

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

From Chapter Five of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous."

# The Point

August 2003

A publication  
of the Intercounty Fellowship  
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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## The Point

is published monthly to inform  
A.A. members about business and  
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Office, or *The Point* Editorial  
Committee. Letters and articles to  
help carry the A.A. message are  
welcomed, subject to editorial  
review by *The Point* Committee.

## H&I: Hot Pink Cans, Hot Issues!

by Steve S.

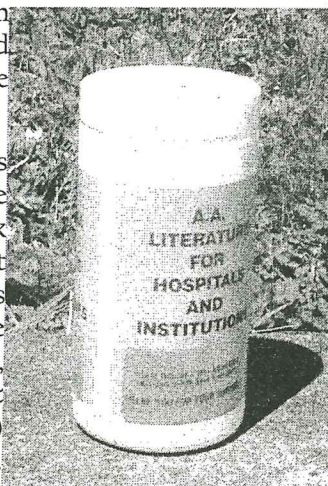
August is the hottest month of the year in many places, but here in the Bay Area we may find ourselves bundling up and waiting for the autumn thaw. Yet there are still hot topics around A.A., few as hotly debated as those hot Pink Cans. Alcoholics are an opinionated lot, and emotions run high where recovery and money mix.

Ornery weather patterns aren't the only reason the Bay Area has its maverick reputation. The City That Knows How often "knows how" differently than the rest of the world, country, or state. A.A.'s Hospitals & Institutions (H&I) outreach is no exception. Lots of questions come up from recovering drunks new to the area and local A.A. oldtimers alike. Concerns about money and accountability of the Northern California Hospitals & Institutions Committee are frequent topics, as evidenced by the Intercounty Fellowship Board minutes for the past few years.

One aspect unique to this part of the country is that the H&I outreach is not a function of the A.A. Central Offices or

Intergroups in Northern California, as it is in most areas. On the face of it, this seems like once again the Bay Area is not going along with the established ways of doing things, but a look at the history of H&I outreach in A.A. shows that we have something to be very proud of here. It is done differently here because organized H&I outreach began in the Bay Area (See page 6 for more information). Central Offices and Intergroups in other areas saw what was going on here and started their own H&I outreach programs. Here, it would be contrary not only to A.A. unity, but also the spirit of cooperation described in the Sixth Tradition if any other service entity were to try to engage in the same excellent work of the existing and thriving H&I Committee.

Still, there remains some concern about accountability. A lot of money goes to the H&I Committee and some members want to know how much and where it goes. Others are concerned that passing the Pink Can takes away from what groups would otherwise send to the General Service Organization and their local Central Office or Intergroup. Some groups in San



(Continued on page 14)

# August 2003....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<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 events of which the Central Office has been notified. Please call Maury at the Central Office (674-1821) by the 15th of the previous month if you would like your event listed. Coming Events are listed on next page.					1	2
3	<b>4 <u>FIRST MON</u></b> Spirit of SF Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7 pm	5	<b>6 <u>FIRST WED</u></b> Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB) 180 Harrison Ave. Sausalito, CA 7 pm	7	8	9
10	<b>11 <u>SECOND MON</u></b> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7 pm	<b>12 <u>SECOND TUE</u></b> Bridging The Gap 1111 O'Farrell, 6:30 pm  SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell, SF Orientation: 7 pm Meeting: 8 pm  Marin H&I Lagunitas & Shady Ln Ross 7 pm	<b>13 <u>SECOND WED</u></b> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco, 6:30 pm	14	15	16
<b>17 <u>THIRD SUN</u></b> Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida San Francisco 1 pm	<b>18 <u>THIRD MON</u></b> SF Teleservice Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm  Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael GSR Sharing: 7 pm District Meeting: 8 pm	<b>19 <u>THIRD TUE</u></b> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo 7:30 pm	<b>20 <u>THIRD WED</u></b> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	21	22	<b>23 <u>FOURTH SAT</u></b> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 10:30 am Main Meeting: Noon
<b>24</b>  <b>31 <u>LAST SUN</u></b> Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush San Francisco 5:30 pm	25	<b>26 <u>FOURTH TUE</u></b> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln / Maple (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:30 pm	<b>27 <u>LAST WED</u></b> IFB Orientation Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	<b>28 <u>FOURTH THU</u></b> Marin PI Committee 1360 Lincoln Ave (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:15 pm <b>LAST THU</b> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento / Van Ness San Francisco Orientation: 7:15 pm Regular Meeting: 8 pm	29	30

# COMING EVENTS

2003	Call or visit the Central Office for copies of any flyers of interest to you or your group. Local events are in <b>bold</b> ; flyers of <u>current</u> local events, if available, are printed as space allows.
August 1-3	11th Annual Foothill Roundup, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA
August 16	43rd Anniversary of the In-Between Fellowship, First Congregational Church of Oakland, Oakland, CA
August 16	58th Anniversary of the Vallejo Fellowship, St. Vincent's Memorial Bldg, Vallejo, CA
August 16	The Old Timers Roundup Picnic, Lake Elizabeth, Fremont, CA
August 22-24	11th Annual Payson Round-Up, Sharp Creek Campground, Payson, AZ
August 28-31	27th Annual Great Outdoor Beaver Meeting, Beaver, UT
<b>Aug. 29-Sept. 1</b>	<b>AA Labor Day 2003 Alcothon, 2900 24th Street, San Francisco, CA</b>
Sept. 11-14	18th Annual Northern California Big Book Seminar, Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento, CA
Sept. 25-28	8th Annual National Archives Workshop, Westin Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, FL <a href="http://www.aanationalarchivesworkshop.com">www.aanationalarchivesworkshop.com</a>
October 10-12	52nd Southern California AA Convention, Riverside Convention Center, Riverside, CA <a href="http://www.aasocal.com">www.aasocal.com</a>
October 16-19	13th Annual National/International Native American AA Convention, Hilton Burbank Airport & Convention Ctr, Burbank, CA
November 21-23	Yosemite Summit Conference, Curry Village, Yosemite National Park, CA
November 27-30	WACYPA 7, San Diego Marriott Mission Valley, San Diego, CA <a href="http://www.wacypaa.org">www.wacypaa.org</a>

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## This Month in A.A. History

### August



1937

Bill W. and others broke away from the Oxford Group



1938

Alcoholic Foundation implemented, set up trust for A.A.,  
board



August 18, 1939

Some say the 1st alcoholic was admitted to St. Thomas  
Hospital; most believe it was August 16



1944

Bill started seeing Dr. Harry Tiebout, regular sessions for  
self



1948

Dr. Bob diagnosed with cancer, retired practice



## MEETING CHANGES

### New Meetings

Sat & Sun 7:00 pm	Mission	AA PARA GAY Y LESBIANAS EN ESPANOL 418 Valencia St.
Sat 10:30 am	Parkside	WOMEN LIVING SOBER 2685 30th Avenue/Vicente

### Meeting Changes

Tue 6:00 pm	Mission	A IS FOR ALCOHOL 2900 24th St. (Add "No Slips Signed")
Thu 7:00 pm	Mission	AA PARA GAY Y LESBIANAS EN ESPANOL 418 Valencia St. (was 2837 Mission at 6pm)
Sun 5:00 pm	Noe Valley	SUNDAY NIGHT 3RD STEP GROUP 1658 Church (Add "No Slips Signed")
Wed 12:00 pm	Castro	MEETING PLACE NOON 1930 Market (was 1874 Market)
Fri 12:00 pm	Castro	MEETING PLACE NOON 1800 Market (was 1874 Market)
Mon 6:00 pm	Castro	K.I.S.S. 1800 Market, Room Q-34 (was 1874 Market)
Thu 7:00 pm	Financial	4th STEP WORKSHOP 215 Leidesdorff (was Relationships in Sobriety)
Sat 1:00 pm	Financial	BEST OF THE GRAPEVINE, VOL. III 215 Leidesdorff (was Concepts & Service Group Study)
Sat 9:30 am	Financial	SATURDAY AM EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH & HOPE 215 Leidesdorff (was Guide to Group Service Manual Study)
Sun 6:00 pm	Castro	AA STEP STUDY 45 Castro, Davies Med. Ctr, Conf. Rm. B-1 (was at 1874 Market)
Sun 10:00 am	Marina	10AM WEEK IN REVIEW 2118 Greenwich (was 10am Smokeless)
Thu 10:00 am	Marina	10AM DAILY REFLECTIONS 2118 Greenwich (was 10am Smokeless)
Tue 10:00 am	Marina	10AM LIVING SOBER 2118 Greenwich (was 10am Smokeless)
Wed 10:00 am	Marina	10AM BIG BOOK 2118 Greenwich (was 10am Smokeless)
Mon 10:00 am	Marina	10AM STEP STUDY 2118 Greenwich (was 10am Smokeless)
Mon 8:00 pm	Novato	NOVATO MONDAY STAG 853 Tamalpais St. at S. Novato & Center (was 1535 Grant Ave.)
Sun 10:00 am	Novato	RISE N SHINE 180 Rowland Way, Novato Community Hospital, Cafeteria (was 1535 Grant Ave.)
Tue 8:00 pm	San Rafael	SAN RAFAEL BEGINNERS Alano Club at 1360 Lincoln at Maple (was at 1411 Lincoln Ave.)

### No Longer Meeting

Sun 11:30 am	Castro	SUNDAY SOBER SUNDAY 1874 Market
Tue 12:05 pm	Financial	WOMEN'S AA Old St. Mary's, California & Grant
Wed 7:10 pm	Terra Linda	YOUNG & RESTLESS Kaiser Hospital Staff Break Room—Office Bldg. 2, Park Lot A
Thu 12:00 pm	Corte Madera	CONSCIOUS CONTACT 2 Tamalpais Drive, Holy Innocents Church

### SPECIAL NOTE:

The meetings at The Hall in NOVATO (1535 Grant Ave. between 5th & 6th) will be relocating as the facility is closing down. These meeting include: Mon. 8:00 p.m. Novato Monday Stag, Tues. 12:00 noon Novato Big Book, Wed. 12:00 noon Novato Wednesday Noon, Wed. 8:30 p.m. Primary Purpose, Thurs. 1:00 p.m. After Lunch Bunch. (RISE N SHINE has relocated—see above). We do not have any further information about new meeting locations. We will update the website, the meeting schedule, and list the changes in *The Point* as information is provided.

### Reported Missing

Fri 6:00 pm	North Beach	BIG BOOK STUDY 720 Columbus/Filbert
Wed 6:00 pm	North Beach	12x12 STUDY 720 Columbus/Filbert
Mon 7:30 pm	Noe Valley	MONDAY NIGHT LESBIAN 150 Eureka

### Service Meeting Changes

3rd Sun 1:00 pm	Mission	2900 24TH STREET STEERING COMMITTEE (was last Sun at 12:15 pm)
2nd Wed 6:45 pm	San Rafael	MARIN BRIDGING THE GAP 1411 Lincoln Avenue (was 7:15 pm at 1360 Lincoln)

**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!**

## The A.A. Debating Society.

By Ben N.

When I first came to AA I noticed lots of people sitting around in clubs discussing things such as the nature of God, the number of meetings is "enough", how often the steps should be taken, if at all and, if so, do they have to be taken "in order, one through twelve"?

Being a typical ornery, opinionated, hardheaded, know-it-all alcoholic, I was drawn to these discussions. I enjoyed them. I sought them out. I looked forward to them. And, before long, I was a member in good standing of the AA Debating Society.

And, best of all, by the time I was sober about 30 days, I had become an expert on all things related to AA. I was more than willing to give advice and engage in heated debate with others concerning just about anything.

I freely gave advice about how to make amends, for example, to people who had a lot more sobriety than I did. But, it made sense that I should do so as one of the things I noticed early on

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## Group Speakers for August 2003

### TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

1101 O'Farrell, St. Mark's (basement), San Francisco  
Tuesday, 8:00 pm

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
Aug. 5	Jimmie W.	Friendly Circle	2/15/80
Aug. 12	Francine W.	Mill Valley Women's	7/26/79
Aug. 19	Paul F.	Sutter St. Beginners	5/19/88
Aug. 26	Karen C.	A is for Alcohol	3/20/87

### FOUR FORTY NINERS

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

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
Aug. 1	Natalie C.	Attitude Adjustment	7/1/98
Aug. 8	Michael L.	Attitude Adjustment	10/1/84
Aug. 15	Paul F.	Chips Ahoy	7/16/91
Aug. 22	Peter P.	The Other Meeting	11/4/00
Aug. 29	Jim S.	Chips Ahoy	7/31/89

### 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. 1	Tuesday Daily Ref.	Hank P.	New Wed. High Noon
Aug. 8	Diamond Heights	Melissa B.	Sunset Group
Aug. 15	Newcomers	TBA	
Aug. 22	Ten Years After	Greg T.	Upper Room
Aug. 29	Lush Lounge	Nancy M.	Reality Farm

### SATURDAY NIGHT SPEAKER

215 Leidesdorff, San Francisco  
Saturday, 8:00 pm

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
Aug. 2	Jerry A.	Men's Forum	1979
Aug. 9	Christina S.	Celebrate Being Alive	1992
Aug. 16	Bob Z.	Lafayette Hut	1971
Aug. 23	Bob F.	Serenity House	1969
Aug. 30	Silas P.	Too Early	1964

### BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP
Aug. 3rd	Chris M.	San Francisco
Aug. 10th	Lynn H.	San Francisco
Aug. 17th	Robert B.	San Francisco
Aug. 24th	Jerry P.	So. San Francisco
Aug. 31st	Frank S.	Brisbane

### AA Labor Day Alcothon

Mission Fellowship  
2900 24<sup>th</sup> Street @ Florida  
San Francisco, CA

Friday 8/29 @ 6 pm -  
Monday 9/1 @ 8 pm  
Meetings day and night  
every 2 hours on the even hour

Co-Chairs  
Virginia S. (415) 282-9181  
Cathryn B. (415) 550-8165



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 15th of the month preceding publication. Please call Maury at Central Office, 674-1821.

# Service Before Self:

31<sup>st</sup> Annual Northern California Hospital & Institution Conference

By Peter M.

When Bill W. and Dr. Bob searched hospitals to find the 3<sup>rd</sup> member of A.A., they were also laying the foundation for what would later become part of the service work of the Northern California Hospital & Institution Committee. However, it wasn't until 1942 when the warden of San Quentin, Clinton Duffy, found that most of the inmates were there behind alcoholism that the first successful institution meeting that we know of was held. Out of this meeting grew the work of the Hospital and Institution Committee which today takes over 800 weekly meetings into facilities throughout Northern California. H&I goes into 22 major facilities including 19 California state prisons, one United States Federal prison and two California state hospitals. These major facilities are in addition to the many local treatment and correctional facilities that H&I presently serves. Over 4000 H&I volunteers provide service through coordination with these institutions and providing A.A. meetings to alcoholics in these locked and restricted facilities.

The Annual Northern California Hospital & Institution Conference is an opportunity for those involved with H&I to share information about the challenges and successes of doing H&I work. The most recent conference, held March 28-30, 2003 in Milpitas, was made up of four panels with each panel focusing on a different aspect of H&I service. In addition, there were four speaker meetings with speakers ranging from Tom I, a former warden and A.A. member from North Carolina to San Francisco's Marcel A., our former Regional Chairperson, sharing their experience, strength and hope.

The four panels offered a fantastic opportunity to learn about H&I from wide variety of perspectives. The Professional Panel provided information on treatment facilities and included Dr. David Breithaupt, the former Director of the O'Connor Hospital Alcohol Program in San Jose. The Judges and Parole Panel included Judge Lawrence Terry of the Superior Court of San Jose who delighted the attendees of the conference with his understanding of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Institutional Panel was the most intriguing panel be-

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*Hearing the inspiring stories of these inmates was a wonderful way to conclude this year's conference*

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cause it featured two former wardens of major correctional facilities, Jim Estelle and Allen Ault, who have also served as Class A Trustees on the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, the current warden at San Quentin, Jeanne Woodford, participated in the Institutional Panel. In a very real sense, Warden Woodford is continuing the work that Warden Duffy helped start in 1942 with the first meetings held at San Quentin. Many attendees of the conference were very impressed with the level of commitment and interest that these non-alcoholic professionals demonstrated in the service work of the H&I committee and Alcoholics Anonymous. Another aspect of the Institutional Panel provided information on carrying the message to confined juveniles which is an area of growing concern as more and more young people are reaching out to A.A. for help.

The final panel held on the last day of the conference offered the Inmates' Perspective of H&I service. Three former inmates shared their recovery stories and the crucial role that H&I meetings played in their recovery and helping them connect with A.A. outside of confinement. H&I volunteers rarely have the opportunity to see the results of their service. Volunteers take meetings into facilities, and nearly always this is the full extent of their involvement with the confined alcoholics attending the meetings. Hearing the inspiring stories of these inmates was a wonderful way to conclude this year's conference. The organizers of this annual H&I conference are to be congratulated for creating this opportunity for a wide variety of people, alcoholics and non-alcoholics, professionals and volunteers, to join together to discuss the important service that the Hospital & Institution Committee provides.

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Northern California Hospital & Institution Conference will be held in Chico, California from April 16-18, 2004. Look for more information in upcoming issues of *The Point*. 



# Dear Alky

This is only one drunk's opinion. For a more in depth discussion, CALL YOUR SPONSOR!

Dear Alky,

**My doctor does not follow my request for non-narcotic pain medications. What do I do? Do I need to change my sobriety date?**

**—Don't Want to Be Drugged**

Dear Drugged,

I recommend the A.A. pamphlet *the AA member—Medications and Other Drugs*, for you and for your physician. It may help your doctor to see the importance of your request. Also talk frankly with your doctor about the choice of medication. If there is sound medical reason for the medication your doctor has prescribed, you should feel no guilt in taking it.

On the other hand I don't take lightly the dangers prescription drug abuse, especially for an alcoholic. I know alcoholics who—decades sober—have spun out of control on legally dispensed prescription drugs and subsequently either felt that they were no longer sober, or went back to drinking.

I've heard many techniques for dealing with prescription narcotics in a sober manner. Some members try to minimize the amount they take, by waiting longer than directed in between doses, or taking smaller doses than directed, but if that means enduring pain it can be counterproductive to your healing. Pain medication is not just for comfort—the body heals best when it is not in pain.

I had surgery a couple years ago and was prescribed pain medication. The keys for me were to not do it alone and not to control the process. I surrounded myself with other A.A.s. I went to meetings that I could walk to and talked about what I was going through, and used the phone quite a bit. I took exactly the amount prescribed in the intervals prescribed, just like I would a regimen of antibiotics and found another A.A. member who was willing to take a phone call from me every time I took a pill, even in the middle of the night. Every four hours, no less and no more unless I was asleep, I made the phone call and then took one pill. I did this until they were all gone.

This produced surprising results. First, the medication did not affect me as strongly as I feared. When I was drinking, a medicine bottle that read "take one every four hours and do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking this medication" meant to wash down four or five with gin. Taking the medication as directed took away the pain without getting me high. Also, because I followed the prescribed regimen to the end, I didn't have narcotics sitting around the house to tempt me afterward.

All the best,

Alky

**If you have a question for Alky, please send it to:**  
**Alky C/O Central Office**  
**1821 Sacramento St.**  
**San Francisco, CA 94109-3528**  
**OR E-Mail it to: ThePoint@aasf.org**



Dear Alky,

**I am writing about my home group. We're downtown and attract a lot of street people—folks with shopping carts, backpacks and sleeping bags. Sometimes meetings get disrupted, but we try to welcome everybody that wants to get sober. Lately, we've had some of our regular members complain about the personal habits of some of these other members. Most of us can tolerate some dirty clothes and bad body odor, but we've had a few people come to our meetings that have severe personal hygiene problems—such as lice, and body odor that will knock you down. We've tried speaking to these members privately, but it hasn't done much good. Some of regular members support a group conscience asking these members to leave because they're a "public health hazard." Needless to say our unity is being threatened because of this.**

**Thanks,**

**Concerned Member**

Dear Concerned,

This is a dilemma for many groups now, but like a lot of things in A.A., not a new problem. Start by looking at Tradition Three in the 12 & 12 for some guidance. Page 140 informs us that some early A.A. members believed A.A. would work only for "pure and respectable alcoholics" (whatever that is!) and that "beggars, tramps, asylum inmates, prisoners, queers, plain crackpots, and fallen women were definitely out." These early members were fearful that group unity would be destroyed, but from their continued experience learned that none of them dared "to be judge, jury, and executioner" (pg. 141) of anyone desiring A.A.'s solution. As Tradition Three states: The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

Still, I know you don't want to go to meetings wearing rubber gloves and a surgical mask, and every group is autonomous. So, your group certainly does have the right to make any group conscience decisions it chooses, provided these decisions do not affect other groups or A.A. as a whole. However, deciding who is a "public health hazard" is not a responsibility I would want to have.

Before going to the extreme measure of a group conscience, excluding these members, I hope that your group will use all the spiritual tools available. Talk with other groups, go to a General Service or IFB meeting to share your concerns, speak again personally with the individuals involved, pray for guidance from your HP, and perhaps even take a group inventory(!). This is outlined in *The A.A. Group* pamphlet and may reveal things that will help your group see what to do in this situation.

Whatever you and your group decide, you have a great opportunity to practice tolerance and compassion.

Good Luck,

Alky 

## It's That Service Time of Year

by Ben N.


It's that time of the year again! My AA birthday is coming up and I'm feeling very, very grateful for another year of sobriety. I'd like to show my gratitude by doing some service. Service...hmm, I'd like to do some sort of service that's a bit out of the ordinary and that's in addition to the regular things I do. I've done most of the service positions already and I presently am a meeting secretary. Plus, I'd like to do something very special for my AA birthday, something that I don't do every day or every week. In other words, I wanted to do service "specifically designed" for birthday time.

One of the most exciting times of the year for me, as a child, was birthday time. And, the main reason my birthday was so exciting was that I was going to get gifts! Okay, so I was somewhat selfish – it was fun. And, it still is, to tell the truth. Then I came to AA and got sober. Guess what – I got another birthday! Wow, that made me happy, I'll tell you! Here was an opportunity to get yet another gift, right? Well, yes, I did get another gift...the best gift of all, that of sobriety. And, I didn't have to wait for a year to get it. I got it one day at a time. Pretty neat.

Then, my sponsor told me about gratitude, something I didn't really know anything about up until then. He explained to me that an "attitude of gratitude" was important to my recovery and that "gratitude is an action", not just a state of mind nor just a feeling. Oh! He introduced me to the custom of expressing gratitude for my sobriety by making a donation to AA every year on

my AA birthday or anniversary. He suggested something like giving a dollar for each year of sobriety. He told me I could make the donations to my home group, other meetings I attended and, especially, Intergroup/Central Office and to General Service Office in New York. And, he told me, I was not limited to donating only a dollar for each year of sobriety. I could donate up to \$2,000 dollars to each entity if I chose.

I feel immense gratitude to AA for my sobriety and try to express that gratitude. And, it's hard even for me to believe, but I've grown up since getting sober. And, one means of measuring my growing up is observing my AA birthday. I am no longer locked into the "gimme, gimme, gimme", "what can you do for me today?" mindset. They say, "Tis better to give than to receive". I'm not sure of that. It may well be. However, I do know this: When I give to AA, I receive far more in return. That's a deal that's hard to beat. That's what AA has always been for me, a deal that's hard to beat.

Okay, so, now that I've convinced you that it's good to make a birthday contribution, you may want to know how to go about it. The easiest way to find out is to telephone the Central Office at 415-674-1821. The Central Office Manager or Special Worker can help you out with all the information you need to get started. Happy birthday! Hey, mine's coming up. I guess I'd better get my checkbook out. Service is simple, isn't it? 

## Literature Review: Experience, Strength, and Hope

by Matt W.


The stories in *Experience, Strength & Hope* are from the first three editions of the Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. They are the stories that have been taken out to allow for more up to date versions to be included. But by no means do they lack in any way the raw truth that we as alcoholics face. They are powerful examples of what alcohol does to the alcoholic, his/her family and their communities.

I enjoyed *Experience, Strength & Hope* in the way that it read like a history of Dr. Bob's twelfth step work. There's a mystery type feeling to the stories as the shadowy figure of the doctor appears over and over, sometimes known by name often not. And the no nonsense approach he took with the men he encountered. The statement "when you're sure you're ready to quit you can come see us" is repeated in many ways throughout the book. It is a testament to what one person can do.

There is more to this book than booze and recovery. The individual stories in *Experience, Strength & Hope* came together to form an overview of the times and the temperament of the people. The tales, as told by these alcoholics, is an unlikely documentary about the world they lived in. What it was like pre-depression, depression and into the great wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Ameri-

ca. I found the descriptions of the type of work and its abundance surprising.

The men and women who founded AA, mainly through the Twelfth step work of Dr. Bob and Bill W., were extremely lucky I feel. As their stories tell they were going through hell thinking there was no way out until a friend, spouse or maybe traveling salesmen would mention a small group of drunks that were surviving. I think of the thousands of hopeless drunks that never crossed the paths of the few AAs that were there at the time. Without AA they must have suffered greatly. I feel so fortunate that because of AAs proliferation I was able to find help on my way down before I found a more desperate bottom that surely awaited me.

*Experience, Strength & Hope* is a great resource for any member of Alcoholics Anonymous looking to learn more about the start of AA from the perspective of its earliest members. It also of interest historically in and out of the AA perspective. But mostly it's an inspiration and a warning to alcoholics of my type. With the program of Alcoholics Anonymous I can live a life of service in peace and happiness or I can refuse the solution and sink into insanity and death. 



# Self-seeking will slip away

by Roger B.

I got sober in 1985, in New York. In those days “The Promises” were not read at every meeting, as they are here in San Francisco, so it was some time before I encountered them. My first awareness of them came when I read the Big Book “Alcoholics Anonymous,” and someone pointed them out to me. I recall being very happy to hear that, after all the confusion of the first few months, there were some clearly defined “guarantees” being offered. That idea felt more like the “real world” I had lived in before coming into the program, and I grabbed onto it.

I didn’t “get” many of them, and the one I understood least was this one, “Self-Seeking Will Slip Away.” At just around that time I was asked to speak on this promise at a big Christmas-time meeting at my home group. My sponsor was in charge of lining up people to speak on each promise, and he insisted I take that one. I told him I didn’t understand it, and didn’t feel qualified to talk about it, and he just smiled and said, “Do your best.” He always said that. God bless Walter.

I thought long and hard about it. I decided that what I wanted, what I needed it to mean was how, through sobriety, and working the steps, I would no longer need to search for a SELF, to seek for WHO I WAS. Seeking for a self, for who I was and what that meant would stop, would “slip away.” I gave my share at the meeting, and it makes me very happy now to remember how enthusiastically it was received, and how many people saw what I meant, and identified with it.

It wasn’t until much later that I came to a distinctly different understanding. I now believe the true intended meaning of this promise to be that we stop seeking only for ourselves, stop putting ourselves first, at the expense of everyone else, after we finish Step 9. This has been my experience. I can honestly say that before I worked my way up to and beyond Step 9, everything I had ever done in life, in the world, had been in my own self-interest, exclusively. That’s not to say that I converted to sainthood immediately afterwards, certainly not. But I will say that there is a difference in my thinking now, about service to the group, to my fellows in the program, and to all other human beings on the planet.

It started, as it does with many of us, with coffee. I took a

coffee commitment and helped set up a fancy “hospitality spread” at the meeting (it’s a New York thing). I loved it, I really did, and have recommended that commitment enthusiastically (to newcomers especially) ever since. Then

there were other service commitments, including more coffee, set-up, and literature. Then the biggest one came along – sponsorship. My first sponsee’s name was Paul, and I will never forget how nervous I was about working with him. I felt I didn’t know anything, and now I was supposed to help someone else figure out something I hadn’t even “figured out?” But it’s wonderful what happens in the sponsor sponsee relationship, we get

to PRACTICE, to make time and space for each other in our lives, and help each other in the process. Then there were other sponsees, and then Paul got a sponsee of his own, and then his sponsee started making the coffee! And the practice I was getting in the program, the new way of thinking regarding helping others, soon started to influence my attitude outside A.A., and it has never stopped. It is a subtle thing, and an evolving thing, but it is now a part of my mentality. And all credit goes to A.A.. I love A.A., and I

know it’s the best thing that ever happened to me. The great part is that it keeps getting better, as long as I let it. And being able to do things for others has been the most unexpected gift, for one reason. Because I get the gift back, instantly.

Now when I think about all this, all these years later, I see that my first idea, a misunderstanding of sorts, was not that far off. I did lack a self when I got here, and I was seeking that self. I just didn’t know at the time that I would have to stop doing the other

kind of self-seeking, the kind I’d practiced all my life, in order to begin to build the person I am now. Yes, A.A. has given me that “self,” and a life. A life beyond my wildest dreams.

## THE EIGHTH PROMISE

*I recall being very happy to hear that, after all the confusion of the first few months, there were some clearly defined “guarantees” being offered.*



*The Point’s Spotlight on the Ninth Step Promises continues next month.*

# AA Group Contributions - May 2003

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Group	May '03	YTD	Grat. Mo.	Group	May '03	YTD	Grat. Mo.
<b>FELLOWSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS</b>				San Anselmo Fireside Meeting Su 8pm		\$81.12	
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$26.00	\$128.20		Serendipity Sa 11am		\$240.00	
Central Office Donation Box	\$39.79	\$342.01		Sisters in Sobriety Th 7:30pm		\$90.00	
Deer Park Discovery Group F 8pm		\$29.80		Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		\$225.60	
IFB Meeting	\$85.00	\$444.73		Sober & Serene Fri. 7pm	\$150.00	\$150.00	
Marin Teleservice	\$500.00	\$1,500.00		Sober Mom's F 11:30am		\$74.73	
Marin Teleservice Spaghetti Feed		\$95.00		Steps to Freedom M 8:30pm		\$222.50	
MCYPAA		\$9.18		Streetfighters Sa 9am		\$40.00	
Mission Fellowship X-mas Potluck		\$30.00		Sunday Night Mill Valley Smokeless Su 7:30pm		\$10.00	
Serenity Group - Alameda	\$44.13	\$44.13		Survivors M 12pm	\$89.20	\$412.00	
Spirit of SF NYE Event		\$191.06		Terra Linda Th 8:30pm	\$325.00	\$700.00	\$117.58
Sunday Step Study Su 4pm Pacifica		\$90.00		T.G.I'm Sober M 6pm	\$161.61	\$161.61	
Unidentified Group		\$116.00		TGI Tuesday Tu 6pm		\$39.00	
We Are Not St. Francis	\$15.00	\$15.00		T.G.I.F. F 6pm	\$42.60	\$42.60	
<b>TOTAL FELLOWSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$709.92</b>	<b>\$3,035.11</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	The Extra Support Group F 8:30pm		\$67.17	
<b>MARIN CONTRIBUTIONS</b>				Three Step Group Sa 5:30pm		\$289.30	
11th Step Meeting M 8pm		\$189.41		Thursday Night Speaker Th 8:30pm	\$830.00	\$1,330.00	
12 & 12 Study Sa 8:15am		\$100.00		Tiburon Haven Su 12pm		\$160.00	
7am Urgent Care Daily 7am	\$150.00	\$350.00		Tiburon Tuesday Beginners & Closed		\$763.00	
Attitude Adjustment Hour Daily 7am	\$70.00	\$1,025.00		Tuesday Smokeless Tu 8:30pm		\$1.28	
Awareness/Acceptance M 10:30am		\$136.00		Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm	\$73.35	\$159.64	
Blackie's Pasture Sa 8:30pm		\$508.45		Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm		\$77.00	
Caledonia Su 8pm		\$294.67		Wednesday Noon W 12pm		\$236.00	
Candlelight Meditation Mon. 7:30pm	\$110.00	\$110.00		Women On Monday M 7pm	\$64.61	\$64.61	
Creekside New Growth Su 7pm		\$85.00		Women's Big Book Tu 10:30am		\$125.00	
Crossroads Su 12pm		\$750.00		Women's Step Study Group M 12pm		\$146.02	
Day At At Time Daily 6:30am		\$600.00		Working Dogs W 12:05pm		\$200.00	
Experience, Strength & Hope Sa 6pm		\$130.00		<b>TOTAL MARIN CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$3,443.97</b>	<b>\$18,189.10</b>	<b>\$368.58</b>
Freedom Finders F 8:30pm		\$80.83		<b>SAN FRANCISCO CONTRIBUTIONS</b>			
Gratitude M 12pm		\$223.00		7am As Bill Sees It Fri.	\$150.00	\$150.00	
Happy Hour Th 6pm		\$130.00		7AM Grab Bag M 7am		\$55.00	
Happy, Joyous, and Free M-F 12pm		\$250.00		AA As You Like It Tu 5:30pm		\$87.84	
Island Group Th 8pm		\$42.00	162.00	AA Step Study Su 6pm		\$150.04	
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		\$50.00		A New Start F 8:30pm		\$306.37	
Keep It Simple Mon. 8:30pm	100.00	\$100.00		A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm		\$60.00	
Marin City M-F 6:30pm		\$150.00		A Vision For You Su 6:30pm		\$26.11	
Marin Newcomers M 8:30pm	83.50	\$83.50		A Vision For You II Tu 7:15pm		\$66.00	
Mill Valley 7AM Daily 7am	\$500.00	\$1,846.09		Alumni Group W 8:30pm		\$32.40	
Mill Valley Discussion Wed 8:30pm	87.00	\$87.00		Acceptance Group M 5:30pm		\$55.00	
Mission Fireside Group W 8:30pm		\$40.00		Afro Ameican Fr 8pm		\$82.04	
M. V. Original Smokeless Th 8pm			\$89.00	All Together Now Th 8pm	\$152.49	\$272.28	
Monday Blues M 6:30pm		\$121.88		Amazing Grace M 7pm		\$258.00	
Monday Night Meeting M 8pm		\$50.00		As Bill Sees It Sa 11am		\$147.60	
Monday Night Stag M 8pm	\$550.00	\$975.00		Beginners Step Study Sa 6:30pm		\$81.86	
Morning After Sa 10am		\$1,161.58		Beginners Warm Up W 6pm		\$120.00	
Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm		\$70.00		Bernal Big Book Sa 5pm		\$816.47	\$170.73
Newcomers Step M 7:30pm		\$339.00		Big Book Basics F 8pm	\$138.00	\$325.19	
Noon Discussion Th 12pm		\$156.50		Big Book Study Sun 11am		\$88.67	
Noon Hope F 12pm	\$57.10	\$248.58		Blue Book Special Su 11am		\$84.85	
Noon Tu 12pm		\$352.08		Brokers Open Book Tu 1:30pm		\$153.44	\$63.51
Novato Big Book Tu 12pm		\$196.00		Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm		\$178.54	
Novato Spirit Discussion Fr 12pm		\$191.35		CLAADAAGH Sa 8:15pm		\$60.00	
On Awakening Daily 5:30am		\$350.00		Castro Discussion W 8pm		\$234.60	\$123.00
Primary Purpose W 8:30pm		\$413.00		Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm		\$355.03	\$54.15
Rise N Shine Su 10am		\$55.00		Civic Center Nooners M 12pm		\$134.00	
Ross-San Anselmo M 8:30pm		\$40.00					

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Group	May ' 03	YTD	Grat. Mo.	Group	May ' 03	YTD	Grat. Mo.
Cocoanuts Su 9am	\$120.00	\$198.00		Marina Discussion F 8:30pm		\$479.00	
Common Welfare Th 8pm		\$136.53	\$58.85	Marina Dock Daily 7am	15.00	\$15.00	
Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		\$107.40		Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		\$66.62	
Design For Living Sa 8am		\$578.29		Mid-Morning Support Su 10:30am	269.12	\$2,204.07	
Each Day A New Beginning M 7am		\$575.80	\$180.80	Midnight Meditation Sa 12pm		\$33.90	\$43.75
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		\$225.89		Miracles Off 24th St.	50.00	\$50.00	
Each Day A New Beginning Tu 7am		\$388.91		Mission Terrace W 8pm		\$128.22	\$103.18
Each Day A New Beginning W 7am	\$121.25	\$652.18		Mocha Group Th 12:10pm		\$53.01	\$80.75
Each Day A New Beginning Th 7am	\$88.20	\$234.25		Monday at a Time Mon. 12:30pm	95.00	\$95.00	
Early Start F 6pm		\$378.78		Monday Beginners M 8pm		\$190.82	\$47.75
Easy Does It Tu 6pm	110.00	\$110.00		Monday Men's Stag M 8pm			\$19.25
Embarcadero Group We 12:10pm	\$47.35	\$70.35		Monday Monday 12:15pm		\$217.27	
Endless Summer F 8:30pm	\$69.79	\$335.50		Monday Steps & Traditions M 12:10pm		\$55.20	
Eureka Step Tu 6pm	101.70	\$101.70		Moscone Center After Work W 6pm	97.00	\$97.00	
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		\$292.99		New Big Book Study Sa 11am		\$250.00	
Faith, Hope & Charity F 12pm	60.00	\$60.00		New Highs W 1:30pm		\$75.57	
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		\$151.55		New Hope Big Book M 6:30pm		\$141.11	
Fell Street F 8:30pm		\$105.23	\$78.43	Newcomers Tu 8pm		\$158.27	
Fell Street Step Su 8pm	13.70	\$13.70		New Wednesday High Noon	73.26	\$73.26	
Fellowship of the Spirit Su 1:30pm		\$150.00		No Reservation M 12pm		\$57.13	
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		\$205.86		Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		\$124.20	
Fireside Chat Th 8pm		\$148.08	\$50.50	One Liners Th 8:30		\$439.50	
First Place Daily			\$31.55	Parkside Th 8:30pm		\$180.00	\$28.00
Friday All Groups F 8:30pm			\$357.32	Pax West M 12pm		\$295.81	
Friday Big Book F 12pm		\$99.44	\$51.07	Pure & Simple Group Su 6pm		\$39.86	
Friday At Five F 5pm		\$195.27		Richmond Big Book Study Th 7:30pm		\$100.00	
Friday Knights	120.00	\$120.00		Rise-N-Shine Su 10am		\$58.00	
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		\$140.00		Rose Garden Big Book Th. 12pm	150.00	\$150.00	
Friday Smokeless F 8:30pm		\$122.51		Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm	\$60.00	\$120.00	
Friendly Circle Su 7:15pm & 8:30pm		\$1,210.23		Seacliff Th 8:30pm	\$51.45	\$94.71	
Friendship Group W 8pm		\$84.60		Second Chance Th. 2:15pm	70.17	\$70.17	
Garden Variety Sa 8pm		\$23.50		Serenity House Groups	\$300.00	\$600.00	
Gay Beginners Q&A F 7pm		\$108.00		Serenity Seekers M 7:30pm	\$198.00	\$610.20	
Greenhouse Meditation Sa 5pm	\$100.00	\$200.00		Sesame Step Tu 7:30pm		\$257.03	
Gold Mine Group M 8pm		\$132.00		Seven Seas Su 3pm		\$36.00	
Golden Gate for Seniors Tu 1:30pm		\$205.10		Sober & Centered F 7pm		\$46.80	\$20.04
Goodlands Su 2pm		\$45.76	\$36.10	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		\$157.62	
Haight Street Blues Tu 6:15pm		\$25.65		South Park	83.05	\$83.05	
Haight Street Explorers Th 6:30pm		\$120.00		Stepping Out Sa 6pm		\$120.00	
Happy Hour F 6:30pm		\$120.00		St. Francis Men's Group	61.49	\$61.49	
High Noon Friday F 12:15pm		\$594.11		Stonestown Group M 8pm		\$159.01	\$73.50
High Noon Tuesday Tu 12:15pm	\$138.00	\$588.43		Sunday Bookworms Su 7:30pm		\$60.00	
High Noon Thursday Th 12:15pm	\$142.20	\$577.20		Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 10:30am		\$689.33	
High Noon Wednesday W 12:15pm	\$135.00	\$526.80		Sunday Night 3rd Step Group Su 5pm	56.40	\$56.40	
Higher Power Lunch Group Th 12:10pm		\$51.46		Sunday Night Castro SD Su 7:30pm	469.24	\$469.24	
High Sobriety M 8pm		\$203.40		Sunday Rap Su 8pm		\$57.00	
High Steppers W 7pm	374.67	374.67		Sunday Wawona Su 8pm		\$320.00	
Hilldwellers M 8pm		\$120.00		Sundown W 7pm		\$156.00	
Home Group		\$127.20		Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 5:45		\$60.00	
Hoodlum Haven F 8pm		\$420.00		Sunset 9'ers F 9am		\$229.00	
How It Works Sa 2pm		\$135.00		Sunset 9'ers Th 9am		\$296.77	
Huntington Square W 6:30pm		\$355.29		Sunset 9'ers Tu 9am	\$90.00	\$103.32	
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		\$131.70		Sunset 9'ers Sa 9am		\$1,166.10	\$160.55
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		\$554.40		Sunset 11'ers		\$20.00	
Keep It Simple Sa 8:30pm		\$124.36		Sunset 11'ers Su 11am		\$60.00	
Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm	\$51.60	\$51.60	\$12.25	Sunset 11'ers Mon 11am		\$80.00	
Light Steppers Su 7pm		\$180.00		Sunset 11'ers Tu 11am	\$25.00	\$25.00	
Like A Prayer Su 4pm		\$20.00		Surf Tu 8pm		\$50.00	
Lincoln Park Sat. 8:30pm	279.00	\$279.00		Sutter Street Beginners Sa 6pm		\$1,043.05	
Living in the Solution F 6pm		\$310.16		TGI Tuesday 6pm		\$25.20	
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		\$196.34		Ten Years After Su 6pm		\$269.61	\$102.75
Luke's Group W 8pm		\$110.60					

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# IFB Meeting Minutes

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

Regular Monthly Meeting  
Intercounty Fellowship Board  
First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin/Geary, San Francisco, CA  
Wednesday, June 4, 2003

The following groups have registered Intergroup Representatives. Those marked "P" attended the most recent IFB meeting. If your group was not represented, consider electing an Intergroup Representative (IFB) and /or an alternate so your group's voice is heard.

Intergroup Rep	Group		Intergroup Rep	Group	
AJ G.	High Noon Wed. (Alternate)	A*	Leslie F.	How It Works-Sat	P
Ben N.	Past Chair	P	Li L.	Work in Progress	P
Bill R.	Early Start	P	Lisa M.	Friday All Groups	P
Carol W.	Miracles Off 24 <sup>th</sup> St.	A*	Marc D.	Bernal Big Book	P
Dan C.	Tiburon Haven	A*	Maury P.	Office Manager	P
Danny F.	Each Day A New Beginning	P	Michelle C.	Big Book Basics	P
David B.	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm	P	Monika H.	Back 2 Basics	P
David K.	Haight St. Blues	P	Norma W.	Afro-American Group	A*
David P.	New Hope Big Book	A*	Patrick M.	Treasurer	A*
Dick T.	Attitude Adjustment Hour	A*	Paul C.	Waterfront	P
Doug F.	No Reservation	P	Pene P.	Amazing Grace	P
Doug S.	As Bill Sees It - Thursday	P	Ray M.	Sunday Rap	P
Gamin C.	Like A Prayer	A*	Robert C.	Cocanuts	A*
Gary D.	Work In Progress	A*	Russell G.	Regroup	P
Grant D.	Ten Years After	P	Sam W.	Monday Night Stag	X
Greg S.	Keep Coming Back	P	Scott M.	Friendly Circle Beginners	A*
Janet B..	Thursday Night Women's	P	Steve R.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Jean C.	First Place Fellowship	P	Steve B.	Too Early	P
Jeremiah P.	All Together Now	P	Steven S.	Tuesday Downtown	A*
Joe G.	Wednesday Beginners Meeting	P	Tedra M.	Sisters Circle	A*
Joshua K.	High Noon Saturday	A*	Tim McC.	Join the Tribe Tue 7pm	P
Julia W.	Friendship Group	X	Todd M.	Rule 62 W 10pm 2900 24th St.	P
Julie H.	Terra Linda	A*	Tom K.	Common Welfare	P
Justin S.	High Noon Wednesday	A*	Tom O'N.	Ross/San Anselmo	A*
Kate E.	Reality Farm	A*	Tom W.	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	A*
Kristine F.	Castro Discussion	P	Zoe B.	Mill Valley 7am - Daily	P
New IFB Reps Present			Non-IFB Liaisons Present		
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Dave M.	Marin Teleservice	P
Dan P.	Second Chance	P	Georgia L.	H&I	P
Erin B.	Sesame Step	P	Paul P.	PI/CPC	P
Johnny G.	High Noon Tuesday	P	Peter M.	SF Teleservice	P
Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P			
Kent G.	Midnight Meditation	P			
Michael R.	Huntington Square	P			

P = Present; A = Absent; R = Resigned; X = Proxy. The \* above indicates an absence; more than one indicates the number of consecutive absences.  
A Board member who has three consecutive absences from IFB meetings is no longer a member of the Board, as stated in the Bylaws.

## SUMMARY

*The following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business, and service opportunities discussed at the July 2003 IFB meeting. It is provided for your convenience, and it is not intended to be the complete or approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes, contact the Central Office.*

Summary of IFB meeting on July 2, 2003

### A. Business Conducted.

1. Chairs report. Ben thanked the board for its service.
2. Treasurers report. Patrick submitted a written report, but was not present at the meeting. There was a motion made to receive the report as submitted. This motion passed.
3. Central Office Managers report. Lauren gave the report. We have had lots of people volunteering for phone coverage, but continue to need subs. We received the new SF schedule in booklet form. We received the new computers, installation to begin next week. Quarterly bookstore inventory was completed.
4. Central Office Committee reports. Danny F. reported. The COC has decided to pursue putting on a Secretary and Treasurer workshop. The COC

*(Continued on page 13)*

CONTRIBUTIONS, continued from p. 11

Group	May ' 03	YTD	Grat. Mo.
Thursday Afternoon Step Study Th 1:30pm		\$173.31	
Thursday Beginners Th 8pm		\$73.95	\$24.85
Thursday Night Women's Th 6:30pm		\$121.63	
Too Early Sa 8am	\$357.44	\$794.16	
Tuesday's Daily Reflections		\$39.10	
Unidentified Group		\$52.80	
Unidentified - Starbucks		\$21.00	
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$154.80	\$154.80	
Walk Of Shame W 7:30pm	\$62.85	\$62.85	
Waterfront Group Su 8pm		\$180.00	
We Care Tu 12pm		\$120.00	
We Really Do Meditate Sa 10:30am		\$96.00	
Weekend Worker Sa 7am		\$54.00	
Wits End Step Study T 8pm	\$32.19	\$32.19	
Women's AA W12:05pm		\$51.00	
Women's Kitchen Table Tu 6:30pm		\$311.00	
Women's 10 Years Plus Th. 6:15pm	\$255.00	\$255.00	
Work in Progress Sa 7pm		\$156.00	
TOTAL SF CONTRIBUTIONS	\$5,589.41	\$34,814.81	\$1,972.63
TOTAL ALL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$9,743.30	\$56,039.02	\$2,341.21

CALL FOR MEMBERS!!

The Point needs your assistance!! We are looking for writers and/or active committee members. If you are interested in Fellowship, writing, layout, design, service, and sobriety, please join us at our next committee meeting (we meet the 2nd and 4th Tues. of each month at 4:30 at Central Office: 1821 Sacramento St. SF CA). See the enclosed pamphlet for more information or call Central Office.

**MOVING PARTY!!**  
**Greenhouse**  
**Meditation Meeting**  
**is Moving!**  
**Please join us to**  
**celebrate at our last**  
**meeting at**  
**Laguna Honda**  
**Greenhouse,**  
**Laguna Honda Blvd**  
**at Woodside on:**  
**Saturday,**  
**August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003**  
**Meditation Meeting:**  
**5:00pm**  
**Refreshments:**  
**6:00pm**

CONTRIBUTIONS

to the Central Office were made through July 18, 2003 honoring the following members

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Bob  
R. W.

ANNIVERSARIES

Rudi DiP. - 3 Years  
Manny L. - 4 Years  
Carmelita C. - 8 Years  
David Y. - 9 Years  
Bruce K. - 17 Years  
Cynny S. - 18 Years  
Barbara E. - 22 Years

Endless Summer  
Cort - 1 Year  
Morad - 1 Year  
Kelly - 2 Years  
Renee - 2 Years  
Kaesha - 4 Years  
Debbie - 6 Years  
Ritchie - 7 Years  
Ryan - 9 Years  
Angel - 10 Years  
James - 13 Years  
Lord - 14 Years  
Ben - 17 Years

IFB Summary (continued from page 12)

decided that visitors and newcomers would receive free schedules at the Central Office if requested. We discussed what a great job Lauren did in Maury's absence. Thanked everyone for his or her service.

5. Elections of new Officers for the IFB Board.

Chair: Ben asked the Secretary to poll the board for availability to serve. Two members made themselves available. Danny F. and Marc D. Danny F was elected.

Vice-Chair: Ben asked the Secretary to poll the board for availability to serve. Two members made themselves available. Marc D. and Leslie F. After 4 ballots and no 2/3 majority, a motion was made for a 5th ballot. This motion passed. After a 5<sup>th</sup> ballot resulted in no 2/3 majority, it went to the hat. Marc D. got the commitment.

Recording Secretary: Ben asked the Secretary to poll the board for availability to serve. One member was available. Janet B. She was elected by acclamation.

6. Elections for Central Office Committee. Bill R. gave the nominating committee's recommendations to the Members who had made themselves available to serve. The Board then voted on the recommended Candidates for COC.

The board elected Kristine F., Joe G., David K., Li L., Tim M., Steven R.

7. Nominating Committee: Ben announced there was an opening on the nominating committee. Steven B. made himself available.

B. Information.

1. General Service-SF: Todd M. reported. The regular meeting last month was suspended. He presented a copy of advisory actions to the board from the area conference. He announced that General Service in NY is putting the big book on their website.

2. Marin Teleservice: Dave M. reported. The annual picnic for Marin Teleservice is August 23 at the Marin Alano Club. Marin Teleservice has an updated website.

3. Bridging the Gap: Ritchie R. reported. We are giving regular presentations at the SF Jail, Walden House, and the Friendship House.

4. PI/CPC: Paul P. reported. PI/CPC meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at the Central Office at 7PM. We can always use new volunteers.

5. SF Teleservice: Peter M. reported. We are in need of 2 new daily coordinators. We are in the process of planning a Teleservice event. Our orientation and business meeting will be July 21, at the Central Office at 6:30 PM.

6. 12<sup>th</sup> step workshop. Lisa M. reported. The next workshop will be July 26<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 AM at the Central Office. Call Maury at the CO for more details.

The next monthly meeting will be Wednesday, August 6<sup>th</sup> in Sausalito at 180 Harrison Ave. (Star of the Sea Church) at 7PM



### **Hot Pink Cans** *(continued from page 1)*

Francisco and Marin have stopped passing the pink cans during meetings, instead leaving them at the literature or secretary's table, and making announcements that they are there.

The passing of the Pink Cans has been a concern voiced since the practice first began, and as a result the H&I Committee, in an open letter to the Fellowship, requested that the cans be passed separately from the Seventh Tradition baskets in order to avoid creating confusion between the service entities they support. A letter almost identical to this one—including this same request—has been circulated by the H&I Committee for at least a decade. It also thanks the Fellowship for the contributions of nickels, dimes, and quarters that members have made, which supports their entire budget.

The main difficulty some members have with H&I is not the amount of money that is collected in the Pink Cans, but a difficulty in reporting the inventories of literature kept on hand. Because the literature is distributed around the state and stored by members, sometimes quantities of books get forgotten in the trunks of cars or in garages for months or even years. With no public accounting of inventory or tracking of stored literature, there is valid concern about where the literature is going and where it actually is. Indeed, some members have boxes full of pamphlets and Big Books who bring meetings to facilities where outside literature is no longer permitted for security reasons. San Bruno Jail, for example, does not allow pamphlets with staples to be brought inside the facility.

Of course, hearing stories like the above is to be expected. Everyone doing H&I is an alcoholic and doing this work on a

non-professional, volunteer basis. Each member must be trusted with the responsibility to determine what literature is needed for their meeting, and given the latitude to make judgment calls along with this responsibility. Still, there are ways to make the process transparent and accountable to the fellowship. A service structure could be created that oversees inventory and distribution and keeps tabs on inventory. Reporting could be split up by county to make it more manageable. There are many solutions and A.A.'s spirit of democracy and service will lead to the best resolution, so long as we follow our conscience and the Traditions.

It is not the purpose of this article to draw conclusions about H&I, or to recommend any course of action, except to suggest that anyone with concerns about a meeting's practice of passing or not passing the Pink Cans talk to the meeting's officers, and anyone with concerns about the H&I Committee address the H&I Committee directly. There are regularly scheduled meetings, but the most appropriate way is probably to send an inquiry in writing to the same address shown on the side of the Pink Cans:

P.O. Box 192490,  
San Francisco CA 94119-2490

It is important to remember that our survival depends upon A.A. unity. There *are* valid questions being raised about H&I, but as alcoholics we are served neither by accusation nor by defensiveness. The questions simply must be worked through, armed only with facts, awareness of history, and mutual respect. Speculation and suspicion have no place where we are trying only to carry the message. Perhaps the chilly August weather will help keep all our heads cool.



### **Debating Society** *(Continued from page 4)*

that my fellow members were not nearly as bright as I was and none of them had nearly as much knowledge about everything in the world as I did.

I began to notice that the other members of the Debating Society weren't quite as "taken" with my wisdom as I was. In fact, I had the definite impression that, when I would wax eloquently, the others were sitting there, eyes glazed over, ignoring everything I said. So, I would increase the volume of my voice and renew the vigor of my presentation. This didn't seem to work, either.


Then, I got to thinking...these guys aren't even listening to me. They're treating me exactly as I was treating them...I didn't listen to anything they said because I knew I was the only one with anything of value to say. I imagine my eyes glazed over while they talked, too. I used such times to rest my voice, restore my energy and replenish my intellectual ammunition.

On day, I was sitting there advising one of the other "members" that, in order for him to really make amends for some things he had done, he should turn himself into the police and be willing to go to prison. He took exception to that.

It was probably the only time anyone heard anything I said. He suggested that I should do the same thing and I tried to explain how "it's different in my case..."

As the discussion heated up, our voices raised and we interrupted the meeting that was going on in the other room. The meeting room door opened and my sponsor came out. He unceremoniously and with little or no regard for my gentle sensibilities, told me that I needed to get out of the AA Debating Society and get into AA. He told me to start going to meetings instead of sitting outside the meeting arguing about pointless things.

My sponsor was sober over 20 years at the time and I was sober only about 30 days or so. Even though I was pretty sure I knew more about everything than he did, I didn't want to humiliate him in front of the others. So, I meekly accompanied him into the meeting room.

That day was the last time I joined the rest of the "Society" in the coffee shop rather than attending a meeting. And, the day I resigned from the AA Debating Society was the day I began learning and growing in AA. Imagine that. 



# Financial Statement

MAY 2003 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	May 03	Jan - May 03		May 03	Jan - May 03
Ordinary Income/Expense			Training	\$ 0.00	\$ 60.00
Income			Utilities	\$ 206.58	\$ 990.96
Group Contributions	\$ 9,743.30	\$ 56,156.60	Uncategorized Expense	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Individual Contributions			Total Expense	\$ 13,767.65	\$ 68,780.47
Honorary Contributions	\$ 141.00	\$ 872.00	Net Ordinary Income	-\$ 2,045.54	\$ 4,457.03
Individual - Unrestricted	\$ 329.00	\$ 4,403.00	Other Income/Expense		
Individual Contributions - Other	\$ 0.00	\$ 59.48	Other Income		
Total Individual Contributions	\$ 470.00	\$ 5,334.48	Interest Income	\$ 78.11	\$ 318.63
Gratitude Month			Total Other Income	\$ 78.11	\$ 318.63
Gratitude Month - Individual	\$ 0.00	\$ 20.00	Other Expense		
Gratitude Month - Groups	\$ 0.00	\$ 2,223.63	Depreciation Expense	\$ 105.42	\$ 527.10
Total Gratitude Month	\$ 0.00	\$ 2,243.63	Total Other Expense	\$ 105.42	\$ 527.10
Newsletter Subscript.	\$ 192.00	\$ 472.00	Net Other Income	-\$ 27.31	-\$ 208.47
Sales - Bookstore	\$ 6,287.75	\$ 31,877.62	Net Income	-\$ 2,072.85	\$ 4,248.56
Total Income	\$ 16,693.05	\$ 96,084.33			
Cost of Goods Sold					
Cost of Books Sold	\$ 4,970.94	\$ 22,846.83			
Total COGS	\$ 4,970.94	\$ 22,846.83			
Gross Profit	\$ 11,722.11	\$ 73,237.50			
Expense					
Employee Expenses					
Wages & Salaries	\$ 6,750.00	\$ 31,448.12			
Employer Tax Expenses	\$ 689.62	\$ 3,610.01			
Benefits/Pension	\$ 621.00	\$ 2,957.00			
Retirement/Annuity Expense	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00			
Workers Comp Ins.	\$ 0.00	\$ 359.10			
Total Employee Expenses	\$ 8,060.62	\$ 38,374.23			
Bank Charges					
Cr Card Fees	\$ 0.00	\$ 190.09			
Bank Charges - Other	\$ 9.20	\$ 65.20			
Total Bank Charges	\$ 9.20	\$ 255.29			
Equipment Lease	\$ 565.10	\$ 2,825.50			
Filing/Fees	\$ 129.44	\$ 256.14			
Insurance	\$ 100.55	\$ 512.87			
Internet Expense	\$ 0.00	\$ 238.35			
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 0.00	\$ 66.88			
Office Supplies	\$ 89.73	\$ 1,515.23			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	\$ 5.15	\$ 405.15			
Postage - Other	\$ 140.86	\$ 364.86			
Total Postage	\$ 146.01	\$ 770.01			
Shipping	-\$ 0.33	\$ 41.89			
Printing	\$ 203.36	\$ 1,280.77			
Rent - Office	\$ 3,458.75	\$ 17,293.75			
Rent - Other	\$ 75.00	\$ 375.00			
Repair & Maintenance	\$ 156.52	\$ 1,120.41			
Security System	\$ 33.50	\$ 167.50			
Telephone	\$ 533.62	\$ 2,695.69			

Point Committee meetings are for present and prospective committee members. The Point Committee meetings are working meetings and not to be used as a forum for voicing opinions on content or articles contained therein. The Chair has ultimate responsibility for managing the meetings. We welcome opinions and feedback and request that it be submitted to the Central Office in writing.



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**August 2003**

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