

"The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines"  
From Chapter Five of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous."

# The Point

August 2002

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).  
*The Point's* pages are open to  
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Letters and articles to  
help carry the AA message  
are welcomed, subject to  
editorial review by  
*The Point* Committee.

50 cents

## 'Christmas in July? No, It's the Central Office Bookstore.'

Your first impression upon entering the San Francisco Central Office's newest location a few doors up from Van Ness at 1821 Sacramento Street is how clean and professional it appears. There is not much chance that you'd mistakenly think you'd happily stumbled into the latest hip, secret, yet to be discovered, shopping spot. If you or someone you know were to innocently (or not so innocently) wander in, a first thought might be similar to entering any average small or mid-sized street level office, not a retail outlet. Unless you're bowled over by the 'unremarkable', what's most striking is how normal and well ordered the environment is. That is, of course, unless the eye had immediately been drawn to the space's most prominent feature - *the Bookstore*. Once found, throw caution to the wind and let the adventure in shopping begin.

This is a working, buzzing, bustling place where people are getting vital information and the energy is palpable. Beyond the two imposing front desks that deceptively appear to serve as a mock reception area, is an oval conference table encircled by standard Boardroom-type chairs. Anterior 'private offices' seem standardized as do the office machinery and kitchen area adjacent. So, "what is this place?" you're asking yourself. Hardly obscured, unless blind drunk, to the immediate right, the glass walled-in space is more reminiscent of a reference area of a well-stocked library or some topically ordered and arranged section of a New Age, Self Help retail store. The modern chain retailers have nothing over this. In fact, these stocked shelves are

Central Office's literature area. So, why should it be that only the most committed to their commitment have benefited from this incredibly 'user-friendly' area when snapping up all of those versions of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition? This installation has it all, except you. With the holidays coming up sooner than you think, isn't it about time that you stopped in? Everything is available and readily at your disposal for that rare one-stop-shopping-ease-of-living experience you've been craving.

To make your shopping adventure more pleasurable, an itemized checklist awaits. Prices prominently displayed, never again will you have to ask that familiar 'Do you know what this copy of "As Bill Sees It" or



"Living Sober" costs? You'll be able to jump up and be of service, ending the endless wondering and overwhelming confusion the whirling temporary secretary is already experiencing from being doubly compounded. You'll be in the know and people will like you for it.

(Continued on page 10)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>August 2002... In the Fellowship</b> <b>Secretaries: Please make these announcements to your groups</b>						
This calendar lists local AA service and conference planning <i>meetings</i> , as well as any local AA related <i>events</i> of which the Central Office has been notified. Please call Maury at the Central Office (674-1821) by the 19th of the previous month if you would like your event listed. Coming Events are listed on next page, flyers are on pages 5 and 6.				1	2	3
4	5	6	<b>FIRST WED 7</b> <b>IFB: Intercounty Fellowship Board:</b> 180 Harrison St. Sausalito 7:00 pm <b>* Spirit of SF Committee</b> 415 566-3845 or <a href="http://www.spirit-sf.org">www.spirit-sf.org</a>	8	9	<b>10</b> <b>Archives Workday</b> 193 Mayhew Way Walnut Creek Noon—4pm
11	<b>SECOND MON 12</b> <b>* SF Public Information Committee:</b> 1821 Sacramento, SF; 7:00p	<b>SECOND TUE 13</b> <b>Bridging the Gap:</b> 1101 O'Farrell, SF; 6:30 pm <b>* General Service:</b> 1101 O'Farrell, SF Orientation: 7:00p Reg. Meeting: 7:45p <b>* Marin H&amp;I:</b> Lagunitas & Shady Lane, Ross 7 pm	<b>SECOND WED 14</b> <b>Marin Bridging the Gap</b> 1360 Lincoln, (Alano Club) San Rafael, 7:15pm	15	16	17
18	<b>THIRD MON 19</b> <b>* SF Teleservice</b> 1821 Sacramento, SF; 6:30 pm <b>* Marin General Service</b> 9 Ross Valley Rd. San Rafael 7:00 pm GSR Sharing: 8:00 pm District Mtg.	<b>THIRD TUE 20</b> <b>* San Mateo General Service:</b> St. Andrews Ch. 15th & El Camino, San Mateo; 7:30p	21	<b>FOURTH THU 22</b> <b>* Marin PI:</b> 1360 Lincoln, (Alano Club) San Rafael, 7:15pm	23	<b>FOURTH SAT 24</b> <b>General Service CNCA Bus. Mtg:</b> 320 N. McDowell Petaluma; DCMCs: 10:30am Main Meeting: 12:00 pm
<b>LAST SUN 25</b> <b>* Living Sober Committee</b> 1668 Bush, 5:30 pm <b>* 2900 Steering Committee:</b> 2900 24th St., SF 12:15 pm	26	<b>FOURTH TUE 27</b> <b>* Marin Tele-service</b> 1360 Lincoln (Alano Club), San Rafael:	28	<b>LAST THU 29</b> <b>* SF H&amp;I</b> Old First Church, Sacramento/Van Ness Orientation: 7:15p Regular Meeting: 8 pm	30	31

# COMING EVENTS

2002	Call or visit the Central Office for copies of any flyers of interest to you or your group. Local events are shaded; flyers of <u>current</u> local events, if available, are printed on page 5.	
August 2 - 4	24th Humboldt Co. Intergroup Camp Out, <b>Redwood Creek</b> , CA	
August 2 - 4	10th Payson Round-Up, Sharp Creek Campground nr. Christopher Creek, <b>Payson</b> , AZ	
<b>August 3</b>	<b>San Francisco General Service GSR Workshop, Urban Life Center, 1101 O'Farrell/Franklin, San Francisco</b>	
August 3	4th Sis-Unity Brunch, Yreka Community Center, 810 Oregon St., <b>Yreka</b> , CA	
<b>August 4</b>	<b>2nd Spirit Summer BBQ (Meeting, Walk-A-Thon and Potluck), Lindley Meadows-GGP, SF</b>	<b>www.spirit-sf.org</b>
August 23-25	35th District 22 Convention, Veterans Memorial Building, 801 Grand Ave., <b>San Luis Obispo</b> , CA	
Aug. 29 - Sep. 1	27th Great Outdoor Beaver Meeting of AA, Beaver, Utah	email: gscott3@socal.rr.com
<b>Aug. 30 - Sep. 1</b>	<b>10th AA Convention of The Spirit of San Francisco, Ramada Plaza Hotel, San Francisco</b>	<b>www.spirit-sf.org</b>
<b>Aug. 30 - Sep. 2</b>	<b>Labor Day Weekend Alcolthon at the Mission Fellowship, 2900 24th &amp; Florida Sts., San Francisco</b>	
Aug. 30 - Sept. 1	Reno-Sparks 25th Annual A.A. Sierra Nevada Roundup, A New Way of Life, John Ascuagas Nugget, <b>Sparks</b> , NV	
Aug. 30 - Sept. 1	Hotlanta Roundup, Atlanta-Decatur Conference Plaza, <b>Atlanta</b> , GA	www.hotlantaroundup.com
September 13-15	2002 Colorado State Convention, Pueblo Convention Center/Marriott Hotel, <b>Pueblo</b> , CO	
September 19-22	17th Northern California Big Book Seminar, Doubletree Hotel, <b>Sacramento</b> , CA	email: BBSeminar@yahoo.com
September 20-22	2nd Northern Maine & N. B. Round Up, <b>Limestone</b> , ME	
September 26-29	12th National/International Native American Indian A.A. Convention, Burbank Hilton, <b>Burbank</b> , CA	www.nai-aa.org
September 26-29	7th National Archives Workshop, The Hilton, <b>San Bernardino</b> , CA	www.aahistory.com/workshop
September 27-29	17th Central Office/Intergroup Seminar, <b>Pittsburgh</b> , PA	www.pghaa.org
October 11-13	The Monte Carlo Miracle AA Convention, Le Metroplie Palace, <b>Monte Carlo</b> , Monaco	
October 11-13	16th Gold Country Roundup, Amador County Fairgrounds, <b>Plymouth</b> , CA	www.goldcountryroundup.org
October 25-27	16th Caribbean Convention, Renaissance Grand Beach Resort, <b>St. Thomas</b> , U.S. Virgin Islands	
November 14-17	41st Hawaii Convention, Hawaii Convention Center, <b>Honolulu</b> , HI	www.lava.net/~hconv

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August 2002



(from www.aagrapevine.org, reprinted with permission)

"Danger: Newcomer with an idea." Robert M.



# MEETING CHANGES

## NEW MEETINGS

Daily 7 am Corte Madera  
 Mon 1:30 pm Financial  
 Mon 7:30 pm Western Addition  
 Wed 3:00 pm Tenderloin  
 Wed 6:00 pm North Beach  
 Thu 12:05 pm Civic Center  
 Thu 7:00 pm Mission  
 Fri 6:00 pm North Beach

**7AM URGENT CARE GROUP** - 101 Casa Buena Ave., Upstairs, Rm. E (Di)  
**MONDAY FIT SPIRITUAL CONDITION** - California/Grant, Church (SD)  
**SLOW MOTION SECRET HANDSHAKE** - 1201 Fillmore/Turk, Rm. 7 (SD wh YP)  
**3PM BEGINNERS** - 410 Ellis/Jones  
**12X12 STUDY GROUP** - 720 Columbus/Filbert (CI ST)  
**RIGOROUS HONESTY** - 505 Polk/Golden Gate (SD wh)  
**A.A. PARA GAY Y LESBIANA EN ESPANOL** - 2919 Mission St/25th (BB Sh wh)  
**BIG BOOK STUDY** - 720 Columbus/Filbert (BB CI wh)

## MEETING CHANGES

Daily 7:00 am Larkspur  
 Sun 6:00 pm Noe Valley  
 Mon 7:30 pm Laurel Heights  
 Wed 5:30 pm San Rafael  
 Th 7:00 pm Tenderloin  
 Fri 5:30 pm San Rafael  
 Sat 8:15 am Larkspur

**7AM GROUP** - Moved to Ross, St. John's Church, Lagunitas Rd/Shady Ln. - now whl  
**PURE & SIMPLE** - Moved to 3728 Cesar Chavez/Guerrero  
**SERENITY SEEKERS** - Didn't move after all - Still at Lake/Arguello  
**QUITTING TIME** - Designation change only - was SpD, now D  
**MARLTON MANOR QUESTIONS & ANSWERS** - Was "Marlton Manor"; now meeting in Rm. 324  
**QUITTING TIME** - Designation change only - was SpD, now D  
**12X12 STUDY** - Moved to Ross, St. John's Church, Lagunitas Rd/Shady Ln. - now whl

## MEETING CORRECTIONS

Th 7:00 pm Novato

**SIX O'CLOCK SUNSET** - So. Novato Blvd/Midway, Lutheran Church

## NO LONGER MEETING

Wed 8:30 pm Tenderloin

**WEDNESDAY BIG BOOK** - 410 Ellis/Jones



**REPORTED  
MISSING**

**Please Note:** The Central Office occasionally receives reports that meetings listed in our schedules are actually not there. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken—and sometimes they are not. The office relies primarily on information that is given to us by AA groups, but when a group disbands, informing the Central Office is a common omission.

**If you know *anything* about a meeting that is reported missing, please call the Central Office immediately (674-1821).** If we hear no objections during the month following publication here, the meeting will be assumed disbanded, and removed from the schedule. **Thank You!**

# SPEAKER MEETINGS

## TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

St. Mary's Cathedral, Geary & Gough, San Francisco  
 Tuesday, 8:30 pm

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signed for the hearing impaired

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP / Sobriety
August 6	Tonus A.	Back to Basics 5-15-95
August 13	Jim A.	Cow Hollow Young People 8-11-67
August 20	Kristy D.	Alta Plaza CPMC 6-23-87
August 27	Lord	Endless Summer 6-10-89

## BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

250 Visitation Way  
 (Community Center under the Library),  
 Brisbane, Sunday, 11:00 am

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP
4 Aug.	<b>Charles M.</b>	Federal Speaker
11 Aug.	<b>Stephanie S.</b>	Too Early, S. F.
18 Aug.	<b>Jim C.</b>	Pierce and Clay
25 Aug.	<b>Carmel K.</b>	Lincoln Park

# SPEAKER MEETINGS CONT.

## FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

1101 O'Farrell, St. Mark's (basement), San Francisco  
Friday, 8:30 pm

Signed for the hearing impaired

DATE	HOST GROUP	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP
Aug. 2	Monday Beginners	Jeremy	Pax West
Aug. 9	Sunset	Seth	Mission Terrace
Aug. 16	Haight St. Explorers	Elizabeth S.	Pacifica Fellowship
Aug. 23	Bridging The Gap	Doug F	No Reservations
Aug. 30	Alamo Square	Marcel A.	Too Early

## FOUR FORTY NINERS

Slovenian Hall, Vermont & Mariposa  
Friday, 8:00 pm

449'ers Speakers – August, 2002

DATE	SPEAKER
August 2	Roger H.
August 9	Lalaine
August 16	TBA
August 23	Alex
August 30	Ed A.

All *open* speaker (or speaker/discussion) meetings are welcome to publish their month's listing in The Point. The deadline for submission of the information is the **19th** of the month preceding publication. Please call Maury at Central Office, 674-1821.

## 2nd SPIRIT SUMMER BBQ

OPEN SPEAKER MEETING  
Walk-a-thon & Potluck Picnic

**Sunday, August 4<sup>TH</sup>**  
**Golden Gate Park**  
**11 am to 4 pm**

Meeting at 1 pm  
Speaker: Smithy B. of San Francisco

**LOCATION:** Lindley Meadows, John F. Kennedy Drive at 30th Ave. (off Fulton)

**POTLUCK:** bring a dish or something to BBQ and share. Games, charcoal, and tableware provided. Beverages for sale

**The Spirit of San Francisco in conjunction with  
Tuesday Downtown**

**info@spirit-sf.org (415) 566-3845**

**\*visit [www.spirit-sf.org](http://www.spirit-sf.org) for a map and directions \***

## The Spirit of San Francisco

**10th Annual AA Convention**  
**with Al-Anon participation**  
**AUGUST 30, 31 , SEPTEMBER 1**

**Open Speaker Meetings**  
**Fellowship**  
**Workshops**  
**Banquet**  
**Dancing**  
**Spiritual Extravaganza**

**\*\* New Location, the beautifully renovated \*\***  
**Ramada Plaza Hotel, 1231 Market Street, SF**

**\*\*\* Special Convention rates 800-227-4747 \*\*\***

Registration: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door

Banquet: \$30 available with advance registration only

Send check or money order to: The Spirit of San Francisco P.O. Box 423832, San Francisco, CA 94142

**[www.spirit-sf.org](http://www.spirit-sf.org) info@spirit-sf.org 415-566-3845**

## Sober Journeys...

Today when I travel I find the little prayer in the eleventh step to be practical and spiritual, particularly the line "it is better to understand, than to be understood." I lived four years working in the south of France and attended A.A. meetings in Cannes, Nice, Monaco and Grasse on a regular basis. Some were all French and others were bilingual English-French. Unlike Northern California where you can find daily meetings on almost every street corner and even choose the type of meeting you wish to attend, in the south of France attending an A.A. meeting nearly always involves driving for at least an hour and setting a schedule as the choices are far fewer. For me this meant organizing my daily routine more carefully but the rewards were well worth it. For example, by attending French-speaking meetings I certainly improved my French since the language spoken was definitely the language of the heart..

Reflecting on those years I realized that the spirit of A.A. transcends the words. An 'attack de panique' for a French alcoholic is just the same as a 'panic attack' for an English-speaking one. And the solution is also the same—breathing deeply, sharing about it, helping someone else and saying the Serenity Prayer. I discovered that moments like this would always pass and I am grateful for the strength and support I received from those French A.A. meetings.

By applying the line from the St. Francis poem, "It is better to understand than to be understood," intuitively in my everyday affairs I began to understand the French, their culture and lifestyle, much better. English is my first language and as I had gotten sober in London I was used to the style of London A.A. meetings. The French meetings were not that different although I always smiled at the division that would frequently come up in discussions when the word 'Dieu' was mentioned, as opposed to 'Puissance Superior' (Higher Power). This French term always sounded like a high-octane gasoline as the French word for gas is 'essence.'

The English-speaking meeting in Cannes which met every week on Monday evening enjoyed an injection of Los Angeles for two weeks in the year during the Cannes Film Festival. This was a time when we all learned to practice patience and tolerance as our L.A. visitors would frequently tell us how A.A. was done in California. We listened quietly, perhaps even stood corrected, and often wondered how we got by for the other fifty weeks in the year without them.

One of the great advantages of attending A.A. meetings when I travel is that it takes the stress out of my journey. I normally check ahead of time to find a convenient location and usually call to ensure that the meeting is taking

place. When I arrive I introduce myself as I feel the sharing process has already begun. Beyond the spiritual boost frequently I pick up practical advice about restaurants, what's happening in town, or even directions for a walk or a hike that locals know about. This is a long way from the old days when I was drinking where I would quickly hitch up with people in bars and end up depending on the advice of bartenders.

I believe we are all blessed by having an international 'affliction' because with the option of A.A. meetings around the world and an easy-to-find guide posted on the internet there is an international solution. Whether it's in a distant city or small village by simply arriving at an A.A. meeting and announcing my name I get a warm feeling that I have come home. Now that is something really worth being grateful for.

—Peter R.

### San Francisco General Service Presents a General Service Representative (GSR) Workshop

**Saturday August 3, 2002  
Urban Life Center**

- 10:00 a.m. - Breakfast and Registration**  
**10:15 a.m.**
- 10:15 a.m.- Welcome**  
**10:30 a.m.** *Melissa B., Special Events Coordinator*
- 10:30 a.m.- GSR Duties and Responsibilities**  
**10:50 a.m.** *Dallas R., District Committee Member Chair*
- 10:50 a.m.- GSR Resources**  
**11:10 a.m.** *Brian F., Alternate District Committee Member Chair*
- 11:10 a.m.- Service Sponsorship**  
**11:30 a.m.** *CJ R., CA Northern Coastal Area Chair*
- 11:30 a.m.- Voting and Business in A.A.**  
**11:50 p.m.** *Earlene W., CA Northern Coastal Area Registrar*
- 11:50 p.m. Potluck Lunch Break**
- 12:20 p.m.- General Service Conference Process-The**  
**12:50 p.m.** **importance of the information delegate**  
*Nancy H., Past Northern Coastal Area Delegate*
- 12:50 p.m.- Our Service Manual**  
**1:10 p.m.** *Scott B., Service Manual Study Coordinator*
- 1:10 p.m.- Ask It Basket**  
**1:30 p.m.** *Facilitated by Hannah, GSR*

## Intergroup Representative: One Member's Experience

It wasn't a job I volunteered for, nor was I initially elected. But, it has been a job that changed my life. After moving to San Francisco four years ago I went to meetings, but didn't really feel connected with A.A. in San Francisco. As it happens, the transition was difficult, and after a year or so I decided I had to make a commitment to a meeting and just go. It was at this meeting near my house that I began to feel connected. I accepted a commitment as secretary which forced me to find and ask sober alcoholics to speak. After this commitment, I was suggested as the replacement for the group's Intergroup Rep who was moving out of state. At this point I had only a vague idea that the IFB had something to do with Central Office.

So, off I went to the IFB meeting. I was welcomed and told that I could vote at my second IFB meeting. There were many handouts illustrating the business at hand. There were long discussions about the by-laws; long discussions about the Central Office selling chips (what kind, from whom to get them, how to price them) as well as other issues. It all took place in the structure of *Roberts' Rules of Order*. I thought: I'll never get the hang of this. But, I took the information about the chips and the by-laws back to my group.

The next meeting, hoping to avoid the long discussions, I took a book to read. One of the first items up for discussion was changing the hours of Central Office. This discussion frustrated me because it seemed to me the Teleservice Committee's report was not being considered. I thought: these people have done some work figuring this out, why is everybody not paying attention to that? A vote was taken and the new hours were tabled. Then came the part that piqued my interest. They asked for discussion from the minority opinion. Two or three people spoke for the minority, prompting me to chime in. Another representative spoke up saying, "I find the minority opinion compelling." This caught my attention. After more discussion, another vote was taken; the motion for new hours passed. This turn-around so impressed me that my book never left my bag. I have been paying attention (more or less) ever since to this process that can give respect to all.

Next I went off to an Orientation Committee meeting for new Intergroup Reps. This is where it all started to make sense. It was here that I learned about committees. This, I heard, was where the real fun happens. And so it proved to be. I was so excited by the Committee's presentations, that I wanted to be on at least three committees. The choices were many: Twelve-Step Committee, Web Site Committee, Point Committee, Literature Committee, By-laws Committee, Special Needs Committee, Nominating Committee, the Archives Committee, the Office Lease Committee.

I got to know people who are serious about A.A. service work, and serious about the A.A. principles. The *A.A. Service Manual* is a book I've had to study in order to participate in the work at hand this last year or so, especially after I found myself elected to serve on the Central Office Committee. This Committee oversees various procedures and business practices that relate to such things as keeping the lights on, the bills paid, the schedules printed, and the office staffed.

Learning to listen to and respect the thoughts, feelings and opinions of all my fellow committee members has been tremendously helpful both in and out of the Fellowship. Learning that I can, indeed, find the principles to follow, find how they work in a specific situation, and find the strength to stick to these principles, I gain confidence. I have learned that I am one among many, and each voice is needed. Here I have witnessed and participated in using the Traditions of A.A. as well as other A.A. service principles such as "substantial unanimity," and being "prudently on guard against tyrannies, great or small, whether these be found in the majority or in the minority."

Taking apart shelves, packing pictures, repairing holes in the wall during the Central Office move, helping with the Central Office Christmas Party, taking part in the Marin Unity day, these are a few of the fun parts. This is a two-year commitment to more involvement in our A.A. community. It has been a blessing to one who came to San Francisco knowing very few people.

The Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is the legal organization of A.A. serving San Francisco and Marin counties and is composed of delegates from meetings in those two counties. At present there are over 600 meetings listed on the schedules. Nowhere near this many delegates arrive to participate in the IFB meetings. At the May meeting there were 36 reps and 10 liaisons present. How to be a part of the IFB: If your group doesn't have an Intergroup Rep, volunteer. If your group elects a rep, run for the office, or find a group that needs a rep, join the group and volunteer. All it takes is a year of sobriety and willingness to serve.

—Smithy B.

# IFB Annual Meeting

On June 5, 2002, the Intercounty Fellowship Board held its annual membership meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to recapitulate the activities of the past year for the members, advise them of the "state of the Fellowship".

The year was one of significant change.

Central Office moved to its new location at 1821 Sacramento Street, providing up-to-date office space and facilities for the staff and volunteers. The location also makes the office more accessible to our Marin County members.

The new office provides a highly up-graded space for our Bookstore. "Customers" can now walk through the Bookstore, browsing all the selections available to them. This is a vast improvement over the old location.

New office furniture came as "part of the deal" with the new office space. Our Central Office now presents an up to date, attractive, highly professional atmosphere for staff, volunteers and visitors.

In addition, we hired a new Central Office Manager, Maury P. and a new Special Worker, Mike D. to replace Abby H., who retired, and Mark M., who resigned.

All committees of the IFB reported that they are "up and running", although several new volunteers will be needed to replace those rotating out. No committee reported significant problems.

In related news, new IFB officers for the coming year were elected at the July meeting, using the Third Legacy Procedure. The new officers are:

Ben N. (*Sunset Speaker Step Group*), IFB Chair  
 Bill R. (*Early Start Group*), IFB vice Chair  
 Joe G. (*Larkspur Wednesday Beginners Group*),  
 Recording Secretary

In addition, four members were elected or re-elected to the Central Office Committee. Those members are:

Charles M. (*Federal Speaker Group*), to serve a one-year term.  
 Danny F. (*Each Day a New Beginning Group*) re-elected to serve a two-year term.  
 David C. (*Sunday Friendship Group*), elected to serve a two-year term.  
 J. E. (*Friendly Circle Beginners Group*), re-elected to serve a two-year term.

It was noted that a tremendous amount was accomplished during the past year and that the outlook for the coming year is bright. Special emphasis is being placed on more fully involving the Marin County groups on the Board.

The financial picture of the Fellowship, while sound, reflects the need for increased contributions in order to meet the ever-increasing costs of providing services.

Through all the upheaval and change in the past year, the "doors remained opened and the telephones were answered", allowing us to fulfill our primary purpose of carrying the message of AA to the alcoholic who still suffers.

## A Members Story: Traveling Sober

I moved to the Bay Area 10½ years sober, determined to resolve my difficulties with personal relationships, since they seriously affect my sobriety. I had been divorced for just one year. I was not used to being alone.

So, I decided to go to France and Italy and make a clean break with the "world" I had know all my life. I went to Central Office in San Francisco and got an International Meeting Guide. However, what would I do about the language barrier? How would I understand what they were saying in meetings? Would I just wind up wandering around, taking in the sights for three weeks? Time would tell.

I arrived in Nice, France after a 14-hour flight, tired and a bit disorientated due to a nine hour time difference and wondering what to do next.

I rented a car and found my hotel where I telephoned the number for information about English-speaking meetings in Nice. It was an answering machine so I left a message and went to eat. Upon my return, I had a message directing me to a meeting the next night. Being at the meeting was just like being at a meeting back home. People were standing around outside, smoking and gossiping. Then, after the meeting, I was invited to dinner at a sidewalk café with a gang of about ten of us. A woman invited me to Monaco the next day, where the Grand Prix was just beginning. How exciting! Antique race cars and the company of a beautiful woman.

Off to Monaco we went where I got to roam through the pits with the car mechanic.

That evening, I went to a meeting in Monaco. There

(Continued on page 10)



# The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Living Sober Western Roundup ...

The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Living Sober Western Roundup was held at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium on July 4-6. Living Sober is an A.A. conference with Al-Anon participation that is put on by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community and is welcoming of all people with a desire to stop drinking (and folks who love them!) I attended a number of events on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> and have been asked to share my “experience, strength and hope” from the conference.

This was my fourth trip to Living Sober and it seemed to be a slightly smaller turnout than I recall, although it was still bustling. I believe the official registration was approximately 1700 people, but there are always more than the official count, as people sometimes come down for just one or two meetings, or even just the dance.

This year we pre-registered, which was convenient. I was able to walk right up to the table, get my name tag and program and start wandering the conference. I attended numerous workshops, particularly enjoying a third step discussion and a workshop co-hosted by AA and Al-Anon about relationships. It was entitled: One Bed, Two Programs, and it was very interesting and resonated strongly with my partner and me. I learned (not for the first time) that I probably should be mixing in a little Al-Anon into my program diet—since as a person whose partner is also in AA, I certainly qualify!

Another highlight of the conference was the art gallery on the fourth floor, which was full of great works created by artists in recovery. I was really impressed by the paintings, photography and sculpture created by my fellow alcoholics. The gallery also contained a “make your own God Box” activity, stocked with all sorts of crafty supplies and throughout the conference, attendees were creating a wild assortment of boxes, decorated with everything from feathers to beads to fabric. I was particularly proud to note that the God Box made by one of my sponsees was one of several to be chosen for display among the other artistic pieces! Nice work, F.K.!

My partner and I particularly enjoyed the musical this year. For the first time, the show was a joint production by both the AA and Al-Anon committees. The show was called “We Will Be Amazed” and its theme was “the Promises.” The music and performances were quite good and I was actually in tears on a couple of occasions. A song about crying tears “from a long time ago” was especially moving. We had dinner with several members of our home group on Saturday afternoon, and



there was consensus that the show was terrific.

The two big evening meetings on Friday and Saturday were both inspiring and fun. Friday night's two featured speakers were Mary from San Francisco, and Carlos from West Hollywood. Both of their shares were terrific and inspiring, with plenty of room for laughter. Clearly, neither of these speakers has forgotten Rule 62.

On Saturday night, the big “countdown” meeting was held, in which we stood up when our length of sobriety was announced. The meeting was packed (we were sitting in the balcony) and it was so exciting to look around and see how much sobriety filled that room. There were two members with 24 hours or less, and at the end of the countdown, the member with the longest sobriety (Ben, with 50 YEARS!) presented the newest newcomer with a Big Book that had been signed by many, many AA members over the course of the conference. It was a beautiful moment, and the newcomer appeared to have been moved to tears.

My partner and I, having spent 12 hours at the conference on Saturday, were simply too tired to make the big closing dance, but if my prior experiences at Living Sober dances are any indication, a good time was had by all there, too!

I highly recommend this conference to anyone in the program—it's a great infusion of sobriety and fellowship and a great way to spend the Fourth of July holidays.

—M.B.

(Continued from page 1)

you've yet to meet. Searching for that perfect gift for the tireless person of service in your life? Do they seem to have everything? Do they have what you want? Maybe you could put a smile on their face with a copy of "Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers". They just might *reflect daily* on your generosity. 'terminally unique' sponsee? Maybe they will *come to believe* in the promise of the Promises when they have their own pocket edition of the 12 x 12.

Is your home group's business meeting a drag? Spread a little joy without spending a lot. For less than the price of the average caffè latte, you could give everyone in attendance the gift that keeps on giving by handing out one of the many wallet cards that are always available.

Summer means road trips. If your holiday gift list has already been checked off, there are still options for your shopping cart. You may be facing long drives with the kids (your sponsees) fighting in the back seat while en route to one of the many conventions that you'll be attending. Tired of playing *20 Questions*? Don't let them *drive you to drink*! Pass around some cartoons. "It happened to Joe", "The Best of the Grapevine Cartoons" or "It Happened to Alice" are a happy alternative to tears and resentment. Plus, wouldn't even the most willful child be in a place of gratitude when they realize that they didn't leave that baby in the burning building or see Alice's hairstylist whose shaky hand was a bit too heavy with the Blue Rinse? You know you would. Remember, keep your eyes on the road, then do the next indicated action by getting into action. Tune them out and tune in to one of the many soothing speaker tapes stocked. Pop one in and watch the miles melt away with your fear. The time will literally seem to fly by. lovely box sets always make the perfect last minute hostess gift too.

No one wants another Robotic Dog under the tree, bush or in celebration of any festival of any kind. For the technologically advanced, all of the standard approved texts are available on disk. Handheld addicts will love this addition to their PDA. From videos for TV junkies to all things braille, the variety is beyond your wildest dreams. What about a gift for the giver? Impress your friends with your newly honed skills in Czech, Korean, or Hindi. Treat yourself to the treasure of language through practicing your newly discovered linguistic skill while fortifying your commitment to your own program by studying The Big Book in one of the over 15 languages to choose from. Who knew there were over 50—yes, 50—pamphlets available? Well, of course you did, that's who, when you perused what was at your disposal.

Sponsors need love too. Acknowledge them this year with a thoughtful selection. Remember when you thought they were God, before you took your first few steps? Remember, they are people too, so show them you still care. You may even find that something special for

that someone special who was overlooked on last year's Eighth Step list.

So, amend your ways, stop in, and support your local Central Office. A mind is a terrible thing to waste, so beat the seasonal rush and shop early. Isn't there something that was so freely given to you that you feel like sharing somewhere besides at group level? During this season of giving, when we are reminded of all that we have to be thankful for, *Pass It On*.

*Travelling Sober (Continued from page 8)*

were folks from France, England and Germany. And even a guy from New York. We all headed to a casino after the meeting. This was heaven!

All together, I spent six days in Nice and went to four meetings. Then, for seven days, off to Florence, Italy, or "Firenze" as they call it. I attended one meeting there, but decided to cancel six days in the Italian Riviera. I wanted to return to Nice. I had friends there now!

Back in France, I went to meetings in Cannes, Antibes and Nice. Every night it was the same thing - stay out until midnight at a sidewalk café with sober people from all over the world and discuss the wonderful lives we live as sober drunks.

We had an "A.A." Bar-B-Que at a villa overlooking the Mediterranean and the French Riviera. A couple of reporters from Los Angeles were there to cover the film festival. I attended a business meeting and was asked to speak at a meeting in Cannes.

There were flyers circulating about a conference in Monte Carlo this October. I was asked if it would be possible to come back and speak at the conference. I don't know yet, as I just got home. But I am already trying to figure out if I can find the time to go! I hope some other folks from San Francisco can come with me. There is great sobriety and A.A. program there.

**AA Group Contributions – June 2002**  
**Intercounty Fellowship – San Francisco / Marin**

***AA Slogan of the  
Month:***

HALT

One of the first things I heard when I got sober was HALT! Don't get too Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired. I had never heard of this idea before and, being a REAL alcoholic, I did everything to extremes. Learning about HALT was very helpful to me.

When I am not careful about HALT, my serenity crashes, my sense of humor goes and I get restless, irritable and discontent. I don't like feeling that way.

I don't know how long the HALT slogan has been around AA, or if it originated in AA. Does anyone know where or when it originated? And, what's your experience with HALT?

Please submit any responses to this article by the third Tuesday in August and we'll print them in the September issue.

# Focus on the 12 Concepts

August is the eighth month; time to talk about Concept 8:

“The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities.”

This is a difficult Concept to approach from the aspect of our local situation in Marin and San Francisco Counties, as we don't have multiple business entities. However, a few examples might work well to illustrate its relevance.

The Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB) could be interpreted as “The Trustees” in this case. The IFB, through its elected Inter-group Representatives, is charged with the over-all policy and finance of the operation of Central Office and related activities. Major decisions are voted on in the IFB, which will hopefully reflect the group consciences of the member groups. It is the responsibility of the groups to send representatives to the board and it is the mutual responsibility of the groups and the Inter-group Representatives to see that there is an accurate reflection of the group conscience, whether in specifics or in “the spirit”.

However, the realities and practicalities of the everyday, ongoing operation of the Central Office preclude every detail of operation from being considered by the Board, let alone the Fellowship as a whole.

For example, many decisions are made per day in the Central Office that must be made to continue operation. Decisions as to which supplies are needed, the prioritization of tasks, the arrangement of the office space... such matters must be made continually and things would grind to a halt if every decision had to be made by or approved by the Board or the Fellowship as a whole.

Various committees of the Board, such as the Central Office Committee (COC), assist Central Office and the Fellowship in this regard. The COC consists of Board members, elected by the Board, to serve on the Committee. Members are elected based on training and experience related to the operation of a business or similar activities. It is they who, acting in their official capacity in

## Concept VIII

conjunction with the Central Office Manager—who is a member of the committee—see to the more specific details of Central Office Operation.

Decisions that effect the Fellowship as a whole, such as moving the location of Central Office, the hiring of a new Central Office Manager and other matters impacting on the Fellowship's ability to carry out its primary purpose, are taken to the Board and,

thus, to the groups for their decision.

A quote from the discussion of Concept 8 in the A.A. Service Manual: “It follows, therefore, that the close attention of the Board to such large problems must not be subject to constant distraction and interference”. We elect representatives, appoint committees and employ professional workers to take care of the more work-a-day, mundane matters that go into making the Central Office and its related services work. This way, the Central Office, the IFB and the Fellowship as a whole can concentrate on carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. We keep the “doors open and the telephones answered” so that the message can and will be carried, and so services are provided to the groups and the members of the Fellowship.

Again, I am not a “Concepts Scholar”. I am learning and am always anxious to receive feedback on these articles. The articles are not written to teach anyone anything. They are a discussion, reflecting my views, which will, hopefully, stimulate further thought and discussion, and thus, awareness of the Twelve Concepts of World Service.

You may direct any comments or questions to me at 415-239-0947, or email: [xanadutoo@earthlink.net](mailto:xanadutoo@earthlink.net) or through Central Office. I invite letters or articles from all of you that we can print in *The Point* along with this series.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben N.  
IFB Chair

# IFB Meeting Minutes

The IFB is the Board of Directors for our local AA Central Office (San Francisco and Marin Counties)

## Intercounty Fellowship Board Meeting - Minutes

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin St. San Francisco

7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 8:20 p.m. by Ben N.

- A. Approval of the May Minutes:** The minutes from the May meeting were approved.
- B. Election of Nominating Committee.** The following members volunteered to serve on the Nominating committee: Li L., Ray M., and Ellie C.
- C. Request for members of IFB to stand for service on the Central Office Committee.** The following members agreed to run for positions on the Central Office Committee: David C., Danny F., J. E., Bill R., Charles M., and Sam S.
- D. IFB Reports**
  - 1. **Central Office Manager.** Maury's report included the following:
    - a. A bid has been accepted to upgrade the Central Office's computer system.
    - b. Maury proposed an increase in the price of meeting schedules. We are charging less than it costs to produce them. The issue of the format of the schedule has not been resolved. Li L. made a motion that a committee be formed. No vote was taken. However, Maury asked Li to work on a "committee" and he agreed. It was decided that increasing the cost of the schedule is a matter to be taken back to the groups.
    - c. Maury is in the process of scheduling a Volunteer Training and Appreciation day.
    - d. The Central Office has a new part-time volunteer who will be working 18 to 20 hours a week.

- E. Twelve Traditions** Laura read the Traditions.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.  
Jeff T., Secretary.

**Next month's meeting will be on August 7th at 7:00 p.m. at  
the Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison, Sausalito.**

## Errata

In the July issue of *The Point*, the ends of two articles were inadvertently cut off.

The final paragraph of *General Service Representative: One Member's Experience* (page 8) should have read:

But what does all of that mean to me, the A.A. member? It means that I am not a single unheard voice within the Fellowship. It means that

my group is connected to AA, and to every other group in the Fellowship. And it means that I, as an alcoholic, should never take my group for granted. The Responsibility Declaration reads: *I am responsible. Whenever anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that, I am responsible.* For me, being a GSR is fulfilling the Responsibility Declaration. It means being the communication link between my home group and the larger Fellowship. It means doing my part to

help the alcoholic who still suffers. And for this alcoholic, *that's* General Service!

The final sentence of *Marin County Unity Day* should have read, "It also served as a great educational forum with respect to the 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts for World Service."

We apologize for the oversight.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

To the Central Office were made

**June 19—July 17**

### *Honoring the following members*

#### ONGOING MEMORIALS

*Bob  
R. W.*

#### ANNIVERSARIES

*Pene P. - 3 Years  
Manny L. - 3 Years  
Jerry E. - 14 Years  
Bruce K. - 16 Years  
Jean C. - 19 Years  
David L. - 31 Years  
Herman B. - 31 Years*

#### Endless Summer Group

**Kelly - 1 Year  
Richie - 6 Years  
Seven - 12 Years  
Anne J. - 16 Years  
Chavon - 16 Years**

**Thanks to all who  
honor their sobriety  
through giving!**



## Recent Deaths

*Ralph M.*

## SUMMARY

### July 2002 IFB Meeting

The following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business, and service opportunities discussed at the July 2002 IFB meeting. It is provided for your convenience and is not intended to be the complete **or approved** minutes.

#### A. Business Conducted

1. The 2002 – 2003 officers were elected. Ben N. was elected Chair. Bill R. was elected Vice-Chair. Joe G. was elected Recording Secretary. The following members were elected to the Central Office committee: David C., Danny F., J. E., and Charles M.

#### B. Other

1. The Board was asked to host a Friday All Groups meeting.
2. Representatives of the “Spirit of San Francisco” provided information about their convention to be held Labor Day Weekend.
3. The treasurer announced that the year-to-date revenue has been less than the projected budget amounts.

## WANTED:

ARTICLES FOR THE POINT  
Share your experience, strength and hope  
with us. Or, your opinions.  
You may send your articles to Central  
Office by e-mail to:  
**aa@aasf.info**

Note: Articles are due no later than the first  
Tuesday of the month

**Financial Statement****May 2002 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA****The Point  
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**August 2002**



# 2001 Annual Group Contributions

Intercounty Fellowship – San Francisco / Marin





