a meeting, I give back any way I can because I don't know any other way to pay back the program that not only saved my life but gave me a life but gave my daughter a mother and my family back the daughter and sister they always wanted and thought I could be, but I never could because the drugs and mental illness were in the way and untreated. Another important action I take today is staying in God's will not my own and pray for his will on a daily basis. I Know his will is what keeps me here and keeps me clean and my will always takes me out and takes everything I have worked so hard to have back in my life away in a minute. I'm fully aware that I have the disease of addiction and there is no cure and left untreated with meetings, steps and service will take me out again. I also know I have bi-polar disorder and even though I'm treating it with proper medication I will never be cured. These are both lifelong illnesses that must continue to be treated at all times and if not, I WILL lose everything I have all over again.

Recovery from Relapse in Four Stages

By Molly K.

I am returned; the soft eyes of a fallen child.
I am empty; God pours through me like water.
I am listening; God echoes in my silence.
I am burning; God's wick dipped in wax,
a light for you in the darkness.

Clean Time Anniversaries

Date	Name	Yrs 2017
September		
9/1/87	Vicki T.	30
9/15/14	Rachel B.	3
9/16/12	Chalo A.	5
9/17/11	Tonia O.	6
9/19/07	Stephanie M.	10
9/22/82	Sequoia S.	35
9/24/82	Shelly S.	35
9/25/14	Ozzie Z.	3
9/29/11	Carrie C.	6
October		
10/6/12	Veronica S.	5
10/11/12	Renee A.	5
10/13/86	Pam T.	31
10/17/08	Tracy Q.	9
10/18/04	Denise T.	13
10/17/02	Joan H.	15
10/22/96	Pam M.	21
10/30/00	Fred B.	17
10/30/15	Lydia B.	2
10/30/15	Marty B.	2
10/31/06	Laurie M.	11



A Knuckle Headed Addict Like Me

-EL

I came into the rooms of NA or as I like to call them the "NO ADULTS rooms" completely broken and beaten in more ways than one. I thought life had dealt me a bad hand. I couldn't comprehend how Daddy's little girl could've messed things up so drastically. I suddenly found myself standing in front of a mirror all alone not recognizing the thing that stared back at me. Who had I become?

Whose reflection was that? In the mirror, I saw an ugly thing with the resembled something human and extra-terrestrial at the same time. What had happened to the girl who loved to smile and loved life? What was this creature that all of a sudden was faced with having to say "I am an addict and I need help"? Help? What did that mean? That crazy four-letter word didn't exist in my vocabulary, for the only four-letter word I knew was "meth".

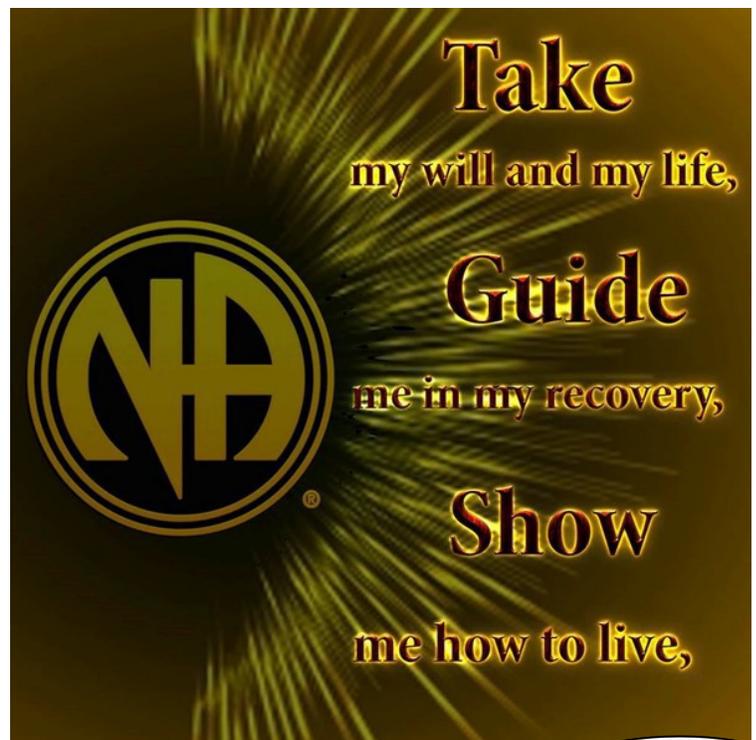
I found myself wondering why I was getting beaten daily? I thought it clearly couldn't be the drugs causing it. It had to be me! I was the problem. When I looked at myself it was as if I wasn't even human anymore. As my disease progressed I fell deeper into a hole that no one could pull me out of. My parents' attempts almost seemed in vain. Even the love I have for my children couldn't get me out of that hole. On February 5, 2016, I was about to kick my day off with my daily routine (perimeter check, smoke a cigarette to make sure no one was listening, and then finally make it into my room). As I listened to the outdoor noise I heard someone knocking on the gate. I went to see who knocked with such determination to get in. It was DCFS standing at my door. I told them great stories of how I had protected my children and everything seemed ok. They came into our home and asked that I change my sons diaper. I was so out of it I hadn't realized he was soiled. I needed my pick me up. As I changed my son, my father walked into the living room and realized they were doing an inventory on my son. They were checking him to see if he had markings or bruises. I didn't realize at that moment that they were only doing this because they already knew they were taking my baby. That's the first time this addict had to admit to anything! I was told to report to court in 21 days. I knew that somehow, I could beat the system. I thought I could just go to rehab and they would just return my babies, right? I was so wrong the only clear thought I had was enrolling in rehab prior to being ordered. I began to get these crazy with suicidal thoughts and rocked myself to sleep with such intensity that my mattress would hit the wall! I eventually went to my first meeting. I hated it! I thought no one in

those rooms knew me and they couldn't compare, and weren't like me. I judged everyone! The same people I judged gave me the simplest and best advice of my life. They said stick to the women, get phone numbers, stay connected get a sponsor, and you'll be okay! They promised me freedom from active addiction! They promised me hope, and vowed to love me until one day I could love myself.

Today I love myself! I stand before you with 565 days clean! That in itself is a miracle. Today I have my children back and they're no longer a ward of the state. Today I have a life. I've put some weight back on and found out the girl who loves life is back. I see her in the mirror now she smiles at me and she says, "hey chubby you need to hit a treadmill."

Life is attainable to all addicts and no matter where you come from or who you thought you were! It's here and now that you can make a conscious choice to change yourself for the better. Here and now you get to pick the people you will soon love more than your own family. Here and now we get to THE MESSAGE IS HOPE AND "THE PROMISE IS FREEDOM THAT AN ADDICT ANY ADDICT CAN STOP USING LOSE THE DESIRE TO USE AND FIND A NEW WAY TO LIVE!" NOT ONLY CAN WE SAY IT BUT WITH OUR HEADS HELD HIGH WE CAN SAY "I AM PROOF I MADE IT OUT ALIVE."

Here and now we can help those who are struggling and they can help us remember where we came from and together we can move forward. To all those parents who've lost a child to DCFS, I say hold on to your seat baby this is a bumpy ride but we can get you through it. For those that have less time than me, just stay I promise you this is worth it. To my predecessors, thank you for paving the way for a knuckle headed addict likeme.



Arrested = Saved

By Linda M. from "Behind the Walls"

On December 27th 2016 my new life began. I was at a drug house and LAPD knocked on the door. My life was in a shambles. I had lost my home, my clean time, the best man I'd ever known and most of all myself. It all started when my mom died. I distanced myself from NA and that was my biggest mistake. That caused a cascade of horrible events in my life that I will spend years making up for. But, I've learned from it. I know I'll be okay, when I got those handcuffs on me, I know beyond a doubt that I was being saved, not arrested. Through NA and a man named Dale L. a woman named Laurie M. and the person who I harmed more than myself this last run ■ I have another chance at life and recover. Thank you HP. Thank You NA. My name is Linda and just for today I am a grateful recovering addict.



GOLD COAST AREA 31st WOMEN'S RETREAT



A Spiritual Journey through the Traditions

June 29th - 31st, 2018

Serra Retreat- Malibu
3401 Serra Rd., Malibu, Ca. 90265

\$250.00

(Price includes semi private room and 6 meals, Friday dinner through Sunday lunch)

Program will include: Workshops, Meditation, Massage (extra cost), Nature Trails,
Coastal Beach & Foliage Views, Labyrinth, and Angel Wash

For more information please contact any of the following committee members:

Deborah C. – Chair (805) 561-8656

Ruth H. – Vice Chair (805) 236-8934

Benee B. – Registration Chair (805) 754-8070

Mail- tear off below with information filled out - along with deposit (checks or money orders)

—

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Enclosed Amount: _____

*(Nonrefundable Deposit of \$34.00 required- 1st payment due ASAP, 2nd payment of \$83.00 due November 2017 and final payment of \$83.00 due by March 2018 ** Roommate choice available, MUST make deposit together. Checks can be made out to: GCAWRC. Mail checks to: Benee Bingham- 893 Weber Circle #205, Ventura, Ca 93003)*



Saturday
12:15PM

Ain't Misbehavin'

Leader-Participation Meeting

Old Friends & Newcomers — Everyone Is Welcome

Tyrone & Sylvan
6260 Tyrone Avenue

Van Nuys

United Methodist Church
Park in the Lot

Homemade Birthday Cake With Advance Notice – NA Recovery Since 1986

• SFV Area NA Helpline: 818-997-3822 • SFV Area NA Website: NASFV.com •