

# Sharing Hope.

## Freedom: Pass It On!

*A Monthly Letter from the Director of Los Angeles H&I*

When I was young, I loved collecting coins. I would save my money and go to the coin store to buy old coins. I loved thinking about the history behind the coins, especially where had they been and who had handled them. I thought that maybe I would find one worth a million dollars someday. My parents and grandparents would always buy coins for my birthday. I amassed a nice collection over the years.

My grandma saved her coins all of her life. She had a huge box of them and when she died, she left them to my mom. My mom always told me that eventually the coins would go to me. Towards the end of my drinking I lost everything. I lost my career, my money, and liquidated my savings. I had nothing. I took my coin collection to the pawn shop and borrowed against it. When that money was gone, I went into my mom's closet and found my grandma's coins and started stealing them, 10-15 rolls at a time, borrowing against them also. I went through most of the coins. When my mom figured out I was stealing them I will never forget the words she said to me: "What happened to you?" I was so ashamed of myself. I hated the person I had become, the things that I had done and I realized I was killing my mom through worry, stress and lack of sleep.

After I got clean and sober, before I had done an 8th and 9th Step, I used to think about those coins and I would be overcome by guilt, shame, and remorse. It made me very depressed. Then I came to the 8th Step and put those coins on the list. I became willing to make amends. Clean and sober, I started working again and saving my money. Eventually I went back to that coin shop, bought them all back and returned them to my Mom. I even got my old collection back.

Today, when I think of those coins I am overwhelmed with joy, gratitude and freedom. Alcoholics Anonymous helped me clean up the wreckage of my past and start a new life—one I'm happy to be able to pass on via H&I. Plus, I don't carry that shame and guilt with me anymore; I am a free man.

I am so grateful for the life that AA has given me. And so is my mom....

Sincerely,  
Greg B.,  
Director, LA H&I

### *The Los Angeles H&I Committee*

H&I Director .....	Greg B.
Director's Assistant.....	Stephen B.
Director of Policy Council .....	Andy V.
Director, Correctional.....	Gene S.
Director, Hospitals.....	Noeh H.
Panel Screening Chairs.....	Mark S.
Treasurer.....	Frederick J.
Can Person .....	Mike A.
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Forms Chairperson .....	Lidia C.
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LA Intergroup Rep .....	Sasha/Devon C.
Greeter/Smoking Police .....	Terry W.
Newsletter Editor .....	Colleen W.

### LAHIC TOTAL\$ FOR JUNE 2015:

Los Angeles H&I took in a combined total of \$7,994.34 for June in can collections at meetings, for a 2015 total of \$45,675.62. Thank you for your service, the gift that gives to everyone!

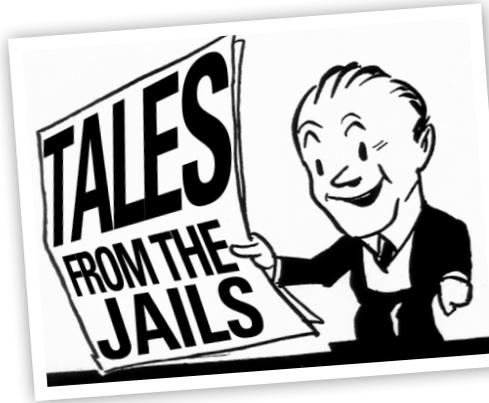
### CENTRAL OFFICE NEEDS YOU!

Pick up a phone shift, save your sobriety—and maybe someone else's. For more info, contact Central Office at (323) 936-4343.

## IT TURNS OUT I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM—I'M A FUNCTIONAL ALCOHOLIC!

A common theme I hear from our brothers and sisters behind bars is about being a functional alcoholic. I heard it again recently from Grumpy, (a moniker she embraces) who claims she's a highly functioning alcoholic; well, if it weren't for the fact that she's doing a five-year prison stint while her son also sits in jail, I might agree with her.

Another fellow told me he could function quite well under the influence, which he demonstrated quite aptly when leading the coppers on a long distance car chase; he obeyed all the traffic laws and only smoked his crack pipe while waiting at a red light. Of course, he also used this down time to shoot at the police, which led them to shooting him, putting him in the hospital and then the Big House.



One more gal tried to convince me she was always at her criminal functional best when under the influence; I guess the authorities who repeatedly locked her up were also quite functional.

And what's the common denominator with these misguided folks? They're all telling their stories behind bars! There also was a time in my life I thought I functioned perfectly well under the influence. Sitting in a courtroom and listening to the DA call me "A Menace to Society" only confirmed my belief that I was extremely misunderstood! (It turns out I wasn't.)

My conclusion about functional alcoholics? A myth! Functional is the capacity to care for and help others, which is what sobriety gives us.

*Gene S.*

*AA H&I Corrections Director*

## A VERY PERSONAL "THANK YOU" FOR YOUR SERVICE

Hello H&I Sisters and brothers.

Thank you for all the service you do at H&I.

We continue to get emails and calls from all kinds of facilities requesting our services, we continue to grow with new panels every month besides the ones we already do and so we need you (not only us but the people you may help) to step up as panel leaders, panel chairs and panel speakers.

If you don't know what any of these positions are about, I invite you to look at the Policy Guidelines which are available on our website [lahic.org](http://lahic.org) they describe specifically what the duties are of any of the positions at H&I.

This month I'd like to talk about commitment.

If you take a panel as panel leader, please make sure you show up for your panel with a format, speakers and

literature. We have a "No Dark Nights" policy. Stay in contact with your panel chair (if you don't know who that is, ask your area supervisor) and your area



supervisor by sending your post-panel reports.

If you sign up to speak on a panel, please write legibly—not all of us read "Hieroglyphs"—keep your sign-up

confirmation slip, and put the date in your calendar.

Though your panel leader may send you a reminder, ultimately it's your responsibility to know when your panel is.

Making a commitment means you don't book anything else on that day and time.

In the event that something unexpected comes up (as it does from time to time) please find a replacement. It's common courtesy not to just call up (if at all) and say: sorry I can't make it.

Remember, we are in the life saving business and the life you are saving may very well be your own.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

*Noeb C.*

*AA Hospitals Director*