

the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

2016 **12**
December

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

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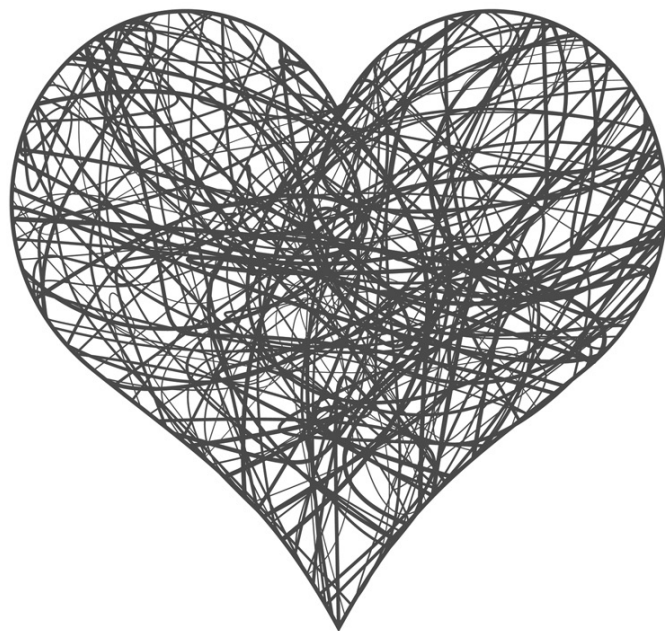
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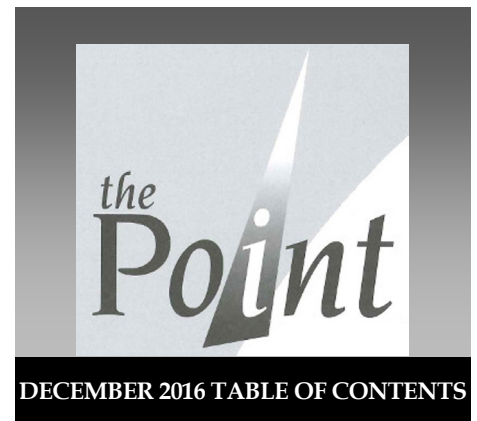
The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of 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.

Illustration by Anonymous

December 2016

| 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> <div>     </div> | | | |
| 4 | 5 FIRST MON Technology Committee Meeting Central Office 6pm | 6 | 7 FIRST WED Intergroup Meeting 1187 Franklin St., SF Orientation 6:15pm Meeting 7pm |
| 11 SECOND SUN Golden Gate Young People in AA Central Office 12pm SF Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Central Office Speaker Workshop 1:30pm | 12 SECOND MON SF Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Central Office Business Meeting 7pm | 13 SECOND TUE Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael 6:15pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St Orientation / Concept Study / BTG 7pm Business Meeting 8pm | 14 SECOND WED Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael Orientation 6pm Business Meeting 6:30pm |
| 18 THIRD SUN Archives Committee Meeting Central Office 2pm <i>Business meeting followed by work day</i> | 19 THIRD MON SF Teleservice Central Office Orientation 6pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael Orientation / Concept Study 6:45pm Business Meeting 7:30pm | 20 | 21 |
| 25 CHRISTMAS DAY Central Office closed | 26 CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY Central Office closed | 27 FOURTH TUE Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael Orientation 7pm Business Meeting 7:30pm | 28 |

| THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|----------|--------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 <u>FIRST SAT</u> The Point Committee Meeting Central Office 12:30pm |
| 8 | 9 | 10 <u>SECOND SAT</u> Access Committee Meeting Central Office 10am |
| 15 | 16 | 17 <u>THIRD SAT</u> SF H&I 2900 24th St, SF Orientation 11am Business Meeting 12pm (odd months have a business meeting) |
| 22 | 23 | 24 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> CNCA Meeting 320 N McDowell Blvd, Petaluma 10am <u>CHRISTMAS EVE</u> Central Office closed |
| 29 | 30 | 31 <u>NEW YEARS EVE</u> Central Office closed |



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*We looked upon this world of
warring individuals, warring
theological systems and
inexplicable calamity, with
deep skepticism. Yet, in other
moments...*

~ Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 46



Meeting Changes

Meeting Changes:

| | | | |
|-----|---------|--------------|--|
| Tue | 12:05pm | Civic Center | We Care, 555 Polk St. (was 711 Eddy St.) |
| Mon | 7:15pm | Fairfax | Ross Valley Fairfax Speaker, 2398 Sir Frances Drake (was a speaker meeting, now BB Discussion) |

The Eureka Valley Rec Center at 100 Collingwood St. in the Castro will be closed from December 19 through January 1 for maintenance and the holidays.

Affected meetings:

| | | | |
|-----|---------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| Sun | 2:00pm | Castro | Goodlands |
| Mon | 6:00pm | Castro | Eureka Valley Topic |
| Thu | 6:00pm | Castro | As Bill Sees It |
| Thu | 7:30pm | Castro | Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) |
| Sat | 10:00am | Castro | Keep Coming Back |

No Longer Meeting:

| | | | |
|-----|--------|--------------|--|
| Sat | 8:30pm | Inner Sunset | Jaywalkers, 1320 7th Ave. / Irving |
| Sat | 9:30am | Hayes Valley | Young at Heart, 601-611 Laguna St. / Hayes |

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!**

Twelve Tips on Keeping Your Holiday Season Sober and Joyous

Holiday parties without liquid spirits may still seem a dreary prospect to new A.A.s. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays of our lives sober—an idea we would never have dreamed of, wanted, or believed possible when drinking. Here are some tips for having an all-round ball without a drop of alcohol.



- Line up extra A.A. activities for the holiday season. Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.
- Be host to A.A. friends, especially newcomers. If you don't have a
- Keep your A.A. telephone list with you all the time. If a drinking urge or panic comes—postpone everything else until you've called an A.A.
- Find out about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations given by groups in your area, and go. If you're timid, take someone newer than you are.
- Skip any drinking occasion you are nervous about. Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put the talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life.
- If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an A.A. with you, keep some candy handy.
- Don't think you have to stay late. Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.
- Worship in your own way.
- Don't sit around brooding. Catch up on those books, museums, walks, and letters.
- Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations. Remember—"one day at a time."
- Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy. Maybe you cannot give material gifts—but this year, you can give love.
- "Having had a . . ." No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.

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From the Editor



Order from Chaos

“But when we have taken a square look at some of these defects, have discussed them...there is something like real peace of mind. To those of us who have hitherto only known excitement, depression or anxiety—in other words, to all of us—this newfound peace is a priceless gift.”

~ *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 74

After the anxiety there is hope, if our own house is in order. Bringing order from chaos is something a sober drunk can identify with. In this issue of *The Point*, Claire A. gets to the heart of helping others to save her own sanity. Forrest P. shares a double-digit sobriety perspective on Tradition 12: Not only is it about the group—it’s about the world.

James M. says showing up is half the battle; carrying the message helps, too. John W. and another anonymous poet remind us no matter how far down

the scale we’ve gone, our experiences benefit others. Also, “the dashing young knight on his snow-white steed who was going to ride into my life and sweep me off my feet has apparently gotten lost in the forest.”

Ken J. discusses his favorite chapter in the Big Book and the evidence of lack of power as our dilemma. Sometimes, surrounded by inexplicable calamity, it’s hard to remember that the realm of the spirit is “broad, roomy and all-inclusive...to those who earnestly seek.” (Big Book, p. 74).

Historian Bob S. recalls Bill’s holiday work which morphed into A.A. the following year. And Nikki H. fixes a program that began like “a house built by a little pig who did not take the time to see what a solid structure needed.” It’s our fervent hope that we can now lay a strong spiritual foundation for future evolution in the coming New Year.

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. To contact *The Point* committee directly, write to 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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How Solid Is My House?

A reflection from Thanksgiving

by Nikki H.

November is my favorite month, as Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. It has always been the holiday that I felt the least pressure, as gratitude and giving thanks are main practices in my life, and a key foundation of my A.A. program.

As it states in the chapter “Into Action” in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, “... for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last” (p. 72). This resonates with me as I look at the 11th Step Prayer and consider my program, and how it works for me today; how, when I could not stay sober, I had not built a solid foundation. I knew I embodied the principles of love, harmony, and joy, that I was happy and loving. How could I question that?

When I could not stay sober, I had not built a solid foundation

In working with my sponsor I could see the wobbly base I was trying to build from, accepting the fearless search I needed to embark on to make my foundation solid. I looked at my program and compared it to a house built by a little pig who did not take the time to see what a solid structure needed, one that would withstand the wind. I had the shape, and the materials, but found the action to put them all together was missing. When I felt anger, did I look for acceptance and an ability to love those who create conflict? Was I participating in the conflict or seeking a

solution through my higher power? When I went to my sponsor with my tribulations, wrought with doubt and worry, her direction was simple, “Have you prayed about it?” Restoring my faith and understanding, I had been given the miracle of healing. It was the cornerstone in the solid foundation I would build.

I had the shape, and the materials, but found the action to put them all together was missing

With each principle that was revealed, I found hope that I could continue to establish solid footing. Where I found the most challenge was in the “spirit of forgiveness” where

there was a perceived wrong. I could not get past my ego to see that I need not right the wrong, but to simply accept the outcome. My A.A. program has continued with that theme, using the tools I have learned, by taking suggestions and practicing the principles in all my affairs.

Alcohol is the wolf waiting to blow my house down, yet I have a solid program, built on a foundation made solid through practicing the 12 steps.



My complete willingness has let me walk through the arch of freedom. Today when I recite the 11th Step Prayer, if I am not on solid footing, I know I have the tools.

Where I found the most challenge was in the ‘spirit of forgiveness’

The tools to forgive: to love, to bring truth, to hope, to bring faith, to bring light, and to bring joy. To celebrate Thanksgiving.



Alcohol is the wolf



The Price for Serenity and Sanity is Self-sacrifice

by Claire A.

I used to think self-sacrifice meant giving up what I like in order to please someone else. It meant not taking a dance class so that I could take the kids to gymnastics. Or going to hear music with my husband, even though I would rather see a movie. What I've been doing is people-pleasing, which can be a very efficient way to create a nice juicy resentment. No thanks.



According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, self-sacrifice is the act of giving up something that you want in order to *help* someone else. I think the word "help" makes all the difference. It's not my job to make other people happy, but it is my job to help others.

When I help others, I am the one who is serene and sane. I can't count the times I've been worried, fearful, jealous, bitter, angry or overexcited, yet when I've turned toward helping another person, be they an alcoholic or not, I find that I feel saner. I forget

It's an honor to be there by her side

about myself as I focus on something outside myself.

I most consistently become agitated when I'm traveling. I get worried about being on time, I don't really like being in planes, and I'm really anxious. This comes out as snapping at my kids and husband and feeling

sick to my stomach. Sometimes, when I feel this way, I make an effort to help other travelers.

Whether it's helping someone lift their bag overhead, playing a game with a bored kid kicking a seat, or just having friendly conversation, I can help others—and thus help myself. It's not hard to do, but I have to remember to help,

rather than stewing in my anxiety. In these situations, I'm not really even giving anything up!

For true serenity, and serious sanity, I help other alcoholics. I suppose the price is time, but it feels like time well spent to me. When I came into A.A., I was a mess. I was angry and fearful. I blamed everyone else for everything. I was a horrible friend—I didn't even know how to be a friend. When I encountered the smallest difficulty with friends, I would give them the silent treatment; if it continued, I would disappear.

My first sponsor showed me how to be a friend. She spent time—at least an hour a week—to show me how to show up for someone else. She took me through the steps, answered my questions and showed me by example how to stay with uncomfortable feelings and resolve them in a healthy way. She was a constant person in my life. She still is, though we haven't worked together for several years. My current sponsor does the same thing. She is a constant friend, and she gives me her time. Often it's pretty mundane, but there are times when I get really upset, and I can count on her to be there for me.

When I help another person, I feel saner

In the same way, I hope I am there for my sponsee. We talk once a week and work the steps. She slipped once, but she came back and we talked about what happened, and she decided to try again. It's an honor to be there by her side. I suppose sometimes I would rather do something for myself than sit on the phone and read the 12 & 12 for the millionth time. I suppose my sponsor would also rather do something more fun and exciting than read the Big Book with me again. But when I spend time with my sponsee, I feel exponentially better. I feel at true peace. I can't really explain it. When I'm able to share my experience, strength and hope, I feel such joy! And in the end, it doesn't feel like sacrifice at all. Sure, I gave up an hour. But the price was well worth it for the sanity and serenity I feel.



Twelfth Step Work

Get out of yourself and stay sober

by Jaime M.

Twelfth step work—work with others—sometimes looks like what you think it should, other times it doesn't. I have some very heartfelt memories of H & I meetings in jails, detoxes, and hospitals. I remember some amazing phone calls from doing teleservice. Sponsoring others is both rewarding and has helped keep me sober. It took me awhile to get it, but the low-key work of making coffee, setting up and cleaning up meetings, all help carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, because showing up at a new place when you don't know anything/anyone is scary, and the first requirement is that the meeting actually be there. And then there is the accidental twelfth step work.

Just seeing a familiar face made it easier

The first person to twelfth-step me was a server at a brunch place. All she did was go to work, and later on, go to meetings. The first meeting I ever went to, she was there. Just seeing a familiar

When I first started going to meetings, I wasn't totally into the whole A.A. thing (sound familiar?). I wondered what was up with those people who had a whole year or more of sobriety, and still went to meetings every dang day—what was up with that, anyway? But one day when I was completely nuts and went to a meeting I had never been to before, there was one of those eager beaver A.A. people, and seeing the familiar face was comforting.

At one point in my sobriety I had settled down to a set of regular meetings and went to the same meeting every week. I had my Monday night, my Tuesday night meeting, and so on. The people in those meetings were great—that was why I went. Except some sometimes they weren't great—they were, to put it bluntly, assholes. Then I awoke suddenly to the fact that a whole roomful of people couldn't have all gone bad in just one week—I was having a serious attitude relapse.

I guess what I'm getting at here is, showing up is more than half the battle. I'm giving examples of situations

I know it impressed me to see people picking up chips for years of sobriety when mine was measured in months, so now I understand the need to pay it forward by picking up chips. Certainly it's a miracle to stay sober so long, but it's not my miracle, at least in the sense of having accomplished it. The miracle belongs to the Fellowship and to my Higher Power. But it is a great way of sharing experience, strength, and hope.

I was having a serious attitude relapse

Other experiences come to mind also. I remember one time a new guy came into a meeting and I joked with him that getting sober “is the cool thing to do, everybody's doing it these days,” or something to that effect. Months later he admitted to me that the idea of joining a hip group of insiders who were doing the latest thing had really attracted him. We laughed together. On another occasion, I stopped to talk to a new guy after a meeting and he didn't seem all that interested. Remembering how people had given me space when I was new, not trying to aggressively recruit

me, I let him go and headed over to the pizza place where many of us went after the meeting. Ten minutes later, the newcomer who hadn't wanted to talk to me came in with someone else from the meeting, talking a mile a minute. For that person, me getting

out of the way had been a big gift—it let him connect with a better sober person from the meeting.

I guess when I think about it, getting out

Continued on Page 19



face made it easier. I had sensed that she had a certain kind of serenity while working the Sunday brunch crowd, and somehow connected it with her sobriety. She later told me that she certainly didn't feel serene at work, but she fooled me.

where other people, just by showing up and staying sober, gave me hope. That's why when my sponsor told me to go pick up chips for increasing amounts of time sober, I believed him when he said to do it, not for myself, but to show others that it can be done.



Tradition 12

Anonymity

by Forrest P.

I was 26 years sober before I knew there were questions on the Traditions. I had been working with a new sponsor for a couple years. They are online on Google. Type in “traditions checklist A.A. Grapevine” to find them. I read through each tradition with my sponsor from the 12 & 12, and then answered the questions (writing) and we would go over them at a later time. Doing this has really helped me understand the way an A.A. group works. It’s not about me, it’s about the group. Not only is it about the group, it’s about the world. This has helped me to look outside of myself much more than before.

Anonymity at the public level is of paramount importance. The danger is to A.A. If a name and image is attached to A.A., whether they do well or falter, people think they represent us as a whole. They have now been elevated to the level of “spokesman.” I think this has encouraged people to have a much more negative impression of just how successful we are.

*I've always found it
kind of fun to hear or
read about someone
who speaks our language*

I've read books where individuals both do and do not keep their personal anonymity. The ones that do are still able to convey their entire stories, they simply say “12 Step Group.” A book where one disregards this Tradition seems okay if they stay sober. You could even say it's good “P.R.,” right? What

if, however, they don't stay sober, or worse yet have a negative or bitter impression of A.A.? This causes irreparable damage to us as a whole publicly. This is why our General Service Office (GSO) in New York does not comment on these things.



I've seen talk shows or interviews that go the same way. In this case, it's a bit more dramatic. Now you are associating a famous person as our spokesman. This goes a little bit further than a book. Again, depending on what this one person's experience is, they will leave a significant impression on the audience, good or bad.

I've always found it kind of fun to hear or read about someone who speaks our language. I know what they mean, but the average person probably doesn't. As recently as this week, there was a documentary about the horrible prescription drug problem that we have in our country. The person that was essentially the host (and is quite famous) was talking with the president about the problems and solutions. This showed people in rehab situations and meetings. None of them, including the host ever stated what program or what meetings they attend.

Since there are so many different 12 step groups now, just think of the potential damage that could be done if more of us didn't honor, appreciate and respect this tradition. What if someone dies because they think A.A. doesn't work? Extreme example, you

say? I don't think so. I am sure this can and does happen. Addiction waits for no one, and kills many.

*Addiction waits for
no one, and kills many*

My own experience has shown me that A.A. works great for me. I've stayed sober. I've seen many come and go. But that's not what's important. As I was told as a newcomer, I've stayed. I am always only a member in a meeting. But outside of meetings (press, radio, etc.), never. To those around, me in my day-to-day life? I am open about it. You never know how or where you may be of help.

I don't think that we are supposed to hide in the shadows, but I do think it's important for our faces to always remain there.



I've Learned that...

Just think about it

by Anonymous

- The best advice you can give anyone is "be kind."
- Even the simplest task can be meaningful if I do it in the right spirit.
- Anticipation is often better than the real thing.
- If you depend on others to make you happy, you'll be endlessly disappointed.
- If I eat donuts today, I wear them tomorrow.

- Heroes are the people who do what has to be done when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.
- All transactions and relationships are enriched by courtesy.
- Young people need old people's love, respect and knowledge of life, and old people need the love, respect and strength of young people.
- We are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.
- To love and be loved is the greatest joy in the world.

- Being too quick to judge someone can deprive you of a great encounter and the possibility of a wonderful long-term relationship.
- The best way to appreciate something is to be without it for a while.
- Trust is the single most important factor in both personal and professional relationships.
- The dashing young knight on his snow-white steed who was going to ride into my life and sweep me off my feet has apparently gotten lost in the forest.



Wounded Healer

A Poem by John W.

Since before he had his first taste
Since before his wound was inflicted
He had longed to be in that number,
Had longed to come marching in

He was no saint, of this he was sure
About this the years of abuse left no doubt
Shattered dreams, broken promises, abandoned hope
Each made clear his failure was no mistake

Until he finally heard the message
Of all things, suggestions from a drunk
"Work the steps and your life will change"
Were empty words, not "hope" for him

He of course was different, not like "them"
So nothing that worked for them
Would heal his wounds
These would take him to his grave

Or so he had thought, until time had passed
With each sober day, the wounds healed
Though scars ran deep, he still got better
As they had foretold, his life did change.

From the wreckage had risen the Phoenix
The skeletons which filled his closet
Now were laid bare in brilliant reflection
Their fear and foreboding no longer a threat

This lesson had been hard taught
But it was a lesson he had learned,
A lesson he had infused into his marrow.
It had become a part of him, a vital part of him

With each novice he was blessed to meet
With each newcomer he got to sponsor
He shared this part of him, bared his soul to them
Shared with them, this experience of his.

To more than some, sadly not all,
The attraction worked, the message was heard
A simple formula, one drunk to another,
Had worked where only failure had been before.

As unlikely as the formula had been, so too
Had he in the most unlikely way, become a Healer,
He was a Wounded Healer, his diseased past,
Now the prescription for a healthy new life.



HISTORY OF A.A.

by Bob S.

It was just a week before Christmas Day in 1934 when Bill W., once a big man on Wall Street, was discharged from the alcoholic ward of Town's Hospital as a dramatically changed alcoholic. Bill was broke. Now, seven days sober, he thought perhaps his once friendly stock market acquaintances would accept him back. Now that his alcoholic malady had been alleviated, he might regain the prestige and wealth he had once enjoyed before his drinking brought him to financial ruin.

What A Christmas Present!

Let us be forever thankful

Memories from his recent spiritual revelation at the hospital (he later jokingly called it a hot flash) loomed in his mind, along with this afterthought: "There were thousands of hopeless alcoholics who might be glad to have what had been so freely given to me. Perhaps I could help some of them. They in turn might work with others." *Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 14.

Thus thoughts of high finance were surmounted by a decision to carry his spiritual message to the alcoholic sots at the Calvary Mission in lower Manhattan.

By Christmas Day, Bill, now fully two weeks sober, began an avalanche of what we now know as twelve-step work. His efforts cascaded into the launching of our Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) program the following summer. Bill never drank again. What a wonderful Christmas gift!

But what about us? Did we not just as well receive that very same gift? Let us be forever thankful for the Christmas season of 1934.



A Decision of the Heart

Deep down within us

by Bob S.

The Big Book tells me that if I was even *willing* to believe, I would commence to get results (p. 46). But then, believing was no problem for a person such as me. I was absolutely terrified of taking that next drink. I considered my simple choice: Believe and get sober, or don't believe and get drunk. When I read Step Two, I exclaimed: I believe!

Someone asked: "How does an alcoholic become willing to believe?" Answer: "Just drink enough hooch, and you'll get willing!" I certainly batted one hundred on that score. So, Step Two was no great shakes for yours truly. But was believing enough? The Devil believed in God, and look where he ended up.

My sponsor, Carl, pointed out that the "ABCs" on page 60 amount to: I can't, but God can. The next paragraph says: "Being convinced, we are now at Step Three." The operative word was "now." Immediate action was necessary—after all, if faith without works is dead, then willingness without action is fantasy! I had lived in alcoholic fantasy quite long enough, thank you.

But to whom should I pray for help? My concepts of God changed day by day; each conclusion would seem more logical than the previous one. However, it was explained that this life-saving power was not to be found by a conclusion of the mind, but by making a decision of the heart...and also, that this power was not far away. The Big Book tells us: "We found the Great

Reality deep down within us. In the last analysis it is only there it can be found" (p. 55). It was further explained that the capitalized Great Reality was that power to whom I should pray for help, and no further conclusions of the mind would be necessary.

I was told that if I continued with the Twelve Steps I would most likely develop a conscious contact with said Great Reality deep within, resulting in a real possibility for a release from that terrifying mental obsession. This was an offer I couldn't refuse, so I humored my sponsor and tried it. Guess what? Some months later, a blessed release *did* come over me, which has been continuous for many years. I have not had to drink since my first A.A. meeting. It works—it really does.



A Spiritual Equation

Simply, a God of our own choosing

by Ken J.

My favorite chapter in the Big Book is *We Agnostics*. Why? Because this is where I not only found God, but also it is where I still go after many years to nurture my faith.

I've heard thousands of people over the years talk about guilt, whether it was Catholic, Mormon or Jewish. I grew-up in a small farming community in Western Nebraska with a little bit of "Methodist misconception." In the 1960s, the Methodists were actually progressive. They preached love, tolerance and a benevolent God. They also had replaced the communion wine with grape juice out of respect for the recovering alcoholic (which I did not approve of). Bible school in the summer was all *Kumbaya*, *This Little Light of Mine* and *Jesus Loves Me*. I don't remember a single fire and brimstone sermon. Sinners only had to ask God for forgiveness and the gates of heaven would swing wide open.

I still believed that God was loving...I didn't feel worthy of that love

My parents went to church occasionally; it was only a block from my house, so I attended regularly up until I was 16. A complete loner with no social life during high school, I had developed a huge thirst for alcohol; then my imaginary friends and I drank with abandon on Saturday nights, and slept late on Sundays.

Fast-forward ten years through a rapid descent into despair and daily drinking: It was 1985 and I miserably existed

in Scottsdale, Arizona. Something in me knew that life didn't have to be so awful. I did have the belief that the answer included God. I still believed that God was loving, the problem was, I didn't feel worthy of that love.



Three years into sobriety, I had God back in my life; I prayed, meditated and worked hard to strengthen my faith. Nevertheless, I was hungry for more. I tried a few different churches, read books, did yoga and went crystal shopping in Sedona. Finally, I just went back to the basics: I studied *We Agnostics*. Every night I read 1 to 2 paragraphs and then spent an hour or so in reflection. It was profound; I became familiar with serenity.

Recently, when I couldn't find anything to watch (even on AppleTV), I picked up the Big Book and turned to page 44. My book has yellow, pink and green highlights; notations in red, black and blue. Sometimes reading what I've written is enlightening because it includes my own actual experiences as well as those of people I have known. What caught my eye was all I needed.

In red pen: *"An atheist is someone who does not believe in God, and only*

has faith in himself. An agnostic believes in some concept of a higher power, but does not always have any faith in it. A believer knows that there is God, and his faith is strong."

The evidence of my faith is found in a peaceful soul

I speak my truth, as I know it to today. By these definitions, I know that I have spent the majority of my life as an agnostic. I have always believed in God, but I have lived struggling with faith. Even after years of sobriety, I find myself confronted with it. There are times when my faith is strong and there are areas of my life where I don't even question it. However, pretty much on a daily basis, I must take action and practice faith.

Fortunately, *We Agnostics* provides me with a fast and reliable path to renewing my faith. It talks about evidence. When I look at my life, it is easy for me to see the evidence of my alcoholism. But today all I have to do is look at the evidence of how faith has worked in the past to reinforce the knowledge that it will work again. When I think about a challenge where I practiced my faith, and acknowledge the results, I am able to see the power of faith. Even though spiritual facts don't always intellectually add up, the evidence of my faith is found in a peaceful soul.

Spiritual malady (my problem) + Spiritual concept (God) + Spiritual practice (faith) = Spiritual state (serenity).

I believe the simple difference between agnostic and believer is the serenity that comes with faith in a power greater than myself.



The Twelfth Concept

Democratic in thought and action

by Anonymous

The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Everything that's needed already exists

The spirit of this concept reflects the spirit of the Steps and Traditions—which isn't particularly surprising, but I find it very reassuring. I haven't held a World Service position, but I'm sure if I did, one of my first moves would be to swell up with pride, and come up with a lot of "great ideas" for A.A. This happens to me whenever I am given something to do. I immediately start thinking about how what I am going to do is fix the whole thing, run the show, make it the best. Before I've even taken Step One, I have made a mess to clean up!

What I see in this concept is a recipe for maintaining humility, serenity, and a reminder that everything that's needed already exists. I forget this and I often go searching for answers when all I really need to do is pray, connect

with another alcoholic, and help someone else. The program is so simple. I tend to complicate it, and if there is one thing I have learned it is that I need reminders like this one. I am unlikely ever to not need reminders.

ger talking just about individuals or groups, after all, but world service, and leadership.

The list of Concepts doles out roles, authority, rights, and powers. I think



Concept 12 is an invitation to stay in balance, and a subtle reminder of who alcoholics are—people at risk when they have too much power and wealth. Mostly, it seems to be a reminder to get out of my own way. Often, I mean well, but I overcomplicate things. Then I get all tangled up and before I know it, I've caused a problem where there was none. On the other hand, when I follow directions, like those laid out in this Concept, when I stay in the middle of the boat, I am okay.

An invitation to stay in balance

Same for the Conference. If it observes the spirit of A.A. tradition, it has an excellent chance of surviving.

The 12 Concepts overall lay out some fairly heavyweight guidelines, with far-reaching effects. We are no lon-

it's an excellent reminder at the end of this weighty list, to have a summary of very basic guidelines that bring us back to the basics of A.A.: service, unity, and recovery.

I am struck, yet again, with gratitude for A.A., and with gratitude for all of the men and women who worked so hard to hammer out this program. And I am struck with the thought that the whole thing really is truly miraculous, that a group of alcoholics working together came up with a program of action that has helped so many people all over the world to get and stay sober, and to continue to pass along the gift of sobriety. We can't get ourselves sober, but we can help others find sobriety.

It is humbling to think about the history of A.A. and the number of people who rely on the program every day.

Intergroup Meeting Summary—November 2016

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.

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Marin Groups | On Awakening | Blue Book Special | Extreme Makeover: Women's Step Study | Sunset Speaker Step |
| Friday Night Book | Thursday Night Speaker | Cocktail Hour | Girls Gone Mild | Too Early |
| Girls Night Out | SF Groups | Come 'n Get It! | Into Action | Waterfront |
| Men's Two Plus | Any Lengths | Cow Hollow Men's Group | Koo Koo Hump Day | What It's Like Now |
| Mill Valley | Be Still | Cow Hollow Young People | Mid-Morning Support | |
| Monday Blues | Beginners Warmup | Creative Alcoholics | Reality Farm | |
| Sunday Night Corte Madera | Big Book Basics | Eureka Step | Sometimes Slowly | |

This is an unofficial summary of the November 2016 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.

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, November 2, 2016 at 101 Donohue St., Marin City.

The meeting was started with a call to order and the Serenity Prayer. Baskets for rent and dinner were passed. The October 2016 minutes and the November 2016 agenda were approved.

Officer Reports

Board Chair, Chris H. Never too early to think about serving on the Intergroup board. We will have 3 spots opening and terms are for 3 years, so good to start thinking about it now. Looking for a new board treasurer and need IGRs to put the word out. Business experience tends to be helpful. They do not need to be an IG rep. Maury is attending A.A. Tech Workshop. Is

this something we would want to host in San Francisco? More to come. We've been light on business which is why we are having more presentations. If you have an idea for a presentation or a business topic, reach out!

Treasurer, Bob W. George resigned, so Bob is interim treasurer. Report for September: group contributions were over budget, expenses were under budget, and income was a tad over budget. YTD net income is over budget through September. Bookstore inventory had a cost of \$9000 which was why unrestricted cash was down for September. Thanks to group contributions in October, we should get back to a better rating next month. Budget for 2017 should be approved by next meeting.

Central Office Manager, Maury P. Volunteer appreciation dinner was a success. Office closed November 11 and November 24-25. If your meeting is going to be closed OR if they are hosting an alcolthon, please inform us in advance so we can update the website, The Buzz, etc. so we can make sure folks looking for a meeting know where to go. There are 4 open phone shifts. Our server has been replaced and updates installed. John C. passed away unexpectedly.

Intergroup Committee/Activity Reports

Access, Alesha B. Graphic designer helping with brochures and more. Child care, especially at women's meetings.

SF Teleservice, Pete F. Eight open shifts need to be filled ASAP! Orientation 6pm on Nov. 21 at Central Office.

Technology, James O. Tech committee has been meeting regularly (and have several sub-committees, including digital payments, website, etc. Payments is being beta tested at our group tonight and an info packet for meetings is being developed. Website redesign is being considered and a survey to come soon.

Fellowship, Michael P. Auditions for "I Am Responsible" are this weekend.

Liaison Reports

SF H&I, Lucy T. Nor Cal H&I will distribute excess funds; more info to come in February.

Marin Teleservice, Trevor J. Trying to figure out how to get people involved with Spaghetti Feed. New coordinator for Wednesday night needed; shifts good otherwise.

GGYPAA, Mac Updates are on the GGYPAA website, including events.

New Business/Presentations

Gratitude Month Liz M. presented on Gratitude Month, which is November. During Gratitude Month, many groups pass a 2nd basket around at meetings where all funds collected go to Central Office. \$21K has been budgeted to come from these 2nd baskets.

70th Anniversary Party Michael P. presented. Due to difficulty finding a location, we are doing a weekend celebration (Saturday and Sunday, January 27-28) at the Gratitude Center. Different service groups and meetings can host a meeting there during the

Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through November 15, 2016
honoring the following members:

IN MEMORIUM

Flossie N. and Ray M.

Jennifer — Say Hey

John C. — 2900 Mission Fellowship

weekend. There will also be a preview of "I Am Responsible."

Facebook | Slack and other Social Media

James O. presented on ways Intergroup can use different social media platforms to share information. Facebook – private "secret groups" can be created. This could be used for event invitations, news updates, servicing groups and newcomers in a current way. A secret group cannot be searched so anonymity is maintained. Packet was handed out about A.A. and the Internet. There is a specific call-out about Facebook and other social media platforms. A.A. has no position on whether Intergroups use Facebook. Slack is a team chat and can also have private channels for organization. It can be used for communicating updates, events, etc. through the private channels and is a way for us to have direct contact with other Intergroup members when it's more efficient than email or phone. Documents can also be shared (i.e., *The Point*, agenda, etc.). Members would receive notifications when someone else posts on Slack. You can also do polls! We discussed use cases for each platform; Slack would be for IG use and Facebook would be open the A.A. community. Tech subcommittee recommends use of both platforms as they find Facebook and Slack to be great ways to communicate without breaking anonymity. Maury and James will have more info after they get back from A.A. Tech Conference.

Old Business

Beta test for electronic 7th Tradition collection using Venmo. James (head of Technology Committee) talked through 3 slides about how to use Venmo. Tonight's contributions will only go to rent, not food. He clarified that this is not a replacement for putting cash in the rent basket. You can do cash or Venmo. The name for our group on Venmo is GGIntergroup and will have a photo of the Golden Gate Bridge. You can specify that the payment is for rent. Very important to mark the setting as PRIVATE to keep in alignment with tradition of anonymity. Maury is the account owner (linked to IG's checking account) and James is an account manager; there are no other account managers at this time. Also called out that it is better to link to a debit card or banking account as credit card payments have fees for the payer.

Groups Reports / What's On Your Mind? / Sample IGR Reports, Communicate Highlights

Pete F. Sobriety by The Bay happening same weekend as 70th Anniversary Celebration.

Ongoing Targeted Message:

- Gratitude Month
- Web/Tech Emerging Ideas
- Treasurer Position

Next Intergroup Meeting: Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2016 at 7pm, 1187 Franklin St., 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

VICE CHAIR

Matt S. vicechair@aasf.org

TREASURER

[open] treasurer@aasf.org

RECORDING SECRETARY

Liz M. secretary@aasf.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

ACCESS COMMITTEE

Gabrielle M. access@aasf.org

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Michael P. archives@aasf.org

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Michael P. fellowship@aasf.org

HOMEBOUND MARIN

Jane B. & David W. homeboundmarin@aasf.org

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Greg M. orientation@aasf.org

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Peter B. picpc@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Pete F. sfteleservice@aasf.org

SOS COMMITTEE

Dorothy V. sos@aasf.org

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

David C. & Carole P. sunshine@aasf.org

THE POINT

Jane B. thepoint@aasf.org

aa group contributions

| Fellowship Contributions | Oct. 16 | YTD | Marin Contributions | Oct. 16 | YTD | San Francisco Contributions | Oct. 16 | YTD |
|--|---------|----------|--|----------|-----------|---|----------|----------|
| Contribution Box | \$ 68 | \$ 617 | Pathfinders Tu 12pm | | \$ 79 | 7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am | | \$ 80 |
| Customer | | \$ 631 | Primary Purpose M 12pm | | \$ 60 | A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm | | \$ 529 |
| Intergroup | \$ 78 | \$ 1,041 | Quitting Time M-F 530pm | \$ 650 | \$ 2,873 | A New Start F 830pm | | \$ 631 |
| Novato Fellowship Group | | \$ 656 | Refugee Th 12pm | | \$ 50 | AA As You Like It Tu 530pm | | \$ 159 |
| Fellowship Total | \$ 146 | \$ 2,946 | Reveille 7D 7am | | \$ 381 | Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm | | \$ 272 |
| | | | Rise N Shine Su 10am | \$ 300 | \$ 1,140 | Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm | | \$ 568 |
| Marin Contributions | Oct. 16 | YTD | San Geronimo Valley Book Study F 8pm | | \$ 123 | Alamo Square Su 7pm | \$ 497 | \$ 497 |
| 12 & 12 Study Sa 815am | | \$ 128 | San Geronimo Valley M 8pm | \$ 48 | \$ 211 | All Together Now Th 8pm | | \$ 54 |
| 7AM Group 7D 7am | | \$ 256 | San Marin Step Study Sa 830pm | | \$ 120 | Alumni W 830pm | | \$ 45 |
| 7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am | | \$ 75 | Saturday Weekend Warrior Sa 830am | | \$ 230 | Any Lengths Sat 930am | | \$ 1,080 |
| AA By The Bay Tue 730pm | \$ 50 | \$ 86 | Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6pm | | \$ 209 | Artists & Writers F 630pm | \$ 576 | \$ 1,111 |
| Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am | \$ 350 | \$ 4,400 | Serendipity Sa 11am | | \$ 839 | As Bill CCs It Sun 8am | \$ 160 | \$ 160 |
| Awakenings Sat 830a | | \$ 43 | Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm | \$ 101 | \$ 101 | As Bill Sees It Th 6pm | \$ 322 | \$ 482 |
| Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am | | \$ 274 | Six O'Clock Step Th 6pm | | \$ 101 | As Bill Sees It Th 830pm | | \$ 262 |
| Back to Basics Su 930am | \$ 125 | \$ 281 | Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm | | \$ 300 | Ass in a Bag Th 830pm | | \$ 416 |
| Beginner's Help Th 8pm | | \$ 75 | Sober & Serene F 7pm | | \$ 384 | Atheists, Agnostics & Others Sa 11am | | \$ 50 |
| Big Book Study & Meditation M 7p Bolinas | | \$ 24 | Sober Sisters W 12pm | | \$ 93 | Back to Basics Su 930am | | \$ 127 |
| Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm | | \$ 600 | Spiritual Testosterone Stag Su 830a | | \$ 500 | Back to Basics Th 730pm | | \$ 430 |
| Bolinas Book Study W 8pm | | \$ 56 | Steps to Freedom M 730pm | | \$ 115 | Be Still AA Su 12pm | | \$ 946 |
| Closed Women's Step Study Tu 330pm | | \$ 160 | Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm | | \$ 200 | Beginner Big Book Step Th 630pm | \$ 43 | \$ 124 |
| Corte Madera Saturday Candlelight 8pm | | \$ 418 | Streetfighters Sa 9am | | \$ 100 | Beginners' Step Study Sat 7pm | \$ 42 | \$ 160 |
| Cover to Cover W 730pm | | \$ 150 | Sunday Express Su 6pm | \$ 38 | \$ 496 | Beginners Warm Up W 6pm | | \$ 404 |
| Crossroads Sun 12pm | \$ 67 | \$ 1,198 | Sunday Friendship Su 6pm | | \$ 168 | Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm | \$ 238 | \$ 855 |
| Day At A Time 7D 630am | | \$ 450 | Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm | | \$ 422 | Bernal New Day 7D | \$ 220 | \$ 2,444 |
| Fireside Fri 8pm Bolinas | | \$ 24 | Sundown W 7pm | | \$ 200 | Best Damn Big Book Discussion Th 8pm | | \$ 108 |
| Friday Night Book F 830pm | | \$ 584 | T.G.I. Tuesday 6pm | \$ 80 | \$ 80 | Between the Lines Sat 1p | \$ 20 | \$ 36 |
| Glum Not! Su 9am | | \$ 400 | Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag 8pm | | \$ 665 | Big Book Basics F 8pm | \$ 320 | \$ 847 |
| God Could & Would 5D M-F | | \$ 201 | The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm | | \$ 362 | Big Book Boot Camp 5D | | \$ 160 |
| Gratitude Tu 8pm | | \$ 200 | The Broad Highway Thu 730pm | \$ 106 | \$ 556 | Big Book Study Su 1130am | | \$ 400 |
| Greenfield Newcomers Su 7pm | \$ 150 | \$ 238 | There is a Solution Tu 6pm | | \$ 59 | Blue Book Special Su 11am | \$ 32 | \$ 552 |
| Happy Hour Th 6pm | \$ 80 | \$ 80 | There Is a Solution W 630pm | \$ 60 | \$ 60 | Brothers in Arms M 8pm | | \$ 135 |
| Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm | | \$ 770 | Three Step Group Sa 530pm | | \$ 1,161 | Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm | \$ 240 | \$ 542 |
| High & Dry W 12pm | | \$ 75 | Thursday Night Speaker 830pm | \$ 591 | \$ 1,372 | BYOL W 1pm | | \$ 29 |
| Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am | | \$ 345 | Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm | | \$ 45 | Came to Park Sat 7pm | \$ 301 | \$ 1,111 |
| Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm | | \$ 250 | Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm | | \$ 1,006 | Castro Call Out Sun 830p | | \$ 150 |
| Keep It Simple Sister Thu 7pm | | \$ 150 | We, Us and Ours M 650pm | \$ 55 | \$ 445 | Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm | | \$ 173 |
| Larkspur Beginners F 7pm | | \$ 225 | Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm | \$ 80 | \$ 80 | Cocoanuts Su 9am | | \$ 570 |
| Larkspur Beginners W 7pm | | \$ 50 | Wednesday Night Speaker Discussion 7pm | | \$ 1,050 | Coit's Quitters | \$ 259 | \$ 454 |
| Last Stop Men's Step Study W 6pm | | \$ 250 | What's It All About F 12pm | | \$ 85 | Come 'n Get It! F 630pm | \$ 13 | \$ 78 |
| Living in the Solution F 6pm | | \$ 650 | Wholly Together 11th Step Med W 7p | \$ 84 | \$ 225 | Compass Group W 9pm | | \$ 410 |
| Living Sober M 6pm | | \$ 33 | Why It Works Sun 6pm | | \$ 678 | Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm | \$ 1,040 | \$ 2,017 |
| Los Ranchitos W 830pm | \$ 250 | \$ 500 | Women's Big Book Tu 1030am | \$ 322 | \$ 2,011 | Creative Alcoholics M 630pm | | \$ 52 |
| Marin City Groups 6D 630pm | | \$ 200 | Women's Lunch Bunch F 12pm | \$ 185 | \$ 497 | Design For Living - Big Book Tu, Th 730am | | \$ 120 |
| Marin Teleservice | | \$ 1,500 | Working Dogs W 12pm | | \$ 895 | Design for Living Sat 8am | | \$ 325 |
| Marin Young People F 830pm | | \$ 152 | Young People's BYOB Sat 7pm | | \$ 82 | Down and Dirty at Seven-Thirty Fri | \$ 63 | \$ 63 |
| Men's 2 Plus M 7pm | | \$ 111 | Young People's Chopsticks Sa 1030pm | | \$ 88 | Down and Dirty at Seven-Thirty Mon | \$ 37 | \$ 129 |
| Mill Valley 11th Step Mtg Tu 730pm | | \$ 350 | Marin Total | \$ 4,489 | \$ 45,845 | Down and Dirty at Seven-Thirty Thu | \$ 59 | \$ 96 |
| Mill Valley 7D 7am | \$ 300 | \$ 990 | San Francisco Contributions | Oct. 16 | YTD | Down and Dirty at Seven-Thirty Tue | \$ 22 | \$ 131 |
| Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm | \$ 70 | \$ 249 | 10am Daily Reflections Th | | \$ 23 | Down and Dirty at Seven-Thirty Wed | \$ 78 | \$ 147 |
| Monday Blues M 645pm | | \$ 564 | 11 at 6 Thu 6a | | \$ 6 | Each Day a New Beginning F 7am | \$ 874 | \$ 2,130 |
| Monday Night Madness M 6pm | | \$ 50 | 11th Step Power Power Power | | \$ 286 | Each Day a New Beginning M 7am | | \$ 643 |
| Monday Night Stag Tiburon | | \$ 1,000 | 20+ Sun 445pm (unlisted) | \$ 148 | \$ 492 | Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am | | \$ 414 |
| Monday Nooners M 12pm | | \$ 1,118 | 6am Dry Dock Fri | | \$ 145 | Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am | | \$ 717 |
| Morning After Sa 10am | | \$ 1,300 | 6am Dry Dock Mon | | \$ 250 | Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am | \$ 332 | \$ 1,363 |
| Noon Hope | | \$ 175 | 6am Dry Dock Th | \$ 150 | \$ 350 | Each Day a New Beginning W 7am | | \$ 1,023 |
| North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm | | \$ 447 | 6am Dry Dock Tu | | \$ 486 | Early Start F 6pm | | \$ 2,223 |
| Not a Glum Lot Group F 8pm | | \$ 200 | 6am Dry Dock W | \$ 68 | \$ 68 | Easy Does It Tu 6pm | | \$ 100 |
| Novato Spirit Discussion F 2pm | | \$ 95 | 6am Men's Literature Meeting M | | \$ 135 | Embarcadero Grapevine F 1210pm | | \$ 75 |
| On Awakening 7D 530am | \$ 350 | \$ 2,650 | | | | Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm | \$ 250 | \$ 525 |

| San Francisco Contributions | Oct. 16 | YTD | San Francisco Contributions | Oct. 16 | YTD | San Francisco Contributions | Oct. 16 | YTD |
|---------------------------------------|---------|----------|---|---------|----------|---|------------------|------------------|
| Epiphany Group Th 7pm | | \$ 293 | Monday Monday M 1215pm | | \$ 113 | Sundown W 7pm | | \$ 1,461 |
| Eureka Step Tu 6pm | | \$ 433 | Monday Night Big Book Study M 8pm | \$ 180 | \$ 180 | Sunset 11'ers F | | \$ 100 |
| Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm | | \$ 620 | Moving Toward Serenity W 830pm | | \$ 318 | Sunset 11'ers Su | | \$ 100 |
| Everyone Shares Sun Midnight | \$ 4 | \$ 4 | New Friday Big Book F 12pm | | \$ 106 | Sunset 11'ers Th | | \$ 70 |
| Excelsior "Scent" Free For All Sa 5pm | \$ 60 | \$ 300 | New Light Brigade Sun 630p | \$ 5 | \$ 50 | Sunset 11'ers Tu | | \$ 29 |
| Experience, Strength & Hope Sat 9am | | \$ 157 | Newcomers Tu 8pm | | \$ 174 | Sunset 9'ers M | | \$ 125 |
| Faith, Hope & Charity F 12pm | | \$ 120 | No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm | | \$ 250 | Sunset 9'ers Su | | \$ 157 |
| Federal Speaker Su 12pm | | \$ 617 | No Reservations M 12pm | | \$ 88 | Sunset 9'ers Tu | | \$ 135 |
| Fell Street F 830pm | | \$ 476 | Noon Smokeless F 12pm | | \$ 40 | Sunset Group W 730pm | \$ 8 | \$ 8 |
| Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am | | \$ 237 | Noon Smokeless W 12pm | | \$ 40 | Sunset Reflections Th 1pm | \$ 9 | \$ 9 |
| Fireside Chat Group Th 8pm | | \$ 143 | NYX Sat 7pm | | \$ 280 | Sunset Speaker Step Su 730pm | | \$ 663 |
| Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm | | \$ 46 | O.A.D.W. Mon 7pm | | \$ 68 | Ten Years After Su 6pm | | \$ 1,470 |
| Fourth Dimension Solution Th 515pm | | \$ 26 | One, Two, Three, Go! W 1pm | | \$ 20 | The 4th Dimension Sa 630pm | | \$ 150 |
| Friday All Groups F 830pm | | \$ 718 | Panhandle Th 830pm | | \$ 285 | The Drive Thru W 1215pm | | \$ 1,050 |
| Friday at Five F 5pm | \$ 13 | \$ 65 | Park Presidio M 830pm | | \$ 67 | The Leaky Cauldron Su 930am | \$ 252 | \$ 951 |
| Friday Morning 12 Steppers 7am | | \$ 75 | Parkside Th 8pm | \$ 386 | \$ 560 | The Parent Trap 2 W 4pm | \$ 52 | \$ 279 |
| Friday Smokeless F 8pm | | \$ 170 | Pax West Discussion Th 12pm | \$ 240 | \$ 712 | There is a Solution in the Bayview Tu 7pm | | \$ 156 |
| Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715p | | \$ 387 | Pax West Literature Discussion Tu 12pm | \$ 360 | \$ 882 | They Stopped In Time M 8pm | | \$ 121 |
| Get Up and Go Thu 7am | | \$ 27 | Pax West Prayer and Meditation F 7am | | \$ 130 | Thursday Lunch With Bill 12p | | \$ 21 |
| Girls Night Out W 815pm | | \$ 120 | Pax West Prayer and Meditation M 7am | | \$ 280 | Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm | | \$ 705 |
| Gold Mine Group M 8pm | | \$ 136 | Pax West Speaker Discussion M 12pm | | \$ 1,885 | Thursday Thumpers Th 7pm | | \$ 300 |
| Goodlands Su 2pm | | \$ 87 | Pocket Aces Sun 7pm | | \$ 490 | Too Early Sa 8am | \$ 102 | \$ 801 |
| Gratitude Center Fellowship | | \$ 15 | Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm | | \$ 162 | Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm | \$ 180 | \$ 360 |
| Grouch and the Brainstorm Thu 630pm | | \$ 120 | Raising the Bottom W 8pm | | \$ 477 | Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm | \$ 121 | \$ 285 |
| Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm | | \$ 152 | Reality Farm Th 830pm | \$ 167 | \$ 659 | Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm | | \$ 90 |
| Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm | | \$ 300 | Rebound W 830pm | | \$ 101 | Tuesday Night Lasses Step Study | | \$ 176 |
| Heavy Hitters | \$ 569 | \$ 569 | Refugee Th 12pm | | \$ 40 | Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm | | \$ 100 |
| High Noon 5D | | \$ 185 | Relapses, Rebounds, Retreads & Winners Tu | | \$ 5 | Valencia Smokefree F 6pm | | \$ 923 |
| High Noon Friday 1215pm | | \$ 83 | Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm | | \$ 337 | Wake Up On 3rd St Group | | \$ 173 |
| High Noon Monday 1215pm | | \$ 276 | Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sa 5pm | \$ 298 | \$ 500 | Walk of Shame W 830pm | | \$ 170 |
| High Noon Saturday 1215pm | | \$ 753 | Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm | \$ 717 | \$ 2,513 | We Care Tu 12pm | | \$ 262 |
| High Noon Sunday 1215p | | \$ 458 | Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm | | \$ 862 | Wednesday Noon Step Study 12p | | \$ 510 |
| High Noon Thursday 1215pm | \$ 621 | \$ 621 | Saturday Matinee SA | | \$ 30 | Wednesday Sunrise Smokefree 7am | | \$ 60 |
| High Noon Tuesday 1215pm | \$ 145 | \$ 145 | Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm | | \$ 68 | Weekend Update Su 615pm | | \$ 347 |
| High Noon Wednesday 1215pm | \$ 315 | \$ 315 | Saturday Night Regroup Sa 730pm | | \$ 275 | Weekend Warriors Sa 830am | | \$ 259 |
| High Sobriety M 8pm | | \$ 293 | Saturday Weekend Warrior Sa 830am | | \$ 321 | Weekend Worker Sat 7am | | \$ 210 |
| High Steppers W 7pm | | \$ 288 | Say Hey Group T-F 6pm | | \$ 100 | West Portal W 8pm | | \$ 572 |
| Higher Power W 6am | | \$ 5 | Serenity House | \$ 150 | \$ 1,500 | Wharf Rats Th 815pm | \$ 137 | \$ 367 |
| Hilldwellers M 8pm | | \$ 383 | Serenity Now Tue 830p | | \$ 167 | What It's Like Now M 6pm | \$ 264 | \$ 550 |
| Hoodlum Haven F 8pm | | \$ 360 | Serenity Seekers M 730pm | | \$ 1,004 | Wholly Together 11th Step Meditation W 7p | | \$ 98 |
| Huntington Square W 630pm | \$ 44 | \$ 366 | Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm | | \$ 702 | Why Not Laugh Sat 6p | \$ 31 | \$ 101 |
| In The Solution Sa 9am | \$ 20 | \$ 43 | Sharing Wisdom Sat 730am | \$ 15 | \$ 31 | Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm | \$ 48 | \$ 136 |
| Joe and Charlie Tapes Fri 730am | \$ 25 | \$ 73 | Sinbar Su 8pm | | \$ 247 | Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm | | \$ 862 |
| Join the Tribe Tu 7pm | | \$ 736 | Sober Saturday Sa 830am | | \$ 600 | Women's Big Book Study Tu 1150am | | \$ 80 |
| Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm | | \$ 18 | Sobriety & Beyond W 730pm | \$ 22 | \$ 554 | Women's Came to Believe Sa 10am | \$ 193 | \$ 748 |
| Keep Coming Back Sa 10am | \$ 716 | \$ 1,288 | Sobriety & Miracles S&M Group Sa 5pm | | \$ 156 | Women's Candlelight Thu 1150am | \$ 12 | \$ 41 |
| Like A Prayer Su 4pm | | \$ 180 | Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am | | \$ 1,171 | Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm | | \$ 411 |
| Living Sober @ Gratitude Su 4pm | | \$ 33 | Speaker Discussion F 1pm | | \$ 68 | Women's Meeting There is a Solution W 6pm | | \$ 329 |
| Living Sober with HIV W 6pm | | \$ 527 | Spiritual Awakenings Step Study M 730pm | | \$ 33 | Women's Promises F 7pm | \$ 336 | \$ 1,418 |
| Lush Lounge Sa 2pm | | \$ 271 | Step It Up Tue 6pm | \$ 29 | \$ 78 | Work In Progress Sa 7pm | | \$ 1,113 |
| Meditation, Prayer & Share Tue 730pm | | \$ 145 | Steppin' Up Tu 630pm | | \$ 469 | YAHOO Step Sa 1130am | | \$ 324 |
| Meeting Place Noon F 12pm | | \$ 260 | Steps To The Solution W 715pm | | \$ 377 | Young at Heart Sa 930am | \$ 72 | \$ 201 |
| Mellow Mission Sunrise M 7am | | \$ 54 | Stonestown M 8pm | \$ 288 | \$ 416 | Young People's BYOB Sat 7pm | | \$ 123 |
| Men's Gentle Touch M 7pm | | \$ 429 | Sunday Bookworms Su 730pm | | \$ 63 | San Francisco Total | \$ 14,112 | \$ 96,134 |
| Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am | \$ 336 | \$ 1,210 | Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag 930am | | \$ 802 | YTD | \$ 18,748 | ##### |
| Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm | | \$ 487 | Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm | | \$ 560 | | | |
| Mission Fellowship | | \$ 254 | Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc 730pm | | \$ 1,754 | | | |
| Monday Beginners M 8pm | | \$ 1,561 | Sunday Rap Su 8pm | \$ 166 | \$ 617 | | | |
| Monday Men's Stag (SF) M 8pm | | \$ 226 | Sunday Silence Su 730pm | | \$ 128 | | | |

Profit and Loss Statement: September 2016

| | Sep 16 | Budget | Jan - Sep 16 | YTD Budget | | Sep 16 | Budget | Jan - Sep 16 | YTD Budget |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ordinary Income/Expense | | | | | Paper Purchased | \$ 242 | \$ 91 | \$ 1,021 | \$ 819 |
| Income | | | | | Payroll Fees | \$ 9 | \$ 10 | \$ 72 | \$ 90 |
| Gratitude Month | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 3,205 | \$ 7,575 | Phone Book Listings | \$ 93 | \$ 93 | \$ 744 | \$ 837 |
| Group Contributions | \$ 12,325 | \$ 12,500 | \$ 127,467 | \$ 127,900 | Postage | \$ - | \$ 108 | \$ 563 | \$ 972 |
| Individual Contributions | \$ 5,428 | \$ 3,722 | \$ 41,804 | \$ 33,498 | Printing | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 695 |
| Newsletter Subscript. | \$ 11 | \$ - | \$ 66 | \$ - | Professional Fees | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 725 | \$ 1,425 |
| Sales - Bookstore | \$ 7,390 | \$ 8,387 | \$ 68,037 | \$ 75,483 | Rent - Office | \$ 4,458 | \$ 4,488 | \$ 40,124 | \$ 40,392 |
| Intergroup Event Income | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 2,304 | Rent - Other | \$ 180 | \$ 85 | \$ 750 | \$ 765 |
| Total Income | \$ 25,154 | \$ 24,609 | \$ 240,579 | \$ 246,760 | Repair & Maintenance | \$ 240 | \$ 269 | \$ 2,508 | \$ 2,421 |
| Cost of Goods Sold | | | | | Security System | \$ 138 | \$ 43 | \$ 439 | \$ 387 |
| Cost of Books Sold | \$ 5,620 | \$ 6,090 | \$ 49,815 | \$ 54,822 | Shipping | \$ 212 | \$ 283 | \$ 2,594 | \$ 2,551 |
| Cost of Goods Sold - Shipping | \$ 108 | \$ 29 | \$ 291 | \$ 261 | Software Purchased | \$ 15 | \$ 43 | \$ 705 | \$ 390 |
| Credit Card Processing Fees | \$ 406 | \$ 435 | \$ 3,986 | \$ 3,428 | Telephone | \$ 181 | \$ 175 | \$ 1,985 | \$ 1,575 |
| Inventory Adjustments | \$ (238) | \$ - | \$ (222) | \$ - | Training | \$ - | \$ 44 | \$ 39 | \$ 392 |
| Total COGS | \$ 5,896 | \$ 6,554 | \$ 53,870 | \$ 58,511 | Travel | \$ - | \$ 220 | \$ 11 | \$ 1,200 |
| Gross Profit | \$ 19,258 | \$ 18,055 | \$ 186,709 | \$ 188,249 | Total Expense | \$ 20,041 | \$ 19,698 | \$ 176,069 | \$ 187,625 |
| Expense | | | | | Net Ordinary Income | \$ (783) | \$ (1,643) | \$ 10,640 | \$ 624 |
| Committees | \$ - | \$ 38 | \$ 55 | \$ 387 | Other Income/Expense | | | | |
| Reconciliation Discrepancies | \$ - | | \$ 64 | | Other Income | | | | |
| Bad Checks | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 24 | \$ - | Bag Fees | \$ 3 | \$ 3 | \$ 23 | \$ 27 |
| Bank Fees | \$ 3 | | \$ 8 | | Customer Shipping | \$ 288 | \$ 296 | \$ 3,038 | \$ 2,658 |
| Employee Expenses | \$ 13,200 | \$ 13,364 | \$ 111,742 | \$ 120,386 | Interest Income | \$ 44 | \$ 42 | \$ 404 | \$ 374 |
| Equipment Lease | \$ 816 | \$ - | \$ 4,081 | \$ 3,675 | Miscellaneous Income | \$ 35 | \$ 30 | \$ 538 | \$ 270 |
| Filing/Fees | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 357 | \$ 930 | Total Other Income | \$ 370 | \$ 371 | \$ 4,003 | \$ 3,329 |
| Insurance | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 2,488 | \$ 1,890 | Other Expense | | | | |
| Intergroup Events | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 2,737 | \$ 2,350 | Depreciation Expense | \$ 205 | \$ 205 | \$ 1,845 | \$ 1,845 |
| Intergroup Literature | \$ 2 | \$ 35 | \$ 42 | \$ 315 | Total Other Expense | \$ 205 | \$ 205 | \$ 1,845 | \$ 1,845 |
| Internet Expense | \$ 149 | \$ 135 | \$ 1,344 | \$ 1,215 | Net Other Income | \$ 165 | \$ 166 | \$ 2,158 | \$ 1,484 |
| Office Supplies | \$ 103 | \$ 174 | \$ 847 | \$ 1,566 | Net Income | \$ (618) | \$ (1,477) | \$ 12,798 | \$ 2,108 |

Treasurer's Report

For September 2016, Gross Income (defined as Total Income less COGS) was \$19,257. This is over budget by \$1,202. Total Expenses for September were \$20,041 which is \$342 under budget. The result is Net Ordinary Income/(Loss) of (\$783). Net Income/(Loss) for September was \$618. Net Income incorporates other income and expenses. Net Income Year-To-Date (YTD) is at \$12,799. This is \$10,691 over budget for YTD through September 2016.

Group Contributions for September were \$12,324. This is under budget by \$175. Group Contributions YTD at \$127,467 are pretty close to budget.

Total Unrestricted Cash for September 2016 was \$27,818. Total Unrestricted Cash is down about \$12,851 from August 2016, primarily due to an increase of almost \$9,000 in bookstore inventory.

However, Total Unrestricted Cash is less than one months of operating expenses.

The rating for September is "Poor." The last time we were "poor" was in September 2015 and the decrease in cash is typical at this time of the year.

OVERALL RATING: Poor

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 roughly \$19K/month, so

we'd have over \$38K in unrestricted cash balances for the month. The last time we were "Excellent" was last month July 2016.

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 2015.

September 2016 Balance Sheet

| | Sep 30, 16 | Aug 31, 16 | \$ Change | Sep 30, 15 | \$ Change |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| ASSETS | | | | | |
| Current Assets | | | | | |
| Checking/Savings | | | | | |
| Restricted Cash | \$ 132,902 | \$ 132,859 | \$ 43 | \$ 162,340 | \$ (29,438) |
| Unrestricted Cash | \$ 27,818 | \$ 40,669 | \$ (12,851) | \$ 10,649 | \$ 17,169 |
| Total Checking/Savings | \$ 160,720 | \$ 173,528 | \$ (12,808) | \$ 172,989 | \$ (12,269) |
| Accounts Receivable | | | | | |
| Accounts Receivable | \$ 7 | \$ 77 | \$ (70) | \$ 25 | \$ (18) |
| Total Accounts Receivable | \$ 7 | \$ 77 | \$ (70) | \$ 25 | \$ (18) |
| Other Current Assets | | | | | |
| Inventory - Bookstore | \$ 28,000 | \$ 19,002 | \$ 8,998 | \$ 22,593 | \$ 5,407 |
| Prepaid Literature Orders | \$ 854 | \$ 885 | \$ (31) | \$ 563 | \$ 291 |
| Undeposited Funds | \$ 3,389 | \$ 1,458 | \$ 1,931 | \$ 282 | \$ 3,107 |
| Total Other Current Assets | \$ 32,243 | \$ 21,345 | \$ 10,898 | \$ 23,438 | \$ 8,805 |
| Total Current Assets | \$ 192,970 | \$ 194,950 | \$ (1,980) | \$ 196,452 | \$ (3,482) |
| Fixed Assets | | | | | |
| Comp. and Off. Equipment (Net) | \$ 2,132 | \$ 949 | \$ 1,183 | \$ 1,443 | \$ 689 |
| Leasehold Improvements (Net) | \$ 14,419 | \$ 14,584 | \$ (165) | \$ 16,399 | \$ (1,980) |
| Total Fixed Assets | \$ 16,551 | \$ 15,533 | \$ 1,018 | \$ 17,842 | \$ (1,291) |
| Other Assets | | | | | |
| Deposits | \$ 6,698 | \$ 6,698 | \$ - | \$ 6,698 | \$ - |
| Total Other Assets | \$ 6,698 | \$ 6,698 | \$ - | \$ 6,698 | \$ - |
| TOTAL ASSETS | \$ 216,219 | \$ 217,181 | \$ (962) | \$ 220,992 | \$ (4,773) |
| LIABILITIES & EQUITY | | | | | |
| Liabilities | | | | | |
| Current Liabilities | | | | | |
| Other Current Liabilities | | | | | |
| Direct Deposit Liabilities | \$ (1,202) | \$ - | \$ (1,202) | \$ - | \$ (1,202) |
| Payroll Liabilities | \$ 4,009 | \$ 3,139 | \$ 870 | \$ 3,837 | \$ 172 |
| Sales Tax Payable | \$ 659 | \$ 670 | \$ (11) | \$ 618 | \$ 41 |
| Total Other Current Liabilities | \$ 3,466 | \$ 3,809 | \$ (343) | \$ 4,455 | \$ (989) |
| Total Current Liabilities | \$ 3,466 | \$ 3,809 | \$ (343) | \$ 4,455 | \$ (989) |
| Long Term Liabilities | | | | | |
| Deferred Compensation | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 30,000 | \$ (30,000) |
| Total Long Term Liabilities | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 30,000 | \$ (30,000) |
| Total Liabilities | \$ 3,466 | \$ 3,809 | \$ (343) | \$ 34,455 | \$ (30,989) |
| Equity | | | | | |
| Net Assets | \$ 199,954 | \$ 199,954 | \$ - | \$ 214,601 | \$ (14,647) |
| Net Income | \$ 12,799 | \$ 13,418 | \$ (619) | \$ (28,066) | \$ 40,865 |
| Total Equity | \$ 212,753 | \$ 213,372 | \$ (619) | \$ 186,535 | \$ 26,218 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY | \$ 216,219 | \$ 217,181 | \$ (962) | \$ 220,990 | \$ (4,771) |

Continued from Page 8

of yourself—noticing other people and thinking about other people, are key parts of the twelfth step. After all, the step suggests that we *try to carry this message*, but we acknowledge that where it arrives and how it is received are under the guidance of a Higher Power.

It may sound a little mystical, but I remember being on a solo backpacking

trip of several days' duration. I hiked into the Trinity Alps, going several miles off trail up into the high country. After a great couple of days, turning again for home, it struck me that when I first started in A.A., sobriety was everything—but after staying sober forwhile, my life had been transformed, and now everything was sobriety. If we live this spiritual awakening, we can carry the message wherever we go, whether we are consciously trying to or not.



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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