

# the Point

*The point is, that we are willing  
to grow along spiritual lines.*

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

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The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of AA, nor does publication constitute endorsement of AA as a whole, our Intergroup, the Central Office, or The Point Editorial Committee. Letters and articles to help carry the AA message are welcomed, subject to editorial review by The Point Committee.

*Cover illustration by Anonymous*

# March 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at Intergroup meetings, Intergroup committee meetings or service events sponsored by the preceding entities, including ASL interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative formats, should contact Central Office at (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.</p> 			<p><b>1</b> <b>FIRST WED</b> <b>Intergroup Meeting</b> 1187 Franklin St., SF <b>Orientation</b> 6:15pm <b>Meeting</b> 7pm</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>6</b> <b>FIRST MON</b> <b>Technology Committee Meeting</b> Central Office 6pm</p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>8</b> <b>SECOND WED</b> <b>Marin Bridging the Gap</b> 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael <b>Orientation</b> 6pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 6:30pm</p>
<p><b>12</b> <b>SECOND SUN</b> <b>Golden Gate Young People in AA</b> Marin Alano Club 12pm <i>(even months at Central Office; odd months at Marin Alano Club)</i> <b>Daylight Savings Time</b> Move clocks FORWARD one hour</p>	<p><b>13</b> <b>SECOND MON</b> <b>SF Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC)</b> Central Office <b>Business Meeting</b> 7pm</p>	<p><b>14</b> <b>SECOND TUE</b> <b>Marin H&amp;I</b> 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael 6:15pm <b>SF General Service</b> 1111 O'Farrell St <b>Orientation / Concept Study</b> 7pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 8pm</p>	<p><b>15</b></p>
<p><b>19</b> <b>THIRD SUN</b> <b>Archives Committee Meeting</b> Central Office 2pm <i>Business meeting followed by work day</i></p>	<p><b>20</b> <b>THIRD MON</b> <b>Marin General Service</b> 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael <b>Orientation / Concept Study</b> 6:45pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 7:30pm</p>	<p><b>21</b></p>	<p><b>22</b></p>
<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	<p><b>28</b> <b>FOURTH TUE</b> <b>Marin Teleservice</b> 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael <b>Orientation</b> 7pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 7:30pm</p>	<p><b>29</b></p>

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2	3	4
9	10	11 <u>SECOND SAT</u> Access Committee Meeting Central Office 10am The Point Committee Meeting Central Office 12:30pm
16	17	18 <u>THIRD SAT</u> SF H&I 2900 24th St, SF Orientation 11am (odd months have a business meeting)
23	24	25 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> CNCA Meeting 320 N McDowell Blvd, Petaluma 10am
30	31	



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*Bankrupt idealist that he  
has been, his ideal is no  
longer a dream.*

~ Bill W., Grapevine,  
February 1948



## Meeting Changes

### Meeting Changes:

Sat	10:00am	San Rafael	Chopsticks, Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Blvd. (Was designated YP, was at 10:30pm)
Wed	7:00pm	Pt. Reyes Station	Wednesday Night Speaker Discussion, Dance Palace, 503 B St. (Was located at the Pt. Reyes Station HHS Building)

### No Longer Meeting:

Sun	8:30pm	Castro	Castro Call Out, Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St.
Wed	9:00pm	South of Market	Compass Group, Sailors Union, 450 Harrison St.
Thu	6:30pm	Terra Linda	Marin Big Book Study, Lutheran Church, 1100 Las Gallinas Ave.

**Note: As of 1/15/2017 ALL MEETINGS at Nu Outlook have been cancelled.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** We occasionally receive reports that meetings listed in our schedule are missing or no longer active. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken, and sometimes not. **If you know anything about a meeting that has relocated or disbanded — even temporarily —** please call Central Office immediately: **(415) 674-1821**. This helps us direct newcomers, visitors and sober, local alcoholics alike to actual meetings and not to rooms that housed a meeting once upon a time. *Thank you for contributing to the accuracy of our schedule!*



## PRAASA 2017

### Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

50 years of empowering  
the informed Group Conscience  
**1968 - 2017**

#### “Supporting Our Future”

If you need to contact us, send an email to:  
[PRAASA2017@cna.org](mailto:PRAASA2017@cna.org)

Hosted by Northern California Interior Area 07  
March 3 - 5, 2017  
McClellan Conference Center  
5411 Luce Avenue  
McClellan Park (Sacramento), CA 95652  
Assembly meeting times: Friday, March 3, 1:00 p.m. - Sunday, March 5, 12:15 p.m.

To register online, go to: [PRAASA.ORG](http://PRAASA.ORG)



### Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC)

A.A. Public Information tries to reach the alcoholic indirectly, as well as directly, in two ways:

*By informing the general public about the  
A.A. program*

*By informing “the third person” whose work  
is or may be involved with the active alcoholic*

#### Are you interested in participating?

PI/CPC committee is looking for new committee members and will be conducting elections.

**Contact Peter B. at**  
[picpc@aasf.org](mailto:picpc@aasf.org)

## From the Editor

# Day of the Dreamers

*Bankrupt idealist that he has been,  
his ideal is no longer a dream.*

~Bill W., *Grapevine*, Feb. 1948

Ken J. remembers hearing a woman at a convention say that from her very first meeting she had never found it necessary to drink again (Page 12). When I was struggling through my first year, wincing at every beer commercial, if I heard other sober people speak it gave me hope. The twinkle in newcomers' eyes as they start to live again is one of the things that keeps me coming back to our fellowship.

Our March issue starts with John W.'s story from a St. Patrick's Day he later commemorated on his license plate. Michael T. marvels at Big Book phrases like "shivering denizens of King Alcohol" in his *Meet the Meeting*

article. And Kathleen C. shows how Step 3 transformed her "Bad Mommy" persona when she turned over her so-called life.

Alex P. imparts the glorious, indescribable feeling of connection in an auditorium full of LGBTQ alcoholics Living Sober—42 years old and still going strong (Page 10). Rick R. tells us about when he was 28 and his life stopped passing him by (and he met an intriguing stranger). Bree L. recounts the story of Dan, an old-timer who embodies the wisdom of "staying in the middle of the boat." Finally, Forrest P. illustrates the difference between simply grasping AA concepts and developing a life that works. Time brings hope, with hope one gets sober time, and the idealistic dream becomes a reality.

## EDITORIAL POLICY

*The Point* is published monthly to inform A.A. members about business and meeting affairs of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, *The Point* publishes original feature articles submitted by local A.A. members that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates its pages, and in determining the editorial content, the editors rely on the principles of the Twelve Traditions.

This statement is a summary; for the full editorial policy, please go to [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org). To contact *The Point* committee directly, write to [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org).



## Faithful FIVERS!

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members Who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5 each month toward the support of Central Office. Faithful Fiver contributions go a long way in helping make our vital services possible. We thank the following members:

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Danielle G.	Karen C.	Mary C.
David J.	Karen K.	Mary D.
Dianne E.	Karla S.	Mary L.

(Continued on Page 19)

If you would like to become a Faithful Fiver, please download a pledge form from our website. You will receive a complimentary subscription to **The Point**. And remember, individual contributions are 100% tax deductible!





# A Saint Patrick's Day to Remember

*We never know when the moment of clarity will arise*

by John W.

For over 35 years, nearly daily drinking had not convinced me I had a problem with alcohol. Neither had two DUIs or the six-month separation from my soon-to-be (although I did not then know it) ex-wife in the summer of the previous year. Although I had grudgingly started attending A.A. meetings in the winter, I clearly didn't "get it," for I was hungover at every 7 a.m. meeting for months.

First, Christmas would be the day I stopped for good, then my eldest's birthday, New Year's Eve, then the first day of the new year, the anniversary of my father's death, my birthday, and even Valentine's Day was a target, but each target was missed. So on March 8, when my deceased father's birthday arrived and my ex said she had finally had enough, no looking back, she was filing for divorce forthwith, you would have thought that would have caused me to stop—you would have been wrong.

***As I whined about my misfortune, hungover again, something different happened***

As I whined about my misfortune, hungover again, the next day at 7 a.m., something different happened. While sympathy was offered by several, one guy just looked me in the eye and said: "I can't say enough about the not drinking part of this program!"

I don't know how it happened, because I didn't stop that day or even the next, but I did find myself in my favorite bar on my favorite day, St. Patty's Day, not long thereafter. I had

my newest favorite drink, soda with a splash of OJ, not once but twice and was heading back to the house, no longer my "home," when it hit me.

I realized that for the first time in as long as I could remember, not only had I not had a drink yet that day, I had not even thought about having a drink that day, I had not even wanted a drink that day. I began to cry...just as I am now as I remember that moment almost six years ago.

At my 7 a.m. meeting the next morning I reported in (over the previous two weeks I had actually been telling the truth about being a newcomer, whereas I had lied about it for the first three months), that I hadn't had a drink the day before. My "mentor," a lovely woman with 16 years at the time, who was to die of cancer, sober, before her 70th birthday, gave me a big hug and said that St. Patrick's Day was a great sobriety birthday, so I had to be sure not to drink in the day ahead.



Not realizing how I was tempting fate, and being a creature of habit, I returned that day to my favorite watering hole. Again it was soda with a splash of OJ, then on to the house from which I was soon to be "kicked out" by the court. While driving home that next day, I was

again struck by the fact that I had not thought of or wanted a drink that day—two consecutive days, that was a world record, or at least a personal best.

***As the days without drinking slowly turned into months and then years, marvelous things began to happen to me***

Not long thereafter I got a sponsor and starting working the steps. The family broke up, the divorce happened, the three children were alienated and did not want to be with their dad, the job got worse and my world seemed to implode around me, but I didn't drink. And time began to pass for me, as it does for all of us, in the wonderful way time passes in this program, one day at a time.

As the days without drinking slowly turned into months and then years without drinking, marvelous things began to happen to me. The children started to want to be with their dad again, not in the same way or all at once, but to be with him nonetheless. A new relationship with a woman in A.A., herself with double-digit sobriety, blossomed into my life. Other problems persisted or resolved, but I had found a way to get through them without drinking, at least for that day.

Too many St. Patrick's Days past were forgotten due to blackouts or the manner in which I had comported myself at the time, but the one which appears on my license plate, 3 17 05, daily recalls to me a St. Patrick's Day to remember.



# Better than Brunch

*Big Book Study Group, Sundays, 11:30,  
1201 Fillmore Street, San Francisco*

by Michael T.

What could possibly be more meaningful, worthwhile, or appreciated than a scrumptious brunch on Sunday? We encourage you to come to the Sunday Big Book Study on Sunday at 11:30 and find out! The meeting is held in the recently remodeled Kaiser CDRP facilities at 1201 Fillmore Street. It is one of the oldest meetings in San Francisco, dating back to when Garden Sullivan offered recovery services. It then moved to the YMCA on Geary Street for a number of years, and eventually relocated to its current location at the corner of Turk and Fillmore. While Kaiser offers excellent recovery services, the meeting is not affiliated with the facility in any way. In spite of its august history, the meeting is going through one of those curious transitions where attendance has significantly fallen off (in large part because the facility was recently closed for several months for needed repairs), so we would like to extend an enthusiastic invitation for you to consider supporting the group.

*We sit in a circle, so  
everyone feels like an  
active part of the group*

One reason I enjoy it so much is that we sit in a circle, so everyone feels like an active part of the group. We begin by sharing our names and addictions, something that I could not (and would not) publicly do for many years. What I thought was a badge of shame has truly become a declaration of independence, an earnest step in being honest. Attendance is comfortable

enough that many members have commented that it is here where they first felt at ease speaking or reading out loud. My advice to a newcomer has always been to be as gentle and open as possible, particularly when he or she has finally found the courage to come to a meeting. It certainly is something I should have told myself when I first got sober. When meetings felt awkward, I didn't know the prayers, the steps seemed more like punishment than salvation, and the fellowship was terrifying, the stories in the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) gave me hope that I could stop drinking, even on those days when it didn't seem possible.

*Reading the Big Book  
out loud was profoundly  
helpful in my early sobriety  
and continues to be*

Reading the Big Book out loud was profoundly helpful in my early sobriety and continues to be. In those fragile days, I thought that Bill W. should have been writing Victorian novels; his "shivering denizens of King Alcohol" sounded more like something Dickens would have penned than words from a man who truly saved my life. I was so judgmental then, so eager to read some loophole that would enable me to drink again, and as I turned those pages, so tempted to put the Big Book down rather than appreciate the solutions that were there. My mind would easily drift to thinking about possible dinner menus, vacation plans years hence, or some problem at work. And in fact, years later, it still does. But when I read the Big Book with others

and we have the opportunity to discuss the chapter, it often takes on new meaning, new relevance. Occasionally, I will come across a paragraph that I swear was not there the last time we read it. And in the discussions that



follow, I frequently hear someone's perspective on a passage that is exactly what I need for yet another day of sobriety. At the end of my drinking, Sunday mornings were bleak and toxic, the inevitable pain and shame of yet another hangover. One of the reasons I have gone to this meeting for as long as I have is to thank my Higher Power for another Sunday that doesn't begin with the "incredible demoralization" that we knew so well.

*I frequently hear someone's  
perspective on a passage  
that is exactly what I  
need for yet another  
day of sobriety*

While the meeting won't nourish you like a brunch might, it definitely will nourish your recovery. We very much look forward to welcoming you and to sharing both the Big Book and our stories with you.



# My So-Called Life

*Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God*

by Kathleen C.

When I hit bottom I considered my options—spiritual life or alcoholic death. Hmmm, I thought long and hard about that decision. What was my life as an alcoholic? I was blessed with two little kids but for them I was Drunk Mommy. I was married to a wonderful man but I was a bad wife. I had no job prospects. I felt total shame and self-hatred. But I also had my sober sister, who advised me that if I didn't stop drinking I would die, and who was willing to take me to meetings when I visited her in Los Angeles. Plus, I was living in San Francisco, where there is a morning meeting in every neighborhood, often in the same block as the liquor store.

## *She looked me right in the eye*

So I put that all together and made a decision that maybe I should try not drinking and also try going to some A.A. meetings. Or maybe first some meetings of Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA) to help resolve my anger and resentment toward my parents. Eventually I developed compassion for them. They had rough childhoods and loved us and tried to do what was best for us.

After 18 months of not drinking and going to ACA meetings and working the Steps in that program, I was ready to try A.A. meetings. Maybe just once a week for a while. I was a mother, I had a job, and I was a busy woman.

So I made a decision to start going to the Hilldwellers Monday night Big Book meeting, reading out of *Alcoholics Anonymous* every

Monday, and after a few months asking Bonnie to sponsor me; she is still my sponsor today. We worked all 12 steps and I even took service commitments. But I didn't go to any other meetings and I didn't sponsor anybody. Nobody wanted what I had.

The turning point came when I was at a women's A.A. conference in L.A. with my 12-stepping sister.

I shared in a small group the limited extent of my A.A. program. Afterward, one of the women in the group took me aside. She looked me right in the eye and said, "You're going to drink! There is no standing still in this program. If you're not moving forward, you're sliding back. You're going to drink!" She scared me. I believe she was the voice of my Higher Power and finally was ready to listen.

## *I started having fun in sobriety*

I started going to more meetings. Got more commitments at these new meetings. I let A.A. into my life. I stopped pushing it off into some other area and instead I started participating. Eventu-



ally I got a sponsee who was an A.A. enthusiast. She took me to chip meetings and dinners to celebrate people's A.A. birthdays. I went to more conferences with my sister and with Bonnie. I started having fun in sobriety.

Today the program, my A.A. friends, my sponsor and the women I sponsor are precious to me. They've helped me when "Life Happened." I go to them for advice and they are the voice of my Higher Power.

Spiritual life or alcoholic death? What a difficult decision! I'm glad I turned my stubborn will and my so-called life over to the care of a "Power Greater than Myself," so I could have the life my Higher Power meant for me to have.





# The Speed of Life

*Life isn't passing you by near as fast  
as you think it is*

by Rick R.

*I'm seven years old, every adult in my immediate environment is drinking daily and it isn't hard for me to get a taste of beer (if I wanted) but I don't necessarily like the taste, so no problem. I'm ten years old and beer is beginning to taste better but still not my favorite, but a little sip of whiskey, now and then, tastes OK but it's harder to get the adults to give it up. I'm 13 years old, my friend and I talk an old drunk into buying us a few quarts of beer. We commence to get drunk for the first time in our lives, and now I know why all those adults drink this stuff every night. I was giddy, sloppy, stupid, sick and eventually unconscious. I woke up the next morning and went off to school with a nasty hangover. I was in the eighth grade at that time. Still it was no problem.*

***Broken relations with  
almost everyone that  
means anything to me***

From that time on my mind was consumed with thoughts of how I was going to repeat "that wonderful experience." As I started high school, I worked in a bowling alley from 6:00 to 10:30 pm, setting up pins; when we got off work, we would go straight to a sleazy bar where we could get someone to buy beer for us. From there, we would go to an abandoned school building and drink till all the beer was gone, get into fist fights with each other, wake up the next

morning with black eyes, skinned up knuckles and elbows, go back to school and come up with some ridiculous story about what had happened.



*I'm 16 years old, and I'm allowed to party with the adults. Shortly after getting my driver's license, I'm asked to drive someone home, and on the return trip, I miss a turn and smash into a parked car. I continue to drink unabated, quit school in May of my senior year with almost no resistance, join the Navy*

***Welcome me warmly  
with open arms as  
though expecting me***

in August, am locked up for gang fighting, and have my second drunk driving accident driving into a car at the pump in a gas station.

I continue this kind of behavior for ten more years and am lucky to have survived more trips to jail, a

failed marriage, broken bones, cuts and bruises, and broken relations with almost everyone that means anything to me.

*I'm 28 years old, surrender and show up at A.A. coming out of a blackout; three people welcome me warmly with open arms as though expecting me on the front lawn of a little yellow house in the suburbs and they say, "come inside and have a cup of coffee." They listen patiently to my*

tales of woe, nodding, as they seem to understand. Their eyes are soft and gentle; I feel their compassion.

At the young age of 28, I believed that my life was over; but they say, "*life isn't passing you by near as fast as you think it is.*"

They were right; I had a profound change of perception and all of those bad days are but a distant memory. The obsession was gone and it has never returned.

In my first year of sobriety I met a young lady who was not an alcoholic but was curious about a fleet sailor who was divorced, had a young child, and was an alcoholic; I suppose she sensed something in me that intrigued her. The more we

*Continued on Page 11*



# Living Sober

## *Supporting individual sobriety and community*

by Alex P.

In 1976, a group of lesbians and gay men held an A.A. "Round-Up" at San Francisco State University's Student Union Building. Over time this Round-Up grew and became known as the LGBTQ conference to attend every Fourth of July Weekend. Registration counts peaked at over 5,000 people. A member reflects, "I attended my first Living Sober in 2002 at the Bill Graham Center. I was not prepared for what I found when I walked in. There were more than 3,000 people. I was floored to find that many LGBTQ people in recovery in one place. In 2006, I moved to San Francisco and Living Sober became a must for me. It holds a special place in my heart. The hard work that the sober community invests each year gives it a true feeling of camaraderie. We build lasting connections that continue long after the last meeting."

### *The oldest LGBTQ A.A. Conference in the world*

"The common bond that I rediscover each year is our strong, dedicated and passionate work to carry the message. Since my early years in A.A., conferences have played an integral part in my sobriety. Living Sober is one of my cornerstones. I get so excited because everyone involved, from the early, early newcomers to those of us who have been around forever, is dedicated to carrying the message of how our simple program has changed our lives.

"This year's theme was Fellowship of the Spirit. Living Sober's committees

rose to meet that goal. Our speakers and workshops were fantastic and the general fellowship was a testament to the planning committee's hard work. In all the conferences I have attended over the years, Living Sober 2016 ranks at the top of the list. Every speaker spoke to my heart. I have had difficult times, as we've all had, and every speaker talked about their struggles in sobriety. Decades of sobriety don't give me a pass on tough times. The conference gave me hope and I always need hope."



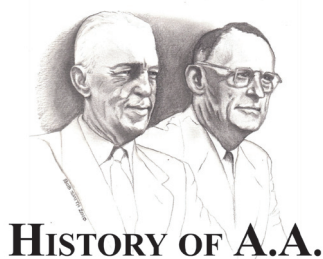
Living Sober attendees went home and shared their experiences, which lead to the creation of hundreds of LGBTQ conferences all over the U.S. With so many conferences to choose from, attendance at Living Sober had dropped. Two years ago, the Steering Committee, General Planning Committee, and Advisory Board of Living Sober met the challenges of lower attendance, higher venue costs,

and a new conference date. The 40th Annual Living Sober Conference was held in August 2015 at the Marines Memorial Hotel in downtown San Francisco. This year's 41st conference returned to Marines Memorial venue. Attendees had a great time and said the conference definitely "carried the message."

### *Male and female members of A.A. and Al-Anon co-chair workshops*

The feeling of holding hands in a row of sober alcoholics surrounded by a full auditorium of other sober people at the last closing meeting is indescribable. In 1995, founding member Bob H. said, "The original concept in 1976 is the same concept we have today, to stay sober...through fellowship and supporting each other." Workshops are co-chaired by male and female members of A.A. or Al-Anon and there's even a fabulous musical production. There's yoga, origami, a sober dance and workshops for everyone ranging from god boxes to bisexuality.

Today, Western Roundup Living Sober has a new Steering Committee and an Advisory Board with more members, all energized and ready to plan a robust and exciting 42nd Annual Western Roundup Living Sober Conference. We need your help! Please join us at the General Planning meetings held on the fourth Sunday of every month at 3:00 p.m. at California Pacific Medical Center's Davies Campus in the basement. For more information visit: <http://www.livingsober.org>.



# The Big Book Words Obsession and Craving

*Sometimes the word “recovered” causes a bit of confusion. We call this plain insanity.*

by Bob S.

The clear-cut Twelve Step directions are discussed in the first 103 pages of the Big Book. Here the words “obsession” and “craving” are used in a special and technical sense:

- **Physical Allergy**—the phenomenon of craving—after the first drink: No recovery possible.
- **Mental Obsession**—Cannot see/act on the truth in drink—before the first drink: Recovery is possible.

It is implied that the word “craving” happens only *after* we take a drink of alcohol, and the word “obsession” applies *before* we take it. This knowledge defines Step One.

However, this is not the case in the Personal Stories sections of the Big Book. On page 181, in *Dr. Bob’s Nightmare*, Bob mentions a “craving” for liquor years after he sobered up. The two terms obsession and craving are intermixed in the *story section* of the Big Book.

Not so in the first 103 pages, where the Twelve Steps are explained in a more technical sense.

Sometimes the word “recovered” causes a bit of confusion. To avoid this problem, the word “release” is often much better communicated; A.A. Number Three, Bill D., uses this term on page 191. Interestingly, the Big Book uses the word “recovered” 11 times in the first 164 pages and seven times afterwards.

An unrecovered alcoholic is powerless both before and after the first drink. Consequently:

- **Obsession**—when the lie overcomes the truth.
- **Recovered**—when truth overcomes the lie.

## Sanity and Insanity

Step Two: *Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*

Before making a study of the Big Book, I took the written words “sanity” and “insanity” to be in the context of the usual dictionary definitions e.g.: “Soundness of mind, etc.” and this is sometimes true in the Big Book usage of this word. However, I believe many times Bill W. was more specific with these words. On page 37—discussing Jim pouring whisky into his milk—he writes: “Whatever the precise definition of the word may be, we call this plain insanity.” Numerous examples of the same can be discovered throughout in the first 103 pages. I have come to generally accept these two Big Book words as meaning:

- **Sanity**—when an alcoholic can see and act on the truth about drinking.
- **Insanity**—when an alcoholic cannot see and act on the truth of drinking.

*Continued from Page 9*

talked about my aspirations and the type of principles I was learning to live by, the closer we became. We were married on October 31, 1970, she is the happiest wife I know and I hit the jackpot. Since embracing the program, we have gained the love and respect of my first wife by being kind and understanding towards her; my son has been witness to all of this.

Since that very first day in the program I have been practicing the Twelve Steps to the best of my



ability and understanding, and it has been a wonderful experience. I wouldn’t trade places with the

richest man on this planet. I couldn’t be more grateful for the way I was welcomed when I needed hope and understanding. I felt safe for the first time in my life. My hope is that all who arrive at the doors of A.A. can be accepted with the same love and kindness that I experienced. *I’m 75 years old* and on my way to 100 years “plus.” Life is awesome.





# Don't Get Too Many Days But Not Enough Years Of Sobriety

*Days become years. Years become decades.*

by Ken J.

In Alcoholics Anonymous, we focus on one day at a time. It is the 24-hour plan. We have a daily reprieve. I've heard it said that the person in the room with the most sobriety is the one who woke up earliest. There's also the idea that years are just days strung together. All of these are valid, but the common denominator is sober time.

From the date of your very first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, the chronology of your sobriety begins. Choking out "I'm an alcoholic" in a room of people was such a moment. For some it marks their A.A. birth-date. For others it becomes the starting point on a journey in and out of the program.

At my first meeting I really don't know how much I understood about time. I knew that not drinking was the goal. They told me to go to meetings and not drink in between. They gave me a 24-hour chip, which soon became chips for 30, 60 and 90 days. People would announce that they had all different lengths of sobriety. Back then there were fewer people with more than 20 years than you see in meetings today. Long-term sobriety was somewhat of an enigma.

***They gave me a 24-hour chip, which soon became chips for 30, 60 and 90 days***

Then I started hearing people talking about relapse, and being newcomers

again. I've learned a great deal from listening to the horror stories of relapse. I am truly inspired by the strength and courage of those who struggle with sobriety, but keep fighting.

***There is a moment when someone new has that twinkle in their eyes***



There is a moment when someone new has that twinkle in their eyes, and a look on their face that reflects the hope they feel about sobriety. It's almost magical. But after each relapse that twinkle or glow seem to get dimmer. I worry that the hope is fleeting. That their belief that this program can work for them too is fading. Thankfully that is not true. While believing in ourselves can be difficult, believing in the power

of Alcoholics Anonymous is not.

At some point I heard it said that I never had to drink again. I remember listening to this woman speak at a convention who said that from her very first meeting she had never found it necessary to drink again. That was so inspiring to me. And there was a voice inside me that promised that one day I could say the same. And so far, I can.

***The work I do today takes me to tomorrow***

It's not about God being willing for me to stay sober. God is more than willing for me to do that. It's about me being willing to stay sober. We do operate on the one day at a time plan. But laying the groundwork for continuous sobriety is a part as well. The work I do today takes me to tomorrow, where I also have the opportunity to be sober. I believe that committing to this way of life and to doing the things necessary to stay sober are the key. Drinking can never be an option for me. And so, days add up and become years. Years then become decades.

At the end of every meeting we tell each other to keep coming back. Regardless of whether you are new, back from a relapse or sober a long time, keep coming back. It's just as important to recognize and celebrate someone with 30 days as it is someone with 30 years. Both represent staying sober, one day at a time.





# Dan's Story

## *Ups, downs and denial with mental health*

by Bree L.

Dan was twenty years old when he first came to A.A. via a West Hollywood Emergency Hospital. That visit May 2, 2006 is also his sobriety date. Before that, he had been trying unsuccessfully to get sober for a year and a half. This time he broke down in the middle of an A.A. meeting, pleading, "I'm miserable and can't do this thing." Someone spoke up and asked if he was powerless; a debate ensued over the philosophy of powerlessness. The argument ended when the other person said, "I can't help you." Dan ended up in the emergency.

### *Staying in the middle of the boat*

A moment of clarity came later when he realized there were those in the meetings who could help him. He looked to the Third Step and saw that no matter what he did, his decisions would put him into worse positions. Past beliefs were that he was a "selfish prick" and there was no way that anyone would understand. He thought his actions did not arise from himself and the best solution was to die as quickly as possible, even though it might hurt others. This happened one and a half years after coming into A.A.; Dan just relapsed one time after another on alcohol and pot, depending on the circumstances. He saw himself



as more of a pothead even though he did dabble in psychedelics.

In early treatment, he identified his drug of choice as psychedelics and from then on stopped all mind-altering substances. After discharge, he suffered a panic attack—thinking he was having a heart attack—he finally was taken to the Kaiser Hollywood locked psych ward. Dan stayed there for two weeks and then he returned to his home in San Francisco. Here he enrolled in a two week, Kaiser CDRP day treatment. He graduated from there to a two-month rehab in San Jose, returned to San Francisco for two weeks of treatment and then six months of intensive outpatient.

Four years into his sobriety, he talks of being in a severely hard-hitting emotional relapse. He thought his sponsor was "gaslight-ting" him over problems with his taking medications. He was also struggling with being bipolar. A cousin who was also bipolar committed suicide and

that concerned him. He saw himself as a burden but he wasn't clear what to do to relieve it. The question was how much powerlessness he could accept and he became lost in his head over it all.

All that time he remembers a lot of ups, downs and denial. As he says, "My head was still stuck, but my feet were better and took me places where I needed to go." Dan believed that someone with mental

health issues could not manipulate any situation that well.

### *My head was still stuck, but my feet...took me places where I needed to go*

Today he sees the desperation at that time and knows anyone would have been a perfect sponsor, as long as they were willing to sponsor him. He says, "I'm right where I need to be and when I'm disturbed the answer is always yes. I can't fantasize about being somewhere else."

Currently Dan works as an actor and has appeared in Jackie B.'s plays. He believes in the concept of staying in the middle of the boat and sees the 12 Steps as a way to instill self-responsibility, the 12 Traditions as his responsibility to the group and the 12 Concepts as his responsibility to them future of the group.

# Intergroup Meeting Summary—February 2017

The following groups have registered Intergroup Representatives who attended the last Intergroup meeting. If your meeting was not represented, please elect an Intergroup Representative (IGR) and/or an alternate so your meeting is represented.

<b>Marin Groups</b>	Weekend Warrior	Cocktail Hour	Embarcadero Group	Mid-Morning Support
Men's Two Plus	<b>San Francisco Groups</b>	Come 'n Get It!	Eureka Step	Serenity Seekers
Monday Blues	Beginners Warmup	Cow Hollow Men's Group	Extreme Makeover: Women's Step Study	Sunset Speaker Step
On Awakening	Big Book Basics	Cow Hollow Young People	Girls Gone Mild	Valencia Smokefree
Sunday Night Corte Madera	Blue Book Special	Creative Alcoholics	High Noon M	Waterfront
Thursday Night Speaker	Castro Discussion	Each Day a New Beginning	Join the Tribe	What It's Like Now

This is an unofficial summary of the February 2017 Intergroup meeting provided for convenience; it is not intended to be the completed approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes and full committee reports see "Intergroup" on our website [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org).

Our intergroup exists to support the groups in their common purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the still suffering alcoholic by providing and coordinating services that are difficult for the individual groups to execute.

The Intercounty Fellowship has been organized by, and is responsible to, the member groups in San Francisco and Marin for the purpose of coordinating the services that individual groups cannot provide.

The meeting was held on Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 101 Donohue St, Marin City, and was started with a call to order and the Serenity Prayer. Baskets for rent and dinner were passed. The January 2017 minutes and the February 2017 agenda were approved.

## Standing Reports

**Board Chair, Chris H.** Three available board positions (members at large) coming up in June; Chris asked if anyone is interested as nominating committee will be meeting soon. Treasurer position is still open; looking for someone with "C" level experience, not necessarily an accounting background. Committees are needing help—SOS is needing a new chair, Fellowship needs help, Sunshine Club needs new members—and committees need to send minutes to Maury.

**Treasurer, Bob W.** December report is "Excellent"; surplus is due to strong group and individual contributions (yay!) Prudent Reserve is being adjusted. More to come next month; will drop to \$125K.

**Central Office Manager, Maury P.** Greg W., former Intergroup Liaison from Marin General Service, passed away in an accident. We held a moment of silence to remember. Several open phone shifts at Central Office; one year of sobriety required. Maintaining communications with Central Office/Intergroup about local meetings is important in order to effectively carry the message to both sober and still suffering alcoholics. The website relies on having accurate information provided by group members. We also want trusted servants to register and currently only have 6%-7% of all groups represented at Intergroup. New service piece from GSO about Safety in A.A. included tonight.

## Intergroup Committee/Activity Reports

**Access, Alesha B.** New Moms recovery group on Skype; possibly more of this type of meeting.

**SF Teleservice, Pete F.** Stepping down at end of February, so looking for new chair and likely new coordinators who might be interested.

**Spirit of Service (formerly Sober Outside Services)** In the spirit of the 9th Tradition, the Chair position and the Coordinator position will be rotated out and these service positions will be available immediately. The next meeting to be held by the SOS committee will be in April and it would be in the spirit of service that the new positions are filled by that time.

**The Point, Jane B.** Looking for writers and Marin folks to drop off *The Point*.

**Orientation, Greg M.** Still looking for another committee member (or two!).

**Technology, James O.** Currently talking about AASF website redesign (WordPress template) using feedback from January's meeting to help. Researching different payment platforms and putting together a resource guide for groups on how to do electronic 7th tradition.

**Fellowship, Michael P.** Thanks to all who attended 70th Anniversary of Central Office. Founders Day is the 2nd Saturday in June—planning is starting now. "I Am Responsible" is opening this weekend; looking for box office volunteers.

## Liaison Reports

**Marin H&I, Karen G.** Northern California H&I has a surplus and approved surplus distribution.

**San Francisco H&I, Rich** San Francisco County Jail has asked us to bring meetings to the psych ward. Approved surplus distribution at recent meeting.

**Marin Teleservice, Jessica S.** Jessica is the new liaison.

**GGYPAA, James for Mac** Teaming up with other YPAA groups in the Bay Area for a dance on February 11 in San Mateo.

**Marin PICPC, Summer** Looking for new members and reevaluating commitments for the group.

**DCM, Jacqueline** Recent group meeting was well-attended and all are welcome. Agenda Topic is Saturday, February 11,

# Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through February 15, 2017  
honoring the following members:

## IN MEMORIUM

Ray M.

Jennifer — Say Hey

## ANNIVERSARIES

Maury P. — 28 years

Chuck S. — 35 years

John V. — 46 years

First Methodist Church in San Rafael.

**Marin Intergroup, Pat** 2020 5-year plan has been approved and Pat brought copies to share.

### What's On Your Mind?

Pete F. shared about "Sobriety by the Bay," which took place last weekend. Will have more to share about financials after the dust settles. Also "Sobriety by the Bay" has experience with a private Facebook group.

Charlie shared that the Embarcadero Group got a bill for liability insurance. Wondering what other groups do to handle covering liability insurance and its cost.

Mike is wondering how to find other "Join The Tribe" groups or other groups started by Tall Man in hopes of having a book signed and delivered as a gift.

Christina shared that her group celebrates birthdays (with cake!) and we are all welcome.

### New Business/Presentations

Hospitality Commitment—John is stepping down and explained the job responsibilities. He is continuing for March so folks have time to think about it. Could be a 2-person job or explore potluck as long as one person is designated for the "accessories," like plates, etc.

Facebook Group—James brought up again the idea to have Intergroup create

a secret Facebook group/page. It cannot be seen or searched unless you are a member. The administrative details can be discussed at another meeting if we want to move forward with this secret group. Liz and Rich made points that moving to Facebook may increase fellowship as people will be able to find out about events and connect with others more easily. Pete mentioned that it can also help with service commitments. Alesha mentioned that it can also help with struggles in sobriety in between meetings and also can help with online meetings like the New Mom Skype group. Don mentioned that Facebook allows for ease of communication. However, there is a concern that moving to Facebook could lead to a path of "inaction" and avoiding actual involvement with AA. Lucy stated that although there may be issues that could come up with an Intergroup secret Facebook group, those issues generally haven't come up with similar large secret AA Facebook groups.

### Ongoing Targeted Message:

- Still need a board treasurer
- Turn in trusted servant forms for your individual groups

Adjourned with the Responsibility Statement.

**Next Intergroup Meeting:** Wednesday, March 1, at 7pm, at 1187 Franklin St. in San Francisco. Orientation is at 6:15pm, dinner is served at 7pm.

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

The following is a list of names and email addresses for our Intergroup Officers and many of the committees. Please email that committee at the address below if you are interested in doing service on a committee, or if you wish to receive more information.

### BOARD OFFICERS:

#### CHAIR

Chris H. [chair@aasf.org](mailto:chair@aasf.org)

#### VICE CHAIR

Matt S. [vicechair@aasf.org](mailto:vicechair@aasf.org)

#### TREASURER

[open] [treasurer@aasf.org](mailto:treasurer@aasf.org)

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Liz M. [secretary@aasf.org](mailto:secretary@aasf.org)

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### ACCESS COMMITTEE

Gabrielle M. [access@aasf.org](mailto:access@aasf.org)

#### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Michael P. [archives@aasf.org](mailto:archives@aasf.org)

#### FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Michael P. [fellowship@aasf.org](mailto:fellowship@aasf.org)

#### HOMEBOUND MARIN

Jane B. & David W. [homeboundmarin@aasf.org](mailto:homeboundmarin@aasf.org)

#### ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Greg M. [orientation@aasf.org](mailto:orientation@aasf.org)

#### SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Peter B. [picpc@aasf.org](mailto:picpc@aasf.org)

#### SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Pete F. [sfteleservice@aasf.org](mailto:sfteleservice@aasf.org)

#### SOS COMMITTEE

Dorothy V. [sos@aasf.org](mailto:sos@aasf.org)

#### SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

David C. & Carole P. [sunshine@aasf.org](mailto:sunshine@aasf.org)

#### THE POINT

Jane B. [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org)

# aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions	Jan. 17	Marin Contributions	Jan. 17	San Francisco Contributions	Jan. 17
GGYPAA	\$18	7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am	\$50	6am Dry Dock Su	\$164
Intergroup	\$101	Mill Valley 7D 7am	\$600	Monday Beginners M 8pm	\$282
Contribution Box	\$87	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (Marin)	\$54	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	\$51
<b>Fellowship Total</b>	<b>\$206</b>	Marin Teleservice	\$2,000	Beginners Warm Up W 6pm	\$88
		<b>Total Marin</b>	<b>\$10,087</b>	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	\$336
				Sunday Rap Su 8pm	\$99
Marin Contributions	Jan. 17	San Francisco Contributions	Jan. 17	Women's Came to Believe Sa 10am	\$193
Los Ranchitos W 830pm	\$50	Women's Promises F 7pm	\$170	Artists & Writers F 630pm	\$249
Crossroads Sun 12pm	\$92	Sunset 11'ers Su	\$166	Surf Tu 8pm	\$673
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	\$416	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	\$116	515 Smokeless M 515pm	\$114
Spiritual Testosterone Stag Su 830a	\$375	Gold Mine Group M 8pm	\$383	Step Talk Su 830am	\$233
Blue Book Special Su 11am	\$20	Sunset 11'ers Th	\$86	Tuesday Women's Tu 630pm	\$73
Serendipity Sa 11am	\$213	YAHOO Step Sa 1130am	\$283	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	\$579
Back to Basics Su 930am	\$130	Design for Living Sat 8am	\$396	Sex and Love in Sobriety M 3pm	\$67
Monday Night Stag Tiburon	\$500	Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715p	\$350	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm	\$115
Monday Nooners M 12pm	\$527	Ten Years After Su 6pm	\$681	Mission Fellowship	\$89
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	\$87	Huntington Square W 630pm	\$64	Sober Saturday Sa 830am	\$189
AA By The Bay Tue 730pm	\$36	The Parent Trap 2 W 4pm	\$87	Bernal New Day 7D	\$212
Quitting Time M-F 530pm	\$1,084	Monday Men's Stag (SF) M 8pm	\$131	Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	\$703
Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm	\$793	Too Early Sa 8am	\$95	Sunset 9'ers Th	\$50
Men's 2 Plus M 7pm	\$70	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm	\$166	Serenity House	\$150
Thursday Night Speaker 830pm	\$326	Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am	\$276	Like A Prayer Su 4pm	\$109
Sunday Friendship Su 6pm	\$215	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 6pm	\$690	Came to Believe Su 8am	\$244
There is a Solution Tu 6pm	\$27	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	\$100	Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am	\$303
Big Book Study & Meditation M 7p	\$92	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	\$286	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	\$125
What's It All About F 12pm	\$34	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	\$179	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	\$558
The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm	\$112	Meditation, Prayer & Share Tue 730pm	\$15	Sex and Love in Sobriety M 3pm	\$144
Three Step Group Sa 530pm	\$236	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm	\$137	It Takes A Village Sa 6pm	\$172
Wholly Together 11th Step Meditation W 7p	\$63	Design For Living - Big Book Th 730am	\$102	Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm	\$60
Wednesday Sundowners W 6pm	\$250	Coit's Quitters	\$60	Grupo Central Th 10am	\$23
Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag Th 8pm	\$518	Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm	\$227	<b>Total San Francisco</b>	<b>\$12,887</b>
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am	\$101	Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm	\$470		
Monday Night Women's M 8pm	\$246	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	\$183	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$23,180</b>
Sober Sisters W 12pm	\$101	Eureka Step Tu 6pm	\$238		
Rise N Shine Su 10am	\$300	Be Still AA Su 12pm	\$304		
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am	\$370				





# Grasping vs. Developing: It's a Process

*Be patient and gentle*

by Forrest P.

A woman I heard speak when I was new would say, "If you are five years sober, you have grasped the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Nobody can stay sober that long if they haven't. It's the developing that will kick your ass." As the years have rolled along, I have come to understand this.



When I got to A.A., I stopped drinking. That was the miracle. I took Step One as I walked into that first meeting. I "drank the lemonade" immediately. I got a sponsor and utilized him—often every day—took the steps, got commitments and started going on H&I panels when I had six months. I set up chairs here, coffee there, literature, washed cups, swept and mopped floors and anything else asked of me. It felt good to feel a part of something, to feel useful again. I was looking out the window versus looking in.

I love newcomers. I reach out to them as much as I can; I encourage them to go to fellowship with us and ask them to meet for a chat before or after meetings. I love talking with people one on one. I don't have to sponsor someone to be useful to them or them for me! When talking and listening to each other that alcoholic identification works so well for me. I processed my alcoholic life with people that listened and now I do the same.

I forget how much experience I have until I'm chatting with a newer person. Naturally, they talk of where they are in their program, what step they are on etc...I never try to correct what their sponsor has them doing. My purpose is to listen and share; lend an ear as so many wonderful people have done for me.

We talk of all kinds of things: childhood, literature, travel, movies, books, fears, hopes, dreams so essentially life!

## *Patience with one's self and journey worked for me*

It seems to me that new people are quick to self diagnose themselves as being eligible for other programs within their first few years: C.O.D.A., O.A., Alanon, Sex and Love Addicts, F.A.A., etc. This is usually in addition to seeing a therapist or psychiatrist—some with or without already being on medication! People are now very

aware of the many ways of getting help and getting better. I don't discourage anyone from getting outside help.

The most important thing for me is time itself. Time brings hope; with hope one gets time. When ingesting alcohol I immediately got a response. Life, it turns out, is not the same. I must focus on today, do today's work to experience tomorrow's joy and peace of mind.

## *Do today's work to experience tomorrow's joy and peace*

I share my experience that patience with one's self and journey worked for me. I share that it took me years before I started to know happiness, forgiveness and understanding. In other words, I don't want them to miss the day-to-day miracles. The miracle for me is in the here and now—I have not taken a drink today. That is something that I can't do on my own. I try to impart this to them, *the miracle of physical sobriety*. I have many things that I do to maintain that grace.

I've had a life beyond my wildest dreams. I have felt so spiritually at peace it was as if I was floating in the skies. I've also had lows where I thought my soul would never see the light again. These periods can be days, weeks and even years. I've felt many things during my sobriety, yet I have never drank. That is the gift.

Don't drink. Get some time. It turns out that together they help. Time does heal all wounds. It's worked for me and it can work for you.

# Income and Expense Statement: December 2016

	Dec 16	Budget	Jan - Dec 16	YTD Budget		Dec 16	Budget	Jan - Dec 16	YTD Budget
<b>Revenue</b>					<b>Paper Purchased</b>	\$ 255	\$ 94	\$ 1,773	\$ 1,095
Gratitude Month	\$ 11,248	\$ 13,252	\$ 16,430	\$ 21,877	Payroll Fees	\$ 9	\$ 15	\$ 100	\$ 125
Group Contributions	\$ 12,209	\$ 10,232	\$ 169,254	\$ 151,132	Bank Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8	\$ -
Individual Contributions	\$ 8,081	\$ 3,712	\$ 61,190	\$ 44,654	Bad Checks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24	\$ -
Newsletter Subscript.	\$ 11	\$ -	\$ 77	\$ -	Phone Book Listings	\$ 186	\$ 93	\$ 1,116	\$ 1,116
Sales - Bookstore	\$ 6,906	\$ 8,390	\$ 88,776	\$ 100,647	Postage	\$ 226	\$ 122	\$ 1,045	\$ 1,310
Customer Shipping	\$ 200	\$ 296	\$ 3,854	\$ 3,546	Printing	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9	\$ 695
Bag Fees	\$ 2	\$ -	\$ 31	\$ 30	Professional Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,450	\$ 1,425
Intergroup Event Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 313	\$ 2,300	Rent - Office	\$ 4,458	\$ 4,488	\$ 53,499	\$ 53,856
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 38,657</b>	<b>\$ 35,882</b>	<b>\$ 339,925</b>	<b>\$ 324,186</b>	Rent - Other	\$ 180	\$ 85	\$ 1,005	\$ 1,020
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>					Repair & Maintenance	\$ 713	\$ 271	\$ 3,708	\$ 3,230
Cost of Books Sold	\$ 5,271	\$ 4,181	\$ 65,322	\$ 68,561	Security System	\$ 138	\$ 45	\$ 577	\$ 518
COGS Shipping	\$ 19	\$ 34	\$ 356	\$ 353	Shipping	\$ 237	\$ 283	\$ 3,403	\$ 3,400
Credit Card Processing	\$ 487	\$ 272	\$ 5,260	\$ 4,275	Telephone	\$ 372	\$ 175	\$ 2,732	\$ 2,100
Inventory Adjustments	\$ 761	\$ -	\$ 535	\$ -	Training	\$ 13	\$ 44	\$ 282	\$ 524
<b>Total COGS</b>	<b>\$ 6,538</b>	<b>\$ 4,487</b>	<b>\$ 71,473</b>	<b>\$ 73,189</b>	Travel	\$ 76	\$ -	\$ 3,003	\$ 1,200
<b>Gross Margin</b>	<b>\$ 32,119</b>	<b>\$ 31,395</b>	<b>\$ 268,452</b>	<b>\$ 250,997</b>	<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 20,620</b>	<b>\$ 19,822</b>	<b>\$ 238,134</b>	<b>\$ 249,397</b>
<b>Expense</b>					<b>Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 11,499</b>	<b>\$ 11,573</b>	<b>\$ 30,318</b>	<b>\$ 1,600</b>
Committees	\$ 107	\$ 62	\$ 521	\$ 840	<b>Other Income/Expense</b>				
Employee Expenses	\$ 12,350	\$ 13,366	\$ 147,365	\$ 160,370	<b>Other Income</b>				
Equipment Lease	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,897	\$ 4,900	Interest Income	\$ 45	\$ 42	\$ 538	\$ 500
Filing/Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 417	\$ 930	Miscellaneous Income	\$ -	\$ 30	\$ 654	\$ 360
Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,488	\$ 2,500	<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>\$ 45</b>	<b>\$ 72</b>	<b>\$ 1,192</b>	<b>\$ 860</b>
Intergroup Events	\$ -	\$ 333	\$ 3,623	\$ 4,000	<b>Other Expense</b>				
Intergroup Literature	\$ 26	\$ 3	\$ 26	\$ 25	Depreciation Expense	\$ 515	\$ 205	\$ 2,770	\$ 2,460
Internet Expense	\$ 149	\$ 130	\$ 1,792	\$ 1,615	Gain/Loss on Sale of Fixed Assets	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 261	\$ -
IT Hardware Purchased	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 326	\$ -	<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>\$ 515</b>	<b>\$ 205</b>	<b>\$ 3,031</b>	<b>\$ 2,460</b>
IT Software Purchased	\$ -	\$ 43	\$ 705	\$ 519	<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>\$ (470)</b>	<b>\$ (133)</b>	<b>\$ (1,839)</b>	<b>\$ (1,600)</b>
Office Supplies	\$ 1,125	\$ 170	\$ 2,240	\$ 2,084	<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 11,029</b>	<b>\$ 11,440</b>	<b>\$ 28,479</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

## Treasurer's Report

For December 2016, Gross Margin (defined as Total Revenue less Cost of Goods Sold) was \$32,119, over budget by \$724. Total Operating Expenses for December were \$20,620, over budget by \$798. The result is Net Operating Surplus of \$11,499. Net Surplus for December was \$11,029, under budget by \$411, and incorporates other income and expenses. 2016 Net Surplus is \$28,479 compared to a break-even annual budget. The Net Surplus is due to strong group and individual contributions in 2016 and employee expenses under budget primarily because

of vacancies in special worker positions during the year.

Group Contributions for December were \$12,209, over budget by \$1,977. Total 2016 Group Contributions were \$169,254, over budget by \$18,122. Total 2016 Individual Contributions were \$61,190, over budget by \$16,536.

Total Unrestricted Cash for December 2016 was \$49,244, an increase of \$8,397 from November 2016, primarily due to gratitude month and individual contributions in December. Unrestricted Cash is over two months of operating expenses.

The rating for December is "Excellent", the same as November.

**OVERALL RATING: Excellent**

### Intergroup Finance Rating System

Every month we rate our monthly finances as "Excellent", "Good", "Fair" or "Poor". Generally speaking, here are the definitions of those terms:

**EXCELLENT:** We exceeded our budget. Our income was greater than our expenses for the month and we have more than two months' worth of operating expenses in unrestricted cash balances. Operating expenses are

# December 2016 Balance Sheet

	Dec 31, 16	Nov 30, 16	\$ Change	Dec 31, 15	\$ Change
<b>ASSETS</b>					
<b>Current Assets</b>					
<b>Checking/Savings</b>					
Restricted Cash	\$ 131,797	\$ 131,752	\$ 45	\$ 162,504	\$ (30,707)
Unrestricted Cash	\$ 49,244	\$ 40,847	\$ 8,397	\$ 21,733	\$ 27,511
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	\$ 181,041	\$ 172,599	\$ 8,442	\$ 184,237	\$ (3,196)
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>					
Accounts Receivable	\$ 67	\$ 9	\$ 58	\$ 23	\$ 44
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	\$ 67	\$ 9	\$ 58	\$ 23	\$ 44
<b>Other Current Assets</b>					
Inventory - Bookstore	\$ 21,892	\$ 24,603	\$ (2,711)	\$ 22,389	\$ (497)
Prepaid Literature Orders	\$ 4,881	\$ 824	\$ 4,057	\$ 411	\$ 4,470
Undeposited Funds	\$ 3,404	\$ 1,249	\$ 2,155	\$ 3,132	\$ 272
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	\$ 30,177	\$ 26,676	\$ 3,501	\$ 25,932	\$ 4,245
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	\$ 211,285	\$ 199,284	\$ 12,001	\$ 210,192	\$ 1,093
<b>Fixed Assets</b>					
<b>Comp. and Off. Equipment (Net)</b>	\$ 1,386	\$ 1,464	\$ (78)	\$ 1,269	\$ 117
<b>Leasehold Improvements (Net)</b>	\$ 13,652	\$ 14,089	\$ (437)	\$ 15,904	\$ (2,252)
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	\$ 15,038	\$ 15,553	\$ (515)	\$ 17,173	\$ (2,135)
<b>Other Assets</b>					
<b>Deposits</b>	\$ 6,698	\$ 6,698	\$ -	\$ 6,698	\$ -
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	\$ 6,698	\$ 6,698	\$ -	\$ 6,698	\$ -
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 233,021</b>	<b>\$ 221,535</b>	<b>\$ 11,486</b>	<b>\$ 234,063</b>	<b>\$ (1,042)</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>					
<b>Liabilities</b>					
<b>Current Liabilities</b>					
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>					
Advance Event Ticket Sales	\$ 629	\$ -	\$ 629	\$ -	\$ 629
Payroll Liabilities	\$ 3,519	\$ 3,637	\$ (118)	\$ 3,576	\$ (57)
Sales Tax Payable	\$ 499	\$ 554	\$ (55)	\$ 591	\$ (92)
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	\$ 4,647	\$ 4,191	\$ 456	\$ 4,167	\$ 480
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	\$ 4,647	\$ 4,191	\$ 456	\$ 4,167	\$ 480
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>					
Deferred Compensation	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ (30,000)
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ (30,000)
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	\$ 4,647	\$ 4,191	\$ 456	\$ 34,167	\$ (29,520)
<b>Equity</b>					
<b>Net Assets</b>	\$ 199,894	\$ 199,894	\$ -	\$ 214,601	\$ (14,707)
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	\$ 28,480	\$ 17,452	\$ 11,028	\$ (14,707)	\$ 43,187
<b>Total Equity</b>	\$ 228,374	\$ 217,346	\$ 11,028	\$ 199,894	\$ 28,480
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>\$ 233,021</b>	<b>\$ 221,537</b>	<b>\$ 11,484</b>	<b>\$ 234,061</b>	<b>\$ (1,040)</b>

roughly \$20K/month, so we'd have over \$40K in unrestricted cash balances for the month.

**GOOD:** We are meeting our budget. Our income for the month, or for the YTD, was slightly greater than our expenses and we'd have approximately 1.5 - 2 months of operating expenses in unrestricted cash balances.

**FAIR:** We are not meeting our

budget. Our expenses were greater than our income for the month and for the YTD - and our unrestricted cash balance would be somewhere between 1 and 1.5x our operating expenses.

**POOR:** We are not meeting our budget and our unrestricted cash balances fell below one month of operating expenses. The last time we were "poor" was in September 2016.



## Thank You Faithful FIVERS! Thank You

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members Who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5 each month toward the support of Central Office. Faithful Fiver contributions go a long way in helping make our vital services possible. We thank the following members:

*(Continued from Page 5)*

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