

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

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

# The Point

September 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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Fellowship of Alcoholics  
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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.

## Paradoxes in Paradise

By Ben W.

I am often confused between the folklore, superstitions, and rhetoric on one side and the pure and simple program of Alcoholics Anonymous on the other. Some of these sayings, along with various chants, probably fall under the heading of "Frothy emotional appeal..." as mentioned in the Doctor's Opinion and, while annoying to some, remain relatively harmless. Others are so very logical as to be believable and, with lives at stake, can hardly be thought dangerous. However, I have tried not to categorize the paradoxes mentioned below but merely hope that they will stimulate more study of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and encourage others to contribute their favorite anomalies.

Superstition: "No major decisions in the first year."

The Big Book: Page 59 - Step 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.

Superstition: "90 meetings in 90 days"

The Big Book: Page 85 - What we really have is a daily reprieve based on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

Superstition: "If you don't want to slip, don't go to slippery places."

The Big Book: Page 101 - So our rule is not to avoid a place where there is drinking if we have a legitimate reason for being there.

Superstition: "Depression requires special treatment"

The Big Book: Page 133 - Now about health: A body badly burned by alcohol does not recover overnight nor do twisted thinking and depression leave in a twinkling.

Superstition: "No relationships in the first year."

The Big Book: Page 69 - We do not wish to be the arbiter of anyone's sex conduct... God alone can judge our sex situation.

Superstition: "We don't talk about drugs in AA."

The Big Book: Page 6 - A doctor came with a heavy sedative and next day found me drinking gin and sedative. Page 22 - As matters grew worse, he begins to use a combination of high-powered sedative and liquor to quiet his nerves so he can go to work.

Superstition: "My sobriety is nobody's business but mine."

The Big Book: Page 102 - At a proper time and place explain to all your friends why alcohol disagrees with you. Page 191 - The Lord has been so wonderful to me, curing me of this terrible disease that I just want to keep telling people about it.

Superstition: "Now that I am sober, I need to get a life outside AA."

The Big Book: Page 25 - If you are as

(Continued on page 6)

# September 2003....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> <u>FIRST MON</u> Spirit of SF Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7 pm	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB) 1187 Franklin St./ Geary San Francisco 7pm	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7 pm	<b>9</b> <u>SECOND TUE</u> 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>10</b> <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <u>THIRD MON</u> 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>16</b> <u>THIRD TUE</u> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo 7:30 pm	<b>17</b> <u>THIRD WED</u> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> <u>THIRD SUN</u> Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida San Francisco 1 pm	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln / Maple (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:30 pm	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <u>FOURTH THU</u> Marin PI Committee 1360 Lincoln Ave (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:15 pm <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento/Van Ness, SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Regular Meeting: 8 pm	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 10:30 am Main Meeting: Noon
<b>28</b> <u>LAST SUN</u> Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush SF 5:30 pm	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <u>LAST WED</u> IFB Orientation Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	<b>Secretaries: Please make these announcements to your groups</b> This calendar lists local AA service and conference planning meetings, 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.		

# 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 **bold**; flyers of current local events, if available, are printed as space allows.

Sept. 11-14	18th Annual Northern California Big Book Seminar, Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento, CA
Sept. 20	Unity Day 2003, Corte Madera Convention Center, Corte Madera, CA
Sept. 25	Sobriety on the Bay, Oyster Point Yacht Club, South San Francisco, CA
Sept. 25-28	8th Annual National Archives Workshop, Westin Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, FL <a href="http://www.aanationalarchivesworkshop.com">www.aanationalarchivesworkshop.com</a>
Sept. 28	36th Anniversary Brisbane Meeting, Library Community Center, Brisbane, CA
October 4	12 Step Worker Seminar, St. Isabella's Parish Center, San Rafael, CA
October 10-12	52nd Southern California AA Convention, Riverside Convention Center, Riverside, CA <a href="http://www.aasocal.com">www.aasocal.com</a>
<b>October 10-12</b>	<b>Spirit of San Francisco, Ramada Plaza Hotel, San Francisco, CA <a href="http://www.spirit-sf.org">www.spirit-sf.org</a></b>
October 16-19	13th Annual National/International Native American AA Convention, Hilton Burbank Airport & Convention Ctr, Burbank, CA
November 6-9	42nd Annual Hawai'i Convention, Hawai'i Convention Center, Honolulu, HI <a href="http://www.lava.net/~hconv">www.lava.net/~hconv</a>
November 21-23	Yosemite Summit Conference, Curry Village, Yosemite National Park, CA
November 27-30	WACYPAA 7, San Diego Marriott Mission Valley, San Diego, CA <a href="http://www.wacypaa.org">www.wacypaa.org</a>

## September 2003

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## This Month in A.A. History—Sept.

1930
Bill wrote promise in the family Bible to quit drinking.
1934
Bill back in Charles B. Towns hospital for the 3rd time.
1940
Chicago group started.
Article called "Alcoholics & God" in <i>Liberty</i> magazine brought in 800 pieces of mail.
Cleveland Plain Dealer carried series of articles in the center of the editorial page, each day for week — A.A. membership in Cleveland went from 12 to over 100 in 1 month.
1941
1 <sup>st</sup> AA meeting in Toledo.
Journal of Nervous & Mental Diseases published a most unsympathetic review of the Big Book.
1946
First AA group in Mexico.



## MEETING CHANGES

### New Meetings

Wed 6:00 pm Mission  
 Wed 7:30 pm McLaren Park  
 Wed 8:15 pm San Rafael  
 Sat 8:00 pm Financial

### Meeting Changes

Tue 8:00 pm San Rafael  
 Wed 8:30 pm Novato  
 Thu 6:30 pm Excelsior  
 Fri 6:00 pm Novato  
 Sat 10:00 am Tenderloin  
 Sat 3:30 pm Marina  
 Sat 5:00 pm Laguna Honda

### 7D 6:30 am Novato

### No Longer Meeting

Mon 7:30 pm Noe Valley  
 Tue 12:00 pm Novato  
 Mon & Wed 7:00 pm Mission  
 Wed 6:00 pm North Beach  
 Wed 12:00 pm Novato  
 Thu 1:00 pm Novato  
 Fri 6:00 pm North Beach

### Reported Missing

Sat 10:00 pm Mission

SOME ARE SICKER THAN OTHERS 2900 24th St. (BB Me ST)  
 INTO ACTION End of Yale/Wayland, Rec. Center (BB SS)  
 GIRLS' NIGHT OUT 1360 Lincoln Ave. (VVo)  
 SATURDAY NIGHT SPEAKER MEETING 215 Leidesdorff/Commercial (Ch Sr)

SAN RAFAEL BEGINNERS 1360 Lincoln Ave. (was 1411 Lincoln Ave.)  
 PRIMARY PURPOSE 1461 S. Novato Blvd. (was 1535 Grant Ave.)  
 THREE LEGACIES 9 Persia (was 6:00 pm)  
 THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS 1007 Simmons Lane (was 1535 Grant Ave.)  
 WAKE UP CALL 705 Natoma St. (was It's A Life at 242 Turk St.)  
 3:30 SMOKELESS 2118 Greenwich/Fillmore (Remove SD, Add ST)  
 SATURDAY AFTERNOON MEDITATION 375 Laguna Honda Blvd., Chapel Admin. Bldg.  
 (was Greenhouse Meditation in Greenhouse)  
 DAY AT A TIME 1905 Novato Blvd. (was 1535 Grant Ave.)

MONDAY NIGHT LESBIAN 150 Eureka  
 NOVATO BIG BOOK 1535 Grant Ave.  
 NATIVE AMERICAN 80 Julian St.  
 12x12 STUDY 720 Columbus/Filbert  
 NOVATO WEDNESDAY NOON 1535 Grant Ave.  
 AFTER LUNCH BUNCH 1535 Grant Ave.  
 BIG BOOK STUDY 720 Columbus/Filbert

LATE SATURDAY NIGHT 2900 24th St.

#### 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!**

## We Aren't a Glum Lot! Living Sober Conference 2003 By Mike L.

The 28<sup>th</sup> annual Living Sober/Western Roundup, the world's oldest conference organized by and for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender members of Alcoholics Anonymous, was held during the Fourth of July holiday weekend at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium in San Francisco. Approximately 2,000 people converged from all over the world to attend meetings and workshops and experience the many faces and forms of recovery.

I attended as well, and, in my opinion, this year's conference was the best it has been in several years. Registered attendance has leveled out in recent years to around 1600, and Living Sober remains one of the largest GLBT conferences for members of A.A. in the world. Every year the message at the conference remains clear and true to the primary purpose—to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. The conference had the perfect atmosphere for everyone to share experience, strength and hope with each other. I attended workshops picked from the revamped, "back-to-basics" LS 2003 Official Program that offered topics from dealing with resentments to overcoming sexual compulsion in recovery. No one person would have had difficulty selecting a workshop catering to his or her personal recovery.

On July third, I attended the opening night AA meeting at the conference. I was amazed as over 1,000 of us recovering alcoholics, addicts and Al-Anon members gathered in unity to witness the "banner raising," which is a long-standing Living Sober

tradition. We then heard two dynamic speakers, carefully chosen by the speaker committee to share their stories with us. The feeling I had was spiritual in every way.

A highlight of the conference, one many look forward to each year, was the AA/Al-Anon Musical, this year entitled "Can't Stop Recovery". It was a bright spot on an already bright weekend. The singing, dancing, and laughs that were part of the musical highlighted the many talents that can come out in recovery.

The final evening of the conference started with the "Sobriety Countdown" meeting. That is where we acknowledge lengths of sobriety from 24 hours to the greatest length of sobriety in the room. That meeting alone is always emotional and overwhelming. After the meeting, we cleared the main auditorium so that it could be transformed into the exciting backdrop for the Living Sober/Western Roundup dance. It was a great way to close the conference.

Now the Living Sober 2003 weekend is over and we all go back to our respective AA meetings. And we go back a little brighter and with a little, or a lot, more hope. We experienced a common feeling – that recovery works, and one day at a time, we can have a life beyond our wildest dreams.

"We aren't a Glum Lot" at all. ↑

## Group Speakers for September 2003

### TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
9/2	Lynne H.	Friendly Circle Beginners	7/17/96
9/9	Elaine B.	Sunday Night Step Study	7/24/81
9/16	Patrick O.	Nursery Group 3 Pleasanton	1/7/89
9/23	Donald W.	Pacifica Sunday Night	1/21/97
9/30	Gail O.	Second Tradition Group	3/26/89

### FOUR FORTY NINERS

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

DATE	SPEAKER
9/5	Christine T.
9/12	Rick the Hat
9/19	Jack W
9/26	Norma L.

### BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP
Sept. 7th	Joe M.	Loma Mar
Sept. 14th	Georgia L.	San Francisco
Sept. 21st	Marc. D.	San Francisco
Sept. 28th	Si P.	San Francisco

All open speaker (or speaker / discussion) meetings are welcome to publish their month's listing in The Point as space allows. The deadline for submission of the information is the **15th** of the month preceding publication.  
Please call Maury at Central Office, 674-1821.

Come celebrate our 36th Anniversary in Brisbane!

**The Breakfast Bunch**

11:00am — 1:00pm

**Sunday September 28, 2003**

**Honoring our Anniversary are:**

Si P. and Jack N. from San Francisco

And

Bacho M. from Daly City

**Join us as we kick off the event with experience, strength, joy and Brunch!**

Library Community Center  
250 Visitation  
Brisbane, CA

## Flyers!!!

### Unity Day 2003

*"Carrying the message of recovery, unity & service with love and tolerance"*

**Saturday, Sept. 20, 2003**

**11:00 am — 11:30 pm**

**Corte Madera Recreation Center  
498 Tamalpais Drive, Corte Madera**

Unity Day is Marin General Service's gift to Marin (District 10).  
This is a fun, stimulating and thought-provoking day.

Great fellowship, fun and food...

Great AA meetings, workshops and an awesome AA dance...  
Find out more about service commitments and carrying the message of recovery in any number of ways...

Archives, Bridging the Gap, Central Office, H&I, MCYPAA, PI/CPC and Teleservice, will have informational displays/tables.

Let's make this the best Unity Day Marin has seen!  
And if you'd like a commitment or have a question, please call Molly at 415. 457-9928 or Therese at 415.717-0512

### 12th Step Worker Seminar

**Saturday, October 4, 2003**

**10 am—12 pm**

Learn how to be of service to others  
Marin County Teleservice, in cooperation with the 12th Step Committee of the IFB, brings you a hands on training on carrying the message to those who still suffer.

**Please join us at St. Isabella's Parish Center  
1 Trinity Way, San Rafael, CA**

(behind school, across parking lot from church in Terra Linda:  
Take 101 to M.T. Freites Parkway exit, U-turn off of Manual T. Freites Parkway at Las Pavadas, Right on Trinity Way)

**"Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety."**

### The Spirit of San Francisco

**11th Annual**

**AA Convention with Al-Anon participation**

October 10 - 12, 2003

Nellie C., Kenwood, CA Beth H., Cary, NC  
Jay P., Myrtle Beach, SC Doug M., Saskatchewan, Canada  
Big Book workshops with Jay & Jeanette L., Modesto, CA

Talent Show Banquet Dance

**Ramada Plaza Hotel**

1231 Market Street, San Francisco, California

www.spirit-sf.org (415) 566-3845 info@spirit-sf.org  
P. O. Box 423832, San Francisco, CA 94142

**REGISTER ONLINE at WWW.SPIRIT-SF.ORG**

# 2003 CNCA Post Conference Assembly

by Jeff O.

The CNCA 2003 Post-Conference Assembly in Cloverdale, CA, during the weekend of May 17 2003, was a moving, educational, and spiritual experience for those participating. It started on that Friday evening with a dinner followed by a captivating and inspiring speaker.

The next morning was orientation. A past delegate discussed why conducting the business of AA as a whole, including adherence to procedures, takes so long. She emphasized "trusting in the process." The more of the process experienced, the more that is seen. Dissimilarity of opinion is part of why the process is vital for AA's continued health. Offering every individual a place to voice their conviction ensures the whole body is heard. Sometimes, after hearing the minority opinion, a motion is reopened after voting. This is a remarkable part of General Service. Representatives express their voice regardless of difference in points of view. When contrasted to other institutions, this opportunity for all to be received is unusual. The speaker reminded us that there are no emergencies in A.A. Have you ever noticed how the assemblage does not vote on new business until it becomes old business? GSR's submit new business to their groups. Questions and feedback are collected from the groups and sometimes they request more information. Only after all the considerations have been made toward an informed group conscience will the assembly vote.

Next, in a business meeting, officers presented financial and demographic statistics. Literature introduced the new book, "Experience Strength and Hope." Bridging the Gap, Archives, Web-site committee and EBYPAA (East Bay Young People) gave cursory presentations. Also, a group reported of its intent to fly from Alaska to Russia to carry the message.

The motion that District Seven, Alameda North, add a new sub-district, Linguistic Sub-district 07-006, composed of the AA Spanish speaking groups was fervently discussed as well as two items of old business, an ad hoc committee translation of Agenda Topics to Spanish and changing of wording in Steps Three, Seven and Eleven and Tradition Three. All

votes were deferred until CNCA summer assembly.

The CNCA delegate presented a report of the results of the 53<sup>rd</sup> General Service Conference, including the "conference advisory actions" and "additional committee considerations." (Your GSR has copies of all this information.) The delegate's review is available on tape as well. The respect for AA literature was expressed during the discussion of changes to the 12&12's forward and several pamphlets and manuals.

The theme of the 2003 conference was "Living AA's Principles through Sponsorship." Three types of sponsorship were discussed:

- 1.) Recovery sponsorship is spiritual.
- 2.) Service sponsorship is principle based.
- 3.) Professional sponsorship is educational.

A few of the speakers shared experiences of sponsorship highlighting being a humble servant, not resting on laurels, taking responsibility, and passing it on in order to keep it. Sponsorship is not about providing jobs, money or housing. Carrying the message is allowing newcomers to rely on God, not on someone else.

Finally, the CNCA delegate passed on a heartfelt message from Dr. John L. Norris, a non-alcoholic trustee for 27 years, who gently articulated how Bill W. was the wise sponsor determined to let go of us before we were willing to let go of him. Bill had abiding faith that AA not only should, but could run without him. Bill believed that everyone should be heard. Bill felt that AA should be directed from the individual to the group via the GSR to the delegate through conference structure, not other way around. Bill had a gift to discern Group Conscience from thousands of voices. With his death AA members had more responsibility to listen carefully and recognize Group Conscience. Bill lived to see his mission complete. He created a channel of communication within the fellowship of AA, so that AA will always be here for the drunk who reaches for help. ↑

## **Paradoxes** (Continued from page 1)

seriously alcoholic as we were, there is no middle of the road solution.

**Superstition:** "Swearing is a crutch for conversational cripples so we clean up our mouths."

**The Big Book:** Page 93 – When dealing with such a person you had better use every day language to describe spiritual principles.

**Superstition:** "Call me every day."

**The Big Book:** Page 94 – Make it plain he is under no obligation to you, that you hope only that he will try to help other alcoholics when he escapes his own difficulties.

**Superstition:** ALL OF THE ABOVE

**The Big Book:** Page 98 – Burn into the consciousness of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone. The only condition is that he trust in God and clean house. ↑

# Dear Alky

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

Dear Alky,

**How come my sponsees all go out and get drunk? This has happened every time I've taken one on.**

—Perplexed

Dear Perplexed,

I am happy to inform you that when a person you sponsor drinks, it is not about you. (Surprise!) Now you can let go of all your self-doubt as well as each person who got drunk "on your watch" and give all the responsibility for everyone else's sobriety to a God of your understanding because "...probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism." Your only responsibility in sobriety is to extend the hand of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I have sponsored quite a few members, newcomers and experienced members of Alcoholics Anonymous, and many of those guys have taken another drink, or as I've heard in a meeting or two "had to do some research." They are lucky the research did not kill them. A relapse for an alcoholic is like playing catch with a wrecking ball. When people slip, they are living proof of the cunning, baffling, powerful, relentless and totally unmerciful nature of the disease of alcoholism. They show us the speed and closeness of the insanity of alcoholism.

None of us is promised a lifetime of sobriety when given the tools of sobriety. What we *are* promised is a daily reprieve from drinking based on the maintenance of our spiritual condition. Maintenance translates into today's action and work. Yesterday's work is not going to keep me sober today. You cannot take the action for the people you sponsor. If a sponsee does not take the suggested action, insanity will return and they will drink again.

I make it a point to tell the people I sponsor that over half of the people I have sponsored are dead from alcoholism - fatal shootings in bad drug deals, suicide, car wrecks, the list goes on. Alcoholism destroys. Recovery and growth are not easy tasks. The book tells us that when I do not do the work and do not maintain a program of action, there are three ends... jails, institutions or death, and for some reason, which I will never know, I am blessed today to show up to the fourth end, Alcoholics Anonymous.

K.I.S.S.,

Alky

Dear Alky,

**Is it OK to drink "near beer"? I ordered one in a restaurant, and the sober friend I was dining with told me that it contains alcohol and that if I have one, I'm not sober. What should I do?**

—Mere Peer

Dear Peer

I'll start with the bare facts about "non-alcoholic malt beverages." If you look at the label of one of these beverages, you'll see that



they all claim "contains less than 0.5% alcohol." This is not an ingredient declaration; it's a legal one. A beverage which is less than one-proof is not taxed as an alcoholic beverage. So the words on the label indicate that this product is exempt from the taxes and tariffs applied to beer and wine.

However, that doesn't mean that there's no alcohol in them. Different brands have different amounts, but most are two or three parts per thousand alcohol. Some contain as little as one part per thousand, and a couple of imported brands are over four. Regular beer varies in alcohol content too, but a reasonable rule of thumb is that a "near beer" has about one-tenth the alcohol content of a regular beer.

It's perfectly reasonable to say that as alcoholics we cannot take any alcohol, even minute amounts. On the other hand, the alcohol content described above is comparable to the amount of alcohol in fresh-squeezed apple or orange juice. Most of us drink apple or orange juice from time to time and would never think we were jeopardizing our sobriety to do so. So maybe this would apply for "near beer" too.

By the way, if you are concerned about your morning glass of juice, consider frozen juice concentrate, as it contains the least amount of alcohol - less than one part per two thousand.

I've heard some say that the convincing point for them was that underage persons cannot buy non-alcoholic malt brews, and that they are kept in the beer and wine section of most stores. While many checkers will ask for ID when purchasing such a beverage, it is not the law, except in Pennsylvania where a special law was passed to restrict sales of beer-like beverages.

But finally, and this may be the most important factor, do you need it? Sometimes I ask myself if I would run out and get alcohol-free tequila if it were to be put on the market, and my answer is no.

Listen to your own conscience. You have to be honest with yourself about this. If it seems like you're getting away with something, sneaking something forbidden, or playacting at drinking, you're best off leaving the stuff alone. On the other hand, if you really don't think anything of it, the actual alcohol content is unlikely to do any harm. Even a sensitive alcoholic with decreased tolerance from years of abstinence would have to drink five or six of them in ten or fifteen minutes in order to feel any effect from it. Chances are, if you're drinking the stuff that fast, you're not treating it as a regular beverage!

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](mailto:ThePoint@aasf.org)**

## Dominoes

It's an old Pink Floyd tune, penned by the unhinged genius Syd Barrett. I picture him scribbling atop a mossy boulder in the hills of England, tripping to beat the devil. He lobotomized himself with LSD and booze, poor chap. Went far out and didn't quite get back. On the way, he conceived some of the soundtrack for *my* bad psychedelic trips and incomprehensible alcoholic demoralization.

For me, Syd's song speaks of interconnectedness. Like alcoholics in service, working the program of AA – I do for you, you do for me and we both go forth and do for others. One domino knocks into another knocking into many more.

by Kent G.

This concept really hit me in the last month and a half, as I've experienced the absolute grace of helping a member of AA in the hospital.

"You and I . . . you and I (are) dominoes . . ."

I'll call him George. George spent forty-five days in bed, then called Central Office. He was lonely and miserable. After my phone shift, I went to see him. Outside the hospital, I lit a smoke and prayed to my God that I be *merely a vehicle for His work*. I didn't want to screw this guy up any further with my

(Continued on page 14)

## The Serenity Prayer

***God, give us the serenity to accept what cannot be changed,***

***Give us the courage to change what should be changed,***

***Give us the wisdom to distinguish one from the other.***

Pastor Reinhold Neibuhr penned these words in the 1920s while ministering to the working people at Detroit's Bethel Evangelical Church. Or, so one legend has it. Another legend says they were scribed while he was at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1932. Over a period of years this prayer was modified and gradually evolved into what we today know as the Serenity Prayer. Pastor Neibuhr published the prayer in 1951 and was granted copyright to it in 1962 when a well-known greeting card company applied for copyright in his name so that they could pay him royalties for using the prayer.

Now, here's where the "facts" become even more confusing. Although Pastor Neibuhr popularized the prayer and is responsible for introducing it to us, even he was unsure where it originated. Late in life he wondered whether his father, who was also a minister, had recited it when Reinhold was a boy. Some attribute it to the German theologian Friedrich Oetinger, although it's unlikely that he would have given us the words in English.

So, it would seem, there are all sorts of questions as to the origins of the Serenity Prayer. But there's no question at all that the Serenity Prayer has helped to shape AA. It's one of the few prayers to appear in A.A. conference-approved literature. Although the Lord's Prayer is commonly recited at A.A. meetings, only the Serenity Prayer, the Prayer of Saint Francis, and the Third and Seventh Step Prayers actually show up in our literature.

by Ben N. and Steve S.

Many AAs have stories of transformations, profound or quiet, that have come about as a result of the Serenity Prayer, and countless of us use it privately on a daily basis, as well as to open and close our AA meetings.

According to AA Comes of Age, a New York member found the prayer in an obituary in 1942 and called it to the attention of Bill W. and Ruth Hock. Soon the Serenity Prayer was sent with every piece of mail that went out from The Alcoholic Foundation's office and it came into use in meetings everywhere.

No matter what the origin, the prayer has brought comfort to countless AAs throughout the years and will likely continue to do so for years to come.

In closing, here is the Serenity Prayer as we know it today, including the second part, which is not so familiar to us:

***God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;***

***Courage to change the things I can;***

***And, the wisdom to know the difference.***

***Living one day at a time;***

***Enjoying one moment at a time;***

***Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;***

***Taking, as He did, this sinful world***

***as it is, not as I would have it;***

***Trusting that He will make all things right***

***if I surrender to His Will;***

***That I may be reasonably happy in this life***

***and supremely happy with Him***

***Forever in the next.***

***Amen.*** 

# Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change by Kathleen C.

Sister Mary Ann whacked my hand with a comb. You know you're not allowed to tease your hair and you do it anyway. You're such a good student. Why do you have such a bad attitude?

I was fourteen and didn't like the rules: act like a lady, do as you're told. I rebelled. I went to parties at houses where the parents were away. Vodka made me feel beautiful, sexy and powerful.

I went to college-not the distant co-ed school I wanted, but a nearby girls' college. I was drinking, smoking marijuana and getting poor grades. The middle of sophomore year I dropped out. Two years later I was a secretary at a men's college when it went co-ed. I sent in my application. The Admissions Office sent it right back. I called and told the dean I was coming to his school, whether he admitted me or not. He not only admitted me, he gave me a scholarship. I lived in a commune in the country, worked part-time, went to classes and wrote. Many a day I sat at my typewriter, gazing out the window, drinking a brandy. Somehow I passed school.

After graduation my boyfriend and I moved to San Francisco. We broke up soon after. I met a man willing to take care of me. For a year I drank wine and snorted cocaine. I was so paranoid I sat in my kitchen peering through the blinds at every passing car. He threatened to kick me out if I didn't kick my habit. I quit cocaine, but continued drinking.

We married and I started law school and then had twin girls. I didn't drink while I was pregnant. Being dry, I was ready either to burst into tears or explode in rage. Then the girls were born and I could drink again.

When they were two years old I left one standing in front of my house while I answered the phone. And then forgot about her. My neighbor found her by the side of a busy street, in her fuzzy pink pajamas, gazing at her favorite park across four lanes of traffic. Her sister was jumping on my bed one morning and accidentally landed on my stomach. I picked her up and threw her on the floor. I'll never forget the look of horror on her face. Did I stop drinking? No.

I hit bottom when I failed the Bar exam. I tearfully resolved to quit smoking marijuana. My sister, six months sober, suggested I quit alcohol too. I have been sober since September 11, 1986.

I came into the program dragging my feet and digging in my heels. Ninety in ninety? Forget it. I was a busy lawyer now. I

went to one meeting a week for the first five years. Fortunately it was a Big Book meeting and my sponsor was there. She showed up every week, sometimes straight from her H & I commitment. She always returned my phone calls.

She didn't order me around. She knew I would run in the opposite direction.

Five years sober, at a women's conference with my sister, I shared that I went to one meeting a week, had a commitment, but rarely called anyone, even my sponsor. Afterward a woman looked me in the eye and said, There's no standing still in this program. If you're not moving forward you're sliding back. You're going to drink! She scared me.

I talked to my sponsor. I worked the steps again. I went to more meetings. I took the suggestions: Keep a notebook so you can write a Tenth Step. Pray. Work with others.

At eight years of sobriety I got my first sponsee. She was an example to me. I went with her to chip meetings and conferences. I really joined AA.

At ten years of sobriety I lost my job when my boss retired. For the first time I got down on my knees when I prayed in the morning. I got over my resentment and did the footwork— re-wrote my resume, called people for advice, and went on interviews. My boss's successor hired me.

After my daughters left for college, I asked a friend about meditation. She told me she sits still for five minutes,, breathes, and clears her mind. It was easy, I could do it.

Today I accept life on life's terms, most of the time. God sees the big picture; I don't. Each morning I try to pray, meditate and read. I say the Serenity Prayer silently throughout the day. When I get irritated at work, I remind myself that God is my employer. I use the phone. I work the steps with my sponsor and sponsees. I take inventory and clear away the wreckage I create. I am a regular at four or five meetings a week, including my home group, the Hill Dwellers' Monday Night Big Book meeting.

My husband and I are happy, together for twenty-eight years. Our daughters are college students, doing much better than I did. I have so much to be grateful for. I didn't try to change my attitude, it just happened. That sense of ease and comfort I looked for in alcohol I found in sobriety.



## THE NINTH PROMISE

# AA Group Contributions - June 2003

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Group	June ' 03	YTD	Grat. Mo.	Group	June ' 03	YTD	Grat.
<b>FELLOWSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS</b>				Novato Big Book Tu 12pm		\$196.00	
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$29.30	\$157.50		Novato Spirit Discussion Fr 12pm		\$191.35	
Central Office Donation Box	\$51.07	\$393.08		On Awakening Daily 5:30am		\$350.00	
Deer Park Discovery Group F 8pm		\$29.80		Primary Purpose W 8:30pm		\$413.00	
IFB Meeting	\$115.73	\$560.46		Rise N Shine Su 10am		\$55.00	
Marin Teleservice		\$1,500.00		Ross-San Anselmo M 8:30pm		\$40.00	
Marin Teleservice Spaghetti Feed		\$95.00		San Anselmo Fireside Meeting Su 8pm		\$81.12	
MCYPAA		\$9.18		San Geronimo Valley Mon. 8pm	\$85.99	\$85.99	
Mission Fellowship X-mas Potluck		\$30.00		Serendipity Sa 11am		\$240.00	
Serenity Group - Alameda		\$44.13		Sisters in Sobriety Th 7:30pm		\$90.00	
Spirit of SF NYE Event		\$191.06		Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		\$225.60	
Stinson Beach Fellowship	\$223.00	\$223.00		Sober & Serene Fri. 7pm		\$150.00	
Sunday Step Study Su 4pm Pacifica		\$90.00		Sober Mom's F 11:30am		\$74.73	
Unidentified Group		\$116.00		Spiritual Testosterone Sunday Men's Stag 8:30am	\$200.00	\$200.00	
We Are Not St. Francis		\$15.00		Steps to Freedom M 8:30pm		\$222.50	
<b>TOTAL FELLOWSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$419.10</b>	<b>\$3,454.21</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	Streetfighters Sa 9am		\$40.00	
<b>MARIN CONTRIBUTIONS</b>				Sunday Night Mill Valley Smokeless Su 7:30pm		\$10.00	
11th Step Meeting M 8pm	\$87.50	\$276.91		Survivors M 12pm		\$412.00	
12 & 12 Study Sa 8:15am		\$100.00		Terra Linda Th 8:30pm		\$700.00	\$117.58
7am Urgent Care Daily 7am	\$250.00	\$600.00		T.G.I'm Sober M 6pm		\$161.61	
Awakenings Sa. 8:30pm	\$180.00	\$180.00		TGI Tuesday Tu 6pm	\$20.80	\$59.80	
Attitude Adjustment Hour Daily 7am		\$1,025.00		T.G.I.F. F 6pm		\$42.60	
Awareness/Acceptance M 10:30am		\$136.00		The Extra Support Group F 8:30pm	\$150.00	\$217.17	
Back to Basics Sun. 9:30am	\$100.10	\$100.10		Three Step Group Sa 5:30pm	\$354.30	\$643.60	
Blackie's Pasture Sa 8:30pm		\$508.45		Thursday Night Speaker Th 8:30pm		\$1,330.00	
Caledonia Su 8pm		\$294.67		Tiburon Haven Su 12pm	\$240.00	\$400.00	
Candlelight Meditation Mon. 7:30pm		\$110.00		Tiburon Tuesday Beginners & Closed		\$763.00	
Creekside New Growth Su 7pm		\$85.00		Tuesday Smokeless Tu 8:30pm		\$1.28	
Crossroads Su 12pm	\$640.00	\$1,390.00		Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm		\$159.64	
Day At At Time Daily 6:30am		\$600.00		Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm		\$77.00	
Experience, Strength & Hope Sa 6pm		\$130.00		Wednesday Noon W 12pm		\$236.00	
Freedom Finders F 8:30pm		\$80.83		Women On Monday M 7pm		\$64.61	
Gratitude M 12pm		\$223.00		Women on Wednesdays 7pm	\$65.27	\$65.27	
Greenfield Newcomers Sun. 7pm	\$80.00	\$80.00		Women's Big Book Tu 10:30am	\$87.50	\$212.50	
Happy Hour Th 6pm		\$130.00		Women's Step Study Group M 12pm		\$146.02	
Happy, Joyous, and Free M-F 12pm		\$250.00		Working Dogs W 12:05pm		\$200.00	
Island Group Th 8pm		\$42.00	\$162.00	<b>TOTAL MARIN CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$3,203.82</b>	<b>\$21,392.92</b>	<b>\$368.58</b>
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		\$50.00		<b>SAN FRANCISCO CONTRIBUTIONS</b>			
Inverness Sunday Serenity 10am	\$60.00	\$60.00		7am As Bill Sees It Fri.		\$150.00	
Keep It Simple Mon. 8:30pm		\$100.00		7AM Grab Bag M 7am		\$55.00	
Living in the Solution F 6pm	\$312.76	\$312.76		AA As You Like It Tu 5:30pm		\$87.84	
Marin City M-F 6:30pm		\$150.00		AA Step Study Su 6pm		\$150.04	
Marin Newcomers M 8:30pm		\$83.50		A New Start F 8:30pm		\$306.37	
Marin Sober Group F 8pm	\$45.00	\$45.00		A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	\$85.34	\$145.34	
Mill Valley 7AM Daily 7am		\$1,846.09		A Vision For You Su 6:30pm		\$26.11	
Mill Valley Discussion Wed 8:30pm		\$87.00		A Vision For You II Tu 7:15pm		\$66.00	
Mission Fireside Group W 8:30pm		\$40.00		Acceptance Group M 5:30pm	\$100.00	\$155.00	
M. V. Original Smokeless Th 8pm	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$89.00	Afro American Fr 8pm	\$91.80	\$173.84	
Monday Blues M 6:30pm		\$121.88		All Together Now Th 8pm		\$272.28	
Monday Night Meeting M 8pm		\$50.00		Alumni Group W 8:30pm	\$42.35	\$74.75	
Monday Night Stag M 8pm		\$975.00		Amazing Grace M 7pm		\$258.00	
Morning After Sa 10am		\$1,161.58		As Bill Sees It Sa 11am		\$147.60	
Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm		\$70.00		Back to Basics W 8pm	\$25.57	\$25.57	
Newcomers Step M 7:30pm	\$144.60	\$483.60		Beginners Step Study Sa 6:30pm		\$81.86	
Noon Discussion Th 12pm		\$156.50		Beginners Warm Up W 6pm		\$120.00	
Noon Hope F 12pm		\$248.58		Bernal Big Book Sa 5pm	\$248.84	\$1,065.31	
Noon Tu 12pm		\$352.08					

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Group	June ' 03	YTD	Grat. Mo.	Group	June ' 03	YTD	Grat. Mo.
Big Book Basics F 8pm		\$325.19	\$170.73	Huntington Square W 6:30pm		\$355.29	
Big Book Study Sun 11am		\$88.67		Join the Tribe Tu 7pm	\$84.15	\$215.85	
Blue Book Special Su 11am	\$36.45	\$121.30		Keepin' It Real Th 6pm	\$423.50	\$423.50	
Brokers Open Book Tu 1:30pm		\$153.44		Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		\$554.40	
Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm		\$178.54	\$63.51	Keep It Simple Sa 8:30pm		\$124.36	
CLAADAAGH Sa 8:15pm		\$60.00		Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm	\$27.87	\$79.47	
Castro Discussion W 8pm		\$234.60		Light Steppers Su 7pm		\$180.00	\$12.25
Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm		\$355.03	\$123.00	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		\$20.00	
Civic Center Nooners M 12pm		\$134.00	\$54.15	Lincoln Park Sat. 8:30pm		\$279.00	
Cocoanuts Su 9am		\$198.00		Living in the Solution F 6pm		\$310.16	
Come N Get It F 6:30pm	\$119.63	\$119.63		Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		\$196.34	
Common Welfare Th 8pm	\$61.65	\$198.18		Luke's Group W 8pm		\$110.60	
Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		\$107.40	\$58.85	Marina Discussion F 8:30pm		\$479.00	
Design For Living Sa 8am	\$143.00	\$721.29		Marina Dock Daily 7am		\$15.00	
Each Day A New Beginning M 7am		\$575.80		Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		\$66.62	
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		\$225.89	\$180.80	Mid-Morning Support Su 10:30am	\$242.95	\$2,447.02	
Each Day A New Beginning Tu 7am		\$388.91		Midnight Meditation Sa 12pm		\$33.90	
Each Day A New Beginning W 7am		\$652.18		Miracles Off 24th St.		\$50.00	\$43.75
Each Day A New Beginning Th 7am		\$234.25		Mission Terrace W 8pm		\$128.22	
Early Start F 6pm		\$378.78		Mocha Group Th 12:10pm		\$53.01	\$103.18
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		\$110.00		Monday at a Time Mon. 12:30pm		\$95.00	\$80.75
Embarcadero Group We 12:10pm		\$70.35		Monday Beginners M 8pm		\$190.82	
Endless Summer F 8:30pm	\$100.50	\$436.00		Monday Men's Stag M 8pm	\$51.12	\$51.12	\$47.75
Eureka Step Tu 6pm		\$101.70		Monday Monday 12:15pm		\$217.27	\$19.25
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		\$292.99		Monday Steps & Traditions M 12:10pm		\$55.20	
Faith, Hope & Charity F 12pm		\$60.00		Moscone Center After Work W 6pm		\$97.00	
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		\$151.55		New Big Book Study Sa 11am		\$250.00	
Fell Street F 8:30pm		\$105.23		New Highs W 1:30pm		\$75.57	
Fell Street Step Su 8pm		\$13.70	\$78.43	New Hope Big Book M 6:30pm		\$141.11	
Fellowship of the Spirit Su 1:30pm		\$150.00		Newcomers Tu 8pm	\$42.24	\$200.51	
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		\$205.86		New Life W 7pm	\$30.73	\$30.73	
Fireside Chat Th 8pm		\$148.08		New Wednesday High Noon	\$816.00	\$889.26	
First Place Daily			\$50.50	No Reservation M 12pm		\$57.13	
Friday All Groups F 8:30pm			\$31.55	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm	\$9.25	\$133.45	
Friday Big Book F 12pm		\$99.44	\$357.32	One Liners Th 8:30		\$439.50	
Friday At Five F 5pm		\$195.27	\$51.07	Parkside Th 8:30pm		\$180.00	
Friday Knights		\$120.00		Pax West M 12pm		\$295.81	\$28.00
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm	\$140.00	\$280.00		Pure & Simple Group Su 6pm		\$39.86	
Friday Smokeless F 8:30pm		\$122.51		Richmond Big Book Study Th 7:30pm		\$100.00	
Friendly Circle Su 7:15pm & 8:30pm		\$1,210.23		Rise-N-Shine Su 10am		\$58.00	
Friendship Group W 8pm		\$84.60		Rose Garden Big Book Th. 12pm		\$150.00	
Garden Variety Sa 8pm		\$23.50		Saturday Easy Does It 12pm	\$565.32	\$565.32	
Gay Beginners Q&A F 7pm		\$108.00		Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm		\$120.00	
Greenhouse Meditation Sa 5pm		\$200.00		Seacliff Th 8:30pm		\$94.71	
Gold Mine Group M 8pm		\$132.00		Second Chance Th. 2:15pm		\$70.17	
Golden Gate for Seniors Tu 1:30pm		\$205.10		Serenity House Groups		\$600.00	
Goodlands Su 2pm		\$45.76		Serenity Seekers M 7:30pm		\$610.20	
Haight Street Blues Tu 6:15pm		\$25.65	\$36.10	Sesame Step Tu 7:30pm	\$98.84	\$355.87	
Haight Street Explorers Th 6:30pm		\$120.00		Seven Seas Su 3pm		\$36.00	
Happy Hour F 6:30pm		\$120.00		Sinbar Sun. 8pm	\$240.00	\$240.00	
High Noon Friday F 12:15pm	\$79.54	\$673.65		Sister's Circle Sun. 6pm	\$58.91	\$58.91	
High Noon Tuesday Tu 12:15pm		\$588.43		Sober & Centered F 7pm		\$46.80	
High Noon Thursday Th 12:15pm		\$577.20		Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		\$157.62	\$20.04
High Noon Wednesday W 12:15pm		\$526.80		South Park		\$83.05	
Higher Power Lunch Group Th 12:10pm		\$51.46		Step Talk Sun. 8:30am	\$113.18	\$113.18	
High Sobriety M 8pm		\$203.40		Stepping Out Sa 6pm	\$60.00	\$180.00	
High Steppers W 7pm		\$374.67		St. Francis Men's Group		\$61.49	
Hilldwellers M 8pm		\$120.00		Stonestown Group M 8pm		\$159.01	
Home Group		\$127.20		Sunday Bookworms Su 7:30pm	\$93.00	\$153.00	\$73.50
Hoodlum Haven F 8pm		\$420.00		Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 10:30am		\$689.33	
How It Works Sa 2pm		\$135.00					

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# IFB Meeting Summary

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

Regular Monthly Meeting  
Intercounty Fellowship Board  
Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Ave., Sausalito, CA  
Wednesday, August 6, 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		Intergroup Rep	Group	
Ben N.	Past Chair	P	Jeremiah P.	All Together Now	P	Norma W.	Afro-American Group	P
Bill R.	Early Start	A*	Joe G.	Wednesday Beginners Meeting	A*	Patrick M.	Treasurer	P
Carol W.	Miracles Off 24 <sup>th</sup> St.	A**	Johnny G.	High Noon Tuesday	P	Paul C.	Waterfront	P
Dan C.	Tiburon Haven	P	Joshua K.	High Noon Saturday	A**	Pene P.	Amazing Grace	A*
Dan P.	Second Chance	P	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P	Ray M.	Sunday Rap	P
Danny F.	Each Day A New Beginning	P	Julia W.	Friendship Group	P	Robert C.	Cocoanuts	X
David B.	Beginner's Warmup	P	Julie H.	Terra Linda	P	Robert R.	Hot Java	A*
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Justin S.	High Noon Wednesday	A**	Russell G.	Regroup	A*
David K.	Haight St. Blues	A*	Kate E.	Reality Farm	A**	Sam W.	Monday Night Stag	P
David P.	New Hope Big Book	P	Kent G.	Midnight Meditation	A*	Scott M.	Friendly Circle Beginners	A**
Dick T.	Attitude Adjustment Hour	P	Kristine F.	Castro Discussion	P	Steve R.	Valencia Smokefree	A*
Doug F.	No Reservation	P	Leslie F.	How It Works	X	Steve B.	Too Early	X
Doug S.	As Bill Sees It - Thursday	A*	Li L.	Keep It Simple	P	Steven S.	Tuesday Downtown	P
Erin B.	Sesame Step	P	Lisa M.	Friday All Groups	P	Tedra M.	Sisters Circle	P
Gamin C.	Like A Prayer	P	Marc D.	Bernal Big Book	P	Tim McC.	Join the Tribe	P
Gary D.	Work In Progress	P	Maury P.	Office Manager	P	Todd M.	Rule 62	A*
Grant D.	Ten Years After	P	Michael R.	Huntington Square	P	Tom K.	Common Welfare	A*
Greg S.	Keep Coming Back	P	Michelle C.	Big Book Basics	A*	Tom O'N.	Ross/San Anselmo	A**
Janet B.	Thursday Night Women's	P	Monika H.	Back 2 Basics	A*	Zoe B.	Mill Valley 7am - Daily	P
Jean C.	First Place Fellowship	A*						
New Reps Present	Group		New Reps Present	Group		Non-IFB Liaisons Present	Representing	
Carol B.	Fireside Chat		Lynnore G.	Walk Of Shame		Dave M.	Marin Teleservice	
David A.	Living Sober		Mary K.	High Noon F		Georgia L.	H&I	
Dan Z.	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag		Randall J.	High Sobriety		Peter M.	SF Teleservice	
Kim O.	Easy Does It							

**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.**

The following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business, and service opportunities discussed at the August 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.

## A. IFB Reports

**Chair's Report:** Danny F. expressed that the IFB exists so that the hand of AA will be there when any alcoholic in San Francisco or Marin reaches out for help and that most of the work is done at committee level. He noted that the main business item for the meeting would be to ask members to sign up for committees.

**Treasurer's Report:** Patrick submitted a written report and highlighted financial activity for June. Central Office's financial condition is sound with expenses well controlled.

**Central Office Manager's Report:** Maury reported that things are going well at Central Office with a stable pool of volunteers. She also said that the newly upgraded computer system is great!

**Central Office Committee Reports:** Maury reported that Joe G. was elected Chair for the new term with Stephen R. as the recording secretary. A

half-day retreat for past and present members to meet together is being planned.

## B. The Special Orders of Business (Action Item)

The PI/CPC literature request item was postponed.

## C. Ad Hoc Committee Reports

**Literature Review Committee:** Doug reported that the committee made a decision that North American Central Office/Intergroup Directories will now be given away free as well as the sheet "How It Works". They are considering designing a pamphlet briefly describing the many service positions available Fellowship wide.

**The Point Editorial Committee:** No report.

**Orientation Committee:** Marc D. reported that there is an orientation for new IFB members the last Wednesday of each month at Central Office at 6:30 pm. The role of the IFB representative is covered.

**Website Committee:** No report.

(Continued on page 13)

Group	June '03	YTD	Grat. Mo.	Group	June '03	YTD	Grat. Mo.
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group Su 5pm		\$56.40		Thursday Night Women's Th 6:30pm	\$126.52	\$248.15	\$24.85
Sunday Night Castro SD Su 7:30pm		\$469.24		Too Early Sa 8am		\$794.16	
Sunday Rap Su 8pm		\$57.00		Tuesday Night Step 7pm	\$30.00	\$30.00	
Sunday Wawona Su 8pm		\$320.00		Tuesday's Daily Reflections		\$39.10	
Sundown W 7pm	\$162.00	\$318.00		Unidentified Group		\$52.80	
Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 5:45		\$60.00		Unidentified - Starbucks		\$21.00	
Sunset 9'ers Mon.	\$293.51	\$293.51		Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$66.97	\$221.77	
Sunset 9'ers F 9am		\$229.00		Walk Of Shame W 7:30pm		\$62.85	
Sunset 9'ers Th 9am	\$109.67	\$406.44		Waterfront Group Su 8pm		\$180.00	
Sunset 9'ers Tu 9am		\$103.32		We Care Tu 12pm		\$120.00	
Sunset 9'ers Sa 9am		\$1,166.10		We Really Do Meditate Sa 10:30am		\$96.00	
Sunset II'ers		\$20.00	\$160.55	Weekend Worker Sa 7am		\$54.00	
Sunset II'ers Su 11am		\$60.00		Wits End Step Study T 8pm		\$32.19	
Sunset II'ers Mon 11am		\$80.00		Women's AA W12:05pm		\$51.00	
Sunset II'ers Tu 11am		\$25.00		Women's Kitchen Table Tu 6:30pm	\$310.08	\$621.08	
Surf Tu 8pm		\$50.00		Women's 10 Years Plus Th. 6:15pm		\$255.00	
Sutter Street Beginners Sa 6pm		\$1,043.05		Women Who Drank Too Much Tues. 6pm	\$88.68	\$88.68	
TGI Tuesday 6pm		\$25.20		Work in Progress Sa 7pm		\$156.00	
Ten Years After Su 6pm		\$269.61		<b>TOTAL SF CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$5,419.16</b>	<b>\$40,233.97</b>	<b>\$1,972.63</b>
Thursday Afternoon Step Study Th 1:30pm		\$173.31	\$102.75				
Thursday Beginners Th 8pm		\$73.95		<b>TOTAL ALL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$9,042.08</b>	<b>\$65,081.10</b>	<b>\$2,341.21</b>

(Continued from page 12)

**Schedule Committee:** Li L. reported that the new schedules have been selling briskly and a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition will likely be issued some time in Sept. 1. The committee is looking at many schedule options that could keep the cost down, such as printing 10,000 at a time. The committee currently has four members and would like more members to join.

**12<sup>th</sup> Step Committee:** Lisa M. reported that the committee is growing steadily and now has Marin participation. The recent workshop held, Saturday, July 26, was attended by eight people; 60% signed up as 12<sup>th</sup> step volunteers. The next workshop will be in Marin.

**Special Event Committee:** No report.

**Special Needs Committee:** David P. is the new chair for the committee. All Groups has submitted a request, which the committee will consider. The next meeting is on Sept. 17, 1:30 pm, at It's Tops 1801 Market/Duboce.

#### C. New Business

Meeting time was devoted to committee sign ups. Committee members were also encouraged to check committee rosters for accuracy. The Bylaws, Archives, Special Events, Special Needs, and Website committees really need increased participation. The committees are where the work of the board is accomplished.

#### D. IFB Standing Committee Reports

1. **Teleservice:** Peter M. reported that there are presently 20 open shifts that don't have a regular volunteer. At least one daily coordinator (Saturday) is needed. The next new volunteer orientation is Monday, August 18, at 6:30 PM; the monthly meeting is at 7 PM.

2. **PI/CPC:** No report.

#### E. Non-IFB Liaison Reports

1. **General Service, SF:** A written report was submitted by Todd M. Highlights: Contributions to New York from groups is down. The CNCA summer assembly was held on Aug. 2.

2. **General Service, Marin:** No report.

3. **Teleservice, Marin:** Dave M. reported that on line shifts are full but backups are needed. There is a picnic planned for Saturday, August 23, at the Marin Alano Club on Lincoln. Unity Day is planned for September 20 and several members from San Francisco and the IFB expressed an interest in attending.

4. **PI/CPC, Marin:** No report.

5. **Bridging the Gap:** No report.


6. **H & I:** Georgia L. reviewed July's financial statement that was prepared for H & I. H & I needs coordinators and meets the last Thursday of the month. They want to open up the lines of communication; a very few people are doing lots of work; they want and need more people to come to the meetings and participate. Don R., the H&I chair for Region 60, spoke and said that there are 800 H & I meeting a week. Marcel A. is the new General Chair. A newsletter comes out four times a year and interested groups can request to be on the mailing list by sending a written request to the address on the pink can. Groups are encouraged to send a representative to the monthly meeting.

7. **Spirit of San Francisco:** No report. Flyers for the October convention were available for members to take to their groups.

#### F. Housekeeping

Danny requests that agenda items be sent to him either via a phone call or e-mail prior to the meeting so he can include them in the agen-

da.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, September 3, at the First Unitarian Universalist Church, at 1187 Franklin at Geary, in San Francisco, at 7PM. 

## CONTRIBUTIONS

to the Central Office were made through August 15, 2003 honoring the following members

### ONGOING MEMORIALS

*Bob  
R. W.*

### ANNIVERSARIES

Kurt C. – 6 Years  
Douglas C. – 8 Years  
Ardis J. – 11 Years  
John O. – 15 Years  
James D. – 20 Years  
Jerry M. – 22 Years  
John M. – 23 Years  
Frances L. – 41 Years  
Wade D. – 53 Years

Endless Summer  
Mike – 1 Year  
Mike – 1 Year  
AJ – 2 Years  
Heather – 3 Years  
Giotto – 16 Years  
Ann J. – 17 Years

# Sober Mom Seeks Meetings

By Dara L.


I am six years sober and a mother of two. Being a parent is as much a part of my personal makeup as my alcoholism. In early sobriety I was single and had no kids. I was involved in service work and attended many meetings. Time went on, my life changed and so did my program, but never as much as it did when I became a parent. I am extremely grateful for what I have learned in AA, because it helps me cope with an entirely new life with new challenges.

Pregnancy – like being a newcomer again. I was on a hormonal roller coaster. Ups and downs, never knowing what the day would bring. Early sobriety was like that for me too. Meetings were important to maintain feeling connected and also for reality checks. Even though I wanted to strangle anyone who told me “Feelings aren’t facts”, it was also the type of advice I needed to hear. My head was a VERY dangerous place to be.

Tired – whoever said lack of sleep never killed anyone was obviously talking about suicide – not homicide. I was so exhausted from lack of sleep that I was punchy and irritable. With spare time that wasn’t being taken up by this little (beautiful, but greedy) human, and all I could think about was sleeping or showering. Thank G-d I had a strong network of women in the program who brought meetings to me. It saved me from flipping out more than I was at that time. Restraint of pen and tongue was not even on my radar at the time! Thanks to AA, I was able to make amends for my behavior – and I made them often!

New levels of powerlessness and unmanageability – I have one word to define powerlessness and unmanageability – TODDLER. Sometimes getting a toddler to do what you want (take a nap, eat dinner, stop screaming, etc.) is futile unless you have endless patience or an incredibly strong will. I still struggle with the whole idea of “turning it over”. I mean, what does that mean with relation to children?? “Do the footwork and let go of the outcome”? Yeah sure and end up with a serial killer on my hands? Like I said, I am still struggling with this one.

Time – Things don’t happen in my time and they happen even less now that I am a parent. I get to one meeting a week, because it is the only one with professional childcare. I meet with my sponsor at an ungodly hour on the weekends because it is when we have time. I utilize the internet as a way of staying connected to AA. This is the one thing that has changed most about my program. I am being patient, in time it will change again.

I am so grateful to AA for the beautiful life I have, but balancing life as a wife, mom and sober alcoholic has been difficult. I am amazed at the lack of meetings with childcare and yet bringing small children to meetings makes life tough for all involved. I feel if we can get people from jails to meetings, then we can get parents to them too. I hope that by writing this article we can start a dialog about creating more meetings with childcare. 

## *Dominoes (Continued from page 8)*

ego, with happy horsecrap I thought a frightened alcoholic with a shattered leg would want to hear.

After we exchanged pleasantries, my man confided the morphine cocktail he was slowly consuming wasn’t enough. He wanted one containing gin. So we talked about hitting bottom, about powerlessness and surrender. We talked about things our HP’s might put before us that we can’t predict or comprehend. We explored the possibility there were tools of healing at work vastly more advanced than the \$10,000 steel cage holding his calf together. We got into the present moment and stayed there for an hour.

In the moments before he nodded off, George dropped his plan to procure a bottle and stash it under his pillow. This had nothing to do with *me*. He played his role; I played mine and God worked the lights. It was a pure dose of what AA is all about.

“You and I . . . you and I (are) dominoes . . .”

Outside, I lit another smoke and the tears fell. I felt a mushy rush of gratitude. The guy who’d rarely even entered a hospi-

tal sober, who’d spent his last time in a hospital eating Certs so his dying father wouldn’t smell booze-breath, now got to carry the AA message to a brother in need. My payback was an infusion of faith that has lasted, and the domino effect that began. Five of my friends in the program kicked it with George. My sponsee saw him a lot. A guy well-known in the rooms mentioned George in a meeting. More dominoes dropped; more alcoholics got gratitude.

And finally after ninety long days, our man got released. He’s home now, as happy and healthy as one can be in his reality. He hasn’t taken a drink. In those ninety days, just by asking for help, George gave all us dominoes working our twelfth steps more than ninety meetings worth of sobriety. It was a cosmic ninety-in-ninety, you might say.

Speaking of cosmic, old Syd Barrett is still around, somewhere in the UK. His brothers in Floyd never forgot his real spirit; the man beyond the chemicals. They wrote songs about him, including one that seems to speak to each of us in AA. Speaks to me, anyway.

*Shine On You Crazy Diamond.* 

# Financial Statement

JUNE 2003 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	Jun 03	Jan - Jun 03		Jun 03	Jan - Jun 03
Ordinary Income/Expense			Utilities	\$182.65	\$1,113.61
Income			Uncategorized Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00
Group Contributions	\$9,042.08	\$65,198.68	Total Expense	\$14,367.89	\$83,148.36
Individual Contributions			Net Ordinary Income	-\$2,546.08	\$1,910.95
Honorary Contributions	\$59.00	\$931.00	Other Income/Expense		
Individual -Unrestricted	\$422.00	\$4,825.00	Other Income		
Individual Contributions - Other	\$0.00	\$59.48	Interest Income	\$73.94	\$392.57
Total Individual Contributions	\$481.00	\$5,815.48	Total Other Income	\$73.94	\$392.57
Gratitude Month			Other Expense		
Gratitude Month -Individual	\$0.00	\$20.00	Depreciation Expense	\$105.42	\$632.52
Gratitude Month-Groups	\$0.00	\$2,223.63	Total Other Expense	\$105.42	\$632.52
Total Gratitude Month	\$0.00	\$2,243.63	Net Other Income	-\$31.48	-\$239.95
Newsletter Subscript.	\$114.00	\$586.00	Net Income	-\$2,577.56	\$1,671.00
Sales - Bookstore	\$6,669.84	\$38,547.46			
Total Income	\$16,306.92	\$112,391.25			
Cost of Goods Sold					
Cost of Books Sold	\$4,485.11	\$27,331.94			
Total COGS	\$4,485.11	\$27,331.94			
Gross Profit	\$11,821.81	\$85,059.31			
Expense					
Employee Expenses					
Wages & Salaries	\$6,750.00	\$38,198.12			
Employer Tax Expenses	\$579.40	\$4,189.41			
Benefits/Pension	\$621.00	\$3,578.00			
Retirement/Annuity Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00			
Workers Comp Ins.	\$7.33	\$366.43			
Total Employee Expenses	\$7,957.73	\$46,331.96			
Bank Charges					
Cr Card Fees	\$266.19	\$456.28			
Bank Charges - Other	\$3.90	\$69.10			
Total Bank Charges	\$270.09	\$525.38			
Equipment Lease	\$565.08	\$3,390.58			
Filing/Fees	\$60.00	\$316.14			
Insurance	\$100.55	\$613.42			
Internet Expense	\$0.00	\$238.35			
Miscellaneous Expense	\$0.00	\$66.88			
Office Supplies	\$421.28	\$1,936.51			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	\$200.00	\$605.15			
Postage - Other	\$0.00	\$364.86			
Total Postage	\$200.00	\$970.01			
Shipping	\$109.20	\$151.09			
Printing	\$0.00	\$1,280.77			
Professional Fees					
Computer Consulting	\$250.00	\$250.00			
Total Professional Fees	\$250.00	\$250.00			
Rent - Office	\$3,458.75	\$20,752.50			
Rent - Other	\$75.00	\$450.00			
Repair & Maintenance	\$150.00	\$1,270.41			
Security System	\$33.50	\$201.00			
Telephone	\$534.06	\$3,229.75			
Training	\$0.00	\$60.00			

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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**September 2003**

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