

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

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

The Point

November 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
meeting affairs in the Intercounty
Fellowship of Alcoholics
Anonymous (San Francisco and
Marin Counties). *The Point's* pages
are open to participation by all
A.A. members. Nothing published
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Fellowship Board, the Central
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.

Central Office—It Works!

by Kenny Ray K.

At a convention in Dallas for members of Alcoholics Anonymous during a Sunday morning meeting a speaker told the group of her introduction to A.A. She came to one morning and knew she needed help because her drinking was bringing her to certain death. She used all her strength to pick up the phone and dial 'O' for the operator. She told the operator about her drinking, that she could not stop. The morning of her call, the speaker had never heard of Alcoholics Anonymous. "Hold on, dear," the operator said and connected her to A. A. where an alcoholic doing Teleservice answered. Here, another journey of sobriety and recovery began, and it started with a call to a Central Office.

The Jack Alexander article in a March 1941 issue of the Saturday Evening Post not only brought a large influx of prospective members into A.A., but it began a new phenomenon. This new concept in A.A. was the beginning of Central Offices and Intergroups. The Central Office, by A.A. tradition, is a service organization. It is the first point of contact with A.A. for many who believe that they may have a drinking problem.

If this were all our Central Office did, the primary purpose of A.A. would be alive. But Central Office does more. The Central Office in San Francisco is the administrative and outreach axis for the Intercounty Fellowship Board of A. A. From the Central Office at 1821 Sacramento Street each member of the fellowship is connected to every other member of A.A. in San Francisco and Marin.

Our Central Office was created from a recognized need. Local groups of A.A. could not affordably or effectively provide certain services like maintaining and distributing meeting schedules, providing referrals of new members by phone twenty-four hours a day and stocking and operating a bookstore where Conference approved literature is conveniently available. Central Office provides a meeting place for many of A.A.'s service boards and committees, hosts and maintains the high traffic www.aasf.org website plus a host of other necessary functions that define the "hand of A.A." in the community for the still suffering alcoholic.

Funding the Central Office is critical to each individual group in San Francisco and Marin. It is the custom for each group to send fifty or sixty percent (depending on the county) of its Seventh Tradition money (after expenses) to our Central Office. These funds directly pay for the services that assist each group in carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Does every A.A. group in San Francisco and Marin send money to help Central Office? The really surprising answer is no, they do not. And not by a long shot. After checking with Central Office, through August of this year 86 of the 234 listed groups in Marin and 204 of the 543 listed groups have contributed to Central Office. Quick calculation - since January 2003 only 37% of the groups that Central Office helps sustain contribute to its operating expense budget, while 63% have not.

(Continued on page 6)

November 2003....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Secretaries: Please make these announcements to your groups 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 <u>FIRST MON</u> Spirit of San Francisco Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7 pm	4 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Special Events Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7:30 pm	5 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB) 180 Harrison Ave., Sausalito 7pm	6	7	8
9	10 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7 pm	11 <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	12 <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	13	14	15
16 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida San Francisco 1 pm	17 <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	18 <u>THIRD TUE</u> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo 7:30 pm	19 <u>THIRD WED</u> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	20 WEBSITE COMMITTEE Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:15 pm SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento, SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Regular Meeting: 8 pm (Both usually meet the LAST Thursday of the month—moved for Thanksgiving holiday.)	21	22 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 10:30 am Main Meeting: Noon
23 <u>LAST SUN</u> Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush SF 5:30 pm 30	24	25 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln / Maple (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:30 pm	26 <u>LAST WED</u> IFB Orientation Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	27 28 CENTRAL OFFICE CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING		29

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 <u>current</u> local events, if available, are printed as space allows.
November 1	3rd Annual Every 5 Years Traditions Workshop, Fort Mason, Rm. C260, San Francisco, CA
November 1	Halloween Dance, St. Peter's Church, Pacifica, CA
November 1	Trailer Bingo, Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, 395 Addison St., SF CA (AA meeting at 7pm; Bingo at 8pm)
November 6-9	42nd Annual Hawai'i Convention, Hawai'i Convention Center, Honolulu, HI www.lava.net/~hconv
November 7-9	19th Annual Santa Barbara Convention, The Elks Lodge, Santa Barbara, CA www.sbaaconvention.com
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 www.wacypaa.org
2004	
February 27-29	Spring Fling, Memorial Auditorium, Sacramento, CA www.sacspringfling.org

Visit our website at www.aasf.org.

You'll find meeting schedules for Marin and San Francisco, our Service Meeting calendar, Trusted Service Registration and Group Information Forms and much more!!!

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This Month in A.A. History November

1928
Bill signed yet another pledge to Lois
in their family Bible that he would stop drinking:
"My strength is renewed a thousand fold in my love for you."
~*~
1935
Ebbey came to live with Bill and Lois.
~*~
1937
Bill W. and a friend, Hank P., tried
to raise money for the Big Book, without success.
~*~
1939
Akron members withdrew from the Oxford Group
and held meetings at Bill's house.
~*~
1950
Bill described Dr. Bob as "the prince of the twelve-steppers".
~*~
1975
A.A. Archives formally opened in NYC.



MEETING CHANGES

New Meetings

Wed 7:30 pm Cathedral Hill E.S.H. 1187 Franklin

Meeting Changes

Sun 7:00 pm Mill Valley STEP SISTERS 410 Sycamore/Camino Alto, Rm. 2 (was 7:30pm at 118 E. Strawberry)

Thu 6:00 pm San Rafael KEEPIN IT REAL 914 Irwin St., upstairs (was 526 3rd St.)

Sat 8:15pm Larkspur 12x12 STUDY Church of the Redwoods, 110 Magnolia (was St. John's Church)

Sun 1:30 pm Laurel Heights FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT 3700 California St., conf. rm. off cafeteria (was Bothin Conf. Rm. B)

Fri 8:00 pm Forest Knolls S.G. VALLEY BOOK STUDY S.G. Valley Presbyterian Church (Removed Sm, SpD; Added Bk; was S.G. Valley Speaker/Discussion)

No Longer Meeting

Tue 12:00 pm Corte Madera TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE 101 Casa Buena Dr.

Reported Missing

Wed 1:15 pm Ingleside SOBER AT CITY CCSF Student Union

Service Meeting Changes

4th Thu 7:00pm San Rafael MARIN PI/CPC 1360 Lincoln Ave. (was 7:15pm)

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!

Was That Ever a Spiritual Experience

by Peter R.

At the time I was about three months sober and living in Boston. I had gotten sober in London and this was my first visit to this country not drinking. Ironically, it was that cultural icon the “bumper sticker” that helped me find my first American AA meeting.

Outside a church I saw “Think, think, think” and then “A day at time” on the cars parked outside. The most beat up car said “Easy does it”. I knew I was home.

Once inside I found an A.A. meditation meeting. This was something I knew little about, but needed especially since my head was racing around like blue bottles (flies) in a jam jar.

Shortly afterwards I enrolled in the course ‘Meditation for Busy People’ which, as the title suggests, was tailor made for recovering alcoholics. The instructor took one look at me and as my mantra gave the word ‘MAYHEM’. With mantras they choose a word that is disyllabic and you say one syllable as you breath in and then the second as you release your breath. They also taught thirty second meditations.

I still do it almost 20 years later, but today the most effective meditation for me is the serenity prayer. I say it as I wait in lines at the super market or post office and it works. Yes, I calm down, and I am amazed how many people come up to me and tell me to go ahead. Yes this is a spiritual experience, but so too was the bumper sticker, because that was my introduction to the Boston A.A. meetings. ↑

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Bob
R. W.

ANNIVERSARIES

David P. – 9 Years
Kevin R. – 24 Years

Endless Summer
Regina – 1 Year
Kelly – 1 Year
Josh – 1 Year
Angie – 1 Year
Trish – 1 Year
Lindsay – 1 Year
Neil – 2 Years
Melanie – 2 Years
Luwanda – 2 Years
Cunningham – 3 Years
Paul – 7 Years
Mike – 14 Years
Rachel – 20 Years

Group Speakers for November 2003

TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
11/4	Kent D.	Nursery Group III	8/8/88
11/11	Anita L.T.	Pedro Valley Pacifica	10/28/89
11/18	Bob S.	Foster City	8/11/77
11/25	Steve L.	Bellflower Big Book	1/21/85

BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP
Nov. 2	Jim H.	San Francisco
Nov. 9	Marion C.	San Francisco
Nov.16	Karen O.	S. San Francisco
Nov.23	Dee M.	S. San Francisco
Nov.30	Pat Mc. T	S. 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.

(3rd ANNUAL — EVERY 5 YEARS)

TRADITIONS WORKSHOP

1st November 2003
2 pm — 4 pm

FORT MASON — Room C260

Speaker: Linda M., Dixon CA

Discussion Groups
Refreshments

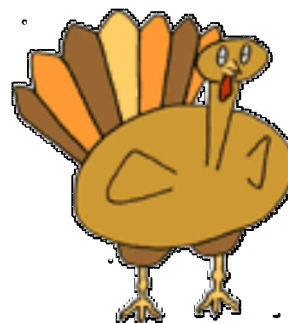
Recent Deaths

Frank B. — 57 years

We print the names of any members who have recently died when the names have been sent to us. Unlike the **Honors** section, which appears elsewhere, **Recent Deaths** is for information only. This one-time listing is not dependent upon a contribution in the name of the deceased.

Flyers!!!

MISSION FELLOWSHIP FIRST EVER THANKSGIVING ALCOTHON



First Meeting

day November 26th
until 8 pm Friday November 28th
Meetings are every 2 hours

4 pm Wednes-

Location: 2900 24th St/Cross street is Florida

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES !!!

IT'S TIME TO GET INVOLVED IN

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IN MARIN COUNTY

Marin County Teleservice has some great opportunities for service. December is the month that all service positions roll over and we are looking for some fresh blood. Please join us for an introductory meeting on November 18 at 7:30pm, where you will be given the opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions. Marin County Teleservice is an active service group working on the front lines of Anonymous. We are always looking for energetic alcoholics wanting to be of service. We have a variety of positions, which require different skills and levels of commitment. You owe it to yourself to at least check out what you might be missing. This could be the chance you have been waiting for to become more involved in the fellowship. We meet twice a month to discuss the business at hand and to develop new ways to serve Alcoholics in need. Come to the Alano Club on Lincoln Avenue this month to find out more. There will be two opportunities, Tuesday November 18th at 7:30pm or Tuesday November 25th at 7:30pm. Please feel free to check out our web site www.marintelesevice.com.

The Commitments available include:

Chairperson, Coordinators for Week 1 — Week 5, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, General Service Liaison, Central Office Liaison, 12-step Committee Liaison, 12-Step Worker List Coordinator, Mailing & Box Coordinator, New Rep. Orientation, Event Table Coordinator, and MCYPAA Liaison.

We look forward to seeing you as we trudge the road to happy destiny together!!

Gratitude Month


It's November again, and, what does that mean? Well, among other things, here in the United States, most of us probably think of Thanksgiving, the holiday on which Americans traditionally gather to express gratitude for another successful year – success, of course, being a relative term.

In A.A., November is known as “Gratitude Month”. It's unclear exactly how the tradition began, but it seems to have originated somewhere in the deep dark past of the 1940s. One legend has it that Bill W. wanted to express gratitude for his sobriety, which he mistakenly believed to have started in November. (It actually began in December.) There are other guesses as to the origins. But, the tradition of November as Gratitude Month has stuck, no matter how it began.

For the past many years, Gratitude Month is the time of year set aside for the individual groups to express their gratitude in a specific way – toward Central Office for all the necessary services it provides throughout the year.

Typically, it is suggested that each meeting, during the month of November, “pass the basket” a second time to collect money to be sent directly to Central Office.

These funds are used by Central Office to defray expenses and help keep operations running. It is not uncommon for the funds collected during Gratitude Month to make up for shortfalls in annual contributions from the Seventh Tradition. The Gratitude month contributions are always needed and always, always appreciated.

The second passing of the basket is a small but important way in which we can all express our thanks and gratitude for our sobriety by helping Central Office carry the message with the services it performs .

We hope you have enjoyed this bit of history about Gratitude Month, and we hope you have also enjoyed our cover story about the origin of Central Office and how it does service for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Central Office — Continued from page 1

So can a group be self-supporting if it does not contribute to Central Office? Tradition Seven speaks to the group level, “Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions” To live our Traditions a group that does not support the services of the Central Office is indeed accepting the outside contributions made by the other groups that are willing to help. To live our Traditions a group that does not support the Central Office would be denied the services provided them. That group would have itself removed from the meeting schedule, not receive Teleservice referrals, and not be able to purchase literature. Even, General Services in New York, which publishes and distributes A.A. literature, is dependent on group contributions.


Central Office is the communications center and exchange hub for groups that conduct over 777 A.A. meetings each week in San Francisco and Marin. It maintains the roster of over 50 volunteers who man the phone lines and a list of over 125 members of A.A. who are available for Twelve Step calls in the city. It typically receives between 200 and 300 weekly calls from people looking for help or information.

Many groups maintain an inventory of A.A. literature so that members, both old and new, can have easier access to purchasing copies of books such as the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and the Daily Reflections meditation book. Most of these groups purchase the literature from our Central Office. Having the literature available at a meeting assists new members who are afraid or ashamed to go elsewhere to purchase a book entitled “Alcoholics Anonymous.” Recently, a person with whom I was working needed a “Twelve and Twelve” on tape because of a learning disability. If it were not for our Central Office, finding

that item would have been very difficult. Sure, I could have ordered it and even searched the Internet to do it, but time is important when carrying the message. There was no worry that Central Office would have it. One great thing about the Central Office Bookstore is that it keeps the literature costs very reasonable for all of us. Books are expensive in the retail stores, but at Central Office, the price is right.

Central Office is open for service and to conduct its business forty one hours per week. That could leave a gap of 127 hours in the week that a wet drunk, or a drunk nursing what could be his last hangover dangling without a lifeline. But Central Office telephones are open to receive calls and dispatch Twelve Step calls twenty-four hours each day, even on holidays. A.A. is known worldwide for help being just a phone call away at any given time of the day or night. Without this, many of us would have died and still more would have had no choice but to die. Tourists, travelers and visitors to our cities use Teleservice to find meetings and fellowship, helping another alcoholic to achieve one more day of sobriety.

The Central Office is a cornerstone of our unity in San Francisco and Marin. The work it carries out is a big part of how we stay sober and help others get sober. In A.A. we go out beyond the group to the level of service that includes Central Office. Creating the San Francisco and Marin Central Office was an expression of gratitude and responsibility by the drunks that showed us how to get and stay sober, happy, joyous and free. Keeping Central Office operating for those of us in the rooms and those to come can be our expression of the action that we know is gratitude.

Give freely of what you have found in the fellowship so that another can get sober and stay sober. It is worth every two dollars you put in the basket. .

Dear Alky

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

Dear Alky

How do we handle the thirteenth steppers? I have had several girlfriends who were approached by men much older than them who were not so much interested in helping them stay sober, but in hitting on them. They are under the impression that the older man with lots of time in AA is there to help them stay sober. It is a rude awakening to find out that he isn't. If he was, he could direct them to a woman who works her program

Sincerely,

Distressed Diva

Dear Diva,

This is something that most of us have heard about at one time or another. In fact, occasionally we hear about repeat offenders. While "we do not want to be the arbiter of anyone's sex conduct," some of us, like you, may find ourselves wanting to protect and defend newcomers. One of the ways this delicate situation might be approached is by

1. Always introducing yourself and giving your phone number to the newcomers of the same sex (although *Alcoholics Anonymous* does not mention only working with others of the same sex anywhere that I know of) (lesbians and gay men often seek sponsors of the opposite biological sex, although not always)

and

2. Introducing the newcomer to some of our literature in addition to the "Big Book." *Living Sober* has some very good information in the section entitled "Steering Clear of Emotional Entanglements." For example: "So, as our experience shows, the first nondrinking days are likely to be periods of great emotional vulnerability . . . In the early relief and delight of getting well, we can whip up enormous crushes on new people we meet, both in AA, and outside it, especially when they show genuine interest in us . . . Over the years, we have become strongly convinced that almost no important decisions should be arrived at early in our sobriety . . . this particularly applies to decisions about people."

If the newcomer receives advice, support and phone calls from sober AAs who are not interested in her romantically, she will be less vulnerable to the Thirteenth Steppers. The best way to thwart the Thirteenth Steppers is by working Step Twelve!

Dear Alky,

I am beginning my first 11th Step. How should I pray to my Higher Power to improve my "conscious contact?"

Signed,

Waiting On My Knees

Dear Waiting,



The best prayer is the one that works for you. A sober woman who had issues with a male Higher Power worked Step Three by writing a beautiful version of the Third Step Prayer addressed to the Goddess. Pray to the Higher Power that you understand.

Probably the most popular prayer among AAs is the Serenity Prayer: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

The Big Book suggests that in the morning we ask God to direct our thinking. In the course of the day, if something upsets us, we pause and ask for the right thought or action. In the evening we ask God to help us do better tomorrow. Or as many AAs put it: "I say please in the morning and thank you at night." Please keep me sober and thanks for another sober day.

The Third Step Prayer asks for relief from the bondage of self, the Seventh Step Prayer for God to take all of us, good and bad, and make us useful, the Eleventh Step Prayer, in the 12 and 12, asks to make us a channel of positive energy and to bring comfort, understanding and love to others, rather than to seek them for ourselves. The common theme of all these prayers is that we develop a closer contact with our Higher Power by asking how to get out of ourselves and to be of service to others.

Dear Alky,

Why do we tell Newcomers to attend ninety meetings in ninety days? And how come a Newcomer is someone with 24 hours to thirty days?

Baffled by the Numbers

Dear Baffled,

Attending ninety meetings in ninety days is just a suggestion. The more meetings you go to, the better your chances of staying sober. And that's not just for newcomers. If you are new and you go to lots of different meetings, you can shop around for meetings you like and find a home group and a sponsor.

As far as the designation of newcomers as anyone in their first twenty-four hours to thirty days of sobriety: Tradition Three says that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking, so you probably don't even need twenty-four hours sober to qualify as a member of AA. As for thirty days as the end of the newcomer period, many detox centers recommend twenty-eight days as the minimum for getting the poison out of the alcoholic's body. That may be where this concept came from. It's probably a good idea for every AA to keep a newcomer's perspective and not take sobriety for granted. Better scared

**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**



On Being a Secretary


by Cindy W.

Before I got sober, I worked as a secretary. I was organized, efficient, creative, and had a major chip on my shoulder. After all, I ran the joint, but of course the boss took all the credit! I was overworked, underpaid, and unappreciated, as well as obnoxious, sarcastic and chronically late. Because I was such a valuable asset to the company, they sympathetically sent me to rehab...twice. Guess where I ended up? Unemployed and unemployable...until by the grace of my higher power, I made it to AA, and actually listened (for a change). That was six years ago. Since that time, I have once again done secretarial work... at AA meetings!

Serving as group secretary has been a really great experience for me. I had a lot of shame about my life as an active alcoholic, and had become accustomed to hiding from people. In early sobriety I really didn't want to talk to anyone, or have anyone look at me, or get to know me. It was extremely difficult for me to go to meetings at all, let alone to meet people or raise my hand and share. During my first six months of sobriety, I took a coffee commitment, and people would talk to me before the meeting in the "back room." When I found out I would have to make the coffee every single week for six whole months, I thought they had to be joking! How could they ask ANYONE to do ANYTHING for that long?! What were they thinking? Could I possibly stay sober long enough to keep this commitment? Would I really have to hang out with these nice but strange smiling people every single week for half a year? Despite myself, I began to enjoy the meeting and take pride in

doing service. At the end of that first six months when service was rotated, they elected me secretary. Oh my God! Making coffee in the back room was one thing. Sitting in front of everyone and opening my mouth...the thought was horrifying. I would be the center of attention! Everyone would see I wasn't good enough; I wasn't perfect, they would be judging me, because now it was going to be all about me, me, me!

As you can guess, I got to list self-centeredness as one of my character defects when I worked my steps. I stayed sober for a whole year just by taking these two commitments. Serving as secretary helped me to overcome self-centered fear and move closer to humility. It helped me to get to know people and to really feel like a member of AA. I enjoyed listening to other members share...because as secretary, it wasn't about me after all...it was about the group and about each and every alcoholic in the room. And it was fun.

Today I'm six years clean, and I clean houses for a living. I haven't gone back to office work...I find sitting in an office all day claustrophobic, and it helps keeps my stress level down when I'm active. But I think I am a much better employee today than I ever was as a drinking alcoholic. I'm organized, efficient, dependable, and grateful to have a job. I take pride in my work and enjoy being of service to my clients. They really appreciate my hard work. It's all a result of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous...I'm finally learning a little about "right size." 



The Wallet Cards!

by Kathleen C.

Which is my favorite AA wallet card? Every one. I stash them in my desk drawer and purse, where I used to hide my drugs and booze.

The life preserver card is "Just for Today." This scrap of precious cardboard encourages me to: "try to live through this day only ... be happy... learn something useful... do somebody a good turn, and not get found out... look as well as I can... act courteously ... have a quiet half hour all by myself... not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful." It reminds me to accept everything, especially myself, try to do better and appreciate the gifts of a sober life.

The card I give away by the handful, especially to newcomers, is "Sought Through Prayer." A speaker one morning started to talk about "the spiritual part of the Program." "Wait a minute," he chuckled. "The spiritual part is the Program." And here it is, all on one card. Arrayed in elegant gold are: the Serenity Prayer, the Third Step Prayer, the Seventh Step Prayer and the Eleventh Step, or St. Francis Prayer.

When a newcomer asks me how she should pray, I hand her


this card and suggest that she try reading it aloud every morning. I do.

The card I keep on my nightstand is "The 24-Hour Program." In silver and black it gives my sobriety schedule:

"On awakening, let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. . .

"As we go through the day, we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. . . humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done. . .

"When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?... or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life?"

The best of AA, on three little cards: keeping it simple! 

We will intuitively know how to handle situations...

by Joe J.

My high school reunion was quickly approaching. What adult does not feel a twinge of anxiety at that thought? It was our thirty-five year reunion. Half a lifetime had passed since graduation. I had not seen many of my classmates since high school. What would I think of them? What would they think of me?

I drank for most of those years. I drank my way through any situation that made me anxious – family visits, business trips, weddings, funerals, even ordinary socializing. I was baffled by any situation that involved people: family, co-workers, bosses, peers, almost everybody. Let's face it: I had "fear of people," big time.

COMING TO A.A.

Eight years ago, at a low point in my life, I would come to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. After a few years in the program, I started to notice how AA's eleventh promise ("We will intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us") was coming true for me.

Quite unexpectedly, the promise crept up on me. Every so often, I would see how I "suddenly knew how to handle" situations with people, the same kinds of situations that I used to drink my way through. Later I would realize that I just knew what to do. How odd! Why would that be?

As a sober human being, I not only know what is happening around me, I also feel what is happening inside of me. Instead of drowning unwanted emotions in drink, I am aware of all my emotions. I am operating with a full deck. My brain is clear. I observe situations, people, and myself, in ways that I couldn't before, when I was lost in the cycle of drinking and hangovers, depression and defeat. Now, as a sober, intelligent human being, I am sometimes startled to notice that I have a lot to offer.

THE ROLE OF SERVICE

I can extend my hand to others, through AA's many forms of service. It's a simple offering of myself, with no strings attached. Service helps me to overcome my feelings of powerlessness. It reminds me that I can do things, and do them successfully.

By serving as coffee-maker, secretary, greeter, sponsor – I practice being with people, talking, cooperating, spending time together. In my drinking, I'd forgotten how to do that without alcohol. I dare to socialize with people, something that had always baffled me in the past. I even talk about myself, something that I'd often avoided before.

TELLING MY STORY

I tell my story in AA, and I listen respectfully as others tell theirs. Telling my story is talking about me. Before AA, I hated

talking about myself. I was always shy. I felt vulnerable, uncompetitive, "less than." People sometimes kidded that I was "too quiet." In sharing my experience and in listening to others, I'm learning that my story is not so different from theirs.

THE ELEVENTH PROMISE

In my drinking days, I disdained my past. It was never good enough. My past was dead, so why bother talking about it? In telling my story, I start to own my past and to value it. I also saw how my Higher Power had always come through for me, even during my drinking days. I may have abandoned God, but God had not abandoned me. As I look back over my life, I can see the many times my Higher Power came to my aid.

TURNING IT OVER

I used to fear the future. I had no faith in God, and little confidence in myself. But as I develop a "closer contact" with a power greater than myself, I can face the future in faith, hope, even optimism. Since my Higher Power has never failed me, why would he start now? I am learning to trust my Higher Power, learning to hope for good outcomes, learning to walk on in faith.

I still do not do it perfectly. But now, when things start to go wrong, I feel it, I notice it. Aware of it, I can take corrective action to get back on track.

ASKING FOR GUIDANCE

There are still times when I am baffled. But the Big Book tells me that I can ask for guidance. I've learned that when I humbly ask for help, my Higher Power unfailingly answers.

In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while... We come to rely upon it.

(Chapter Six, "Into Action")

In the past couple of years, I have had some unfortunate experiences; a layoff from a job of many years, my first period of extended unemployment, family illness, loss of a beloved pet, and a major fire in my apartment building. Yet I was able to face it all sober. One day at a time, I found that I knew what to do.

I went to my thirty-fifth high school reunion. I was happy to see all my old friends again – so many old, familiar faces, so many years gone by. They were glad to see me too. We had a great time. Once again, I found that I knew how to handle situations that used to baffle me. ↑

AA Group Contributions - August 2003

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Group	Aug '03	YTD	Group	Aug '03	YTD
FELLOWSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS			Novato Spirit Discussion Fr 12pm	\$53.20	\$244.55
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$37.40	\$194.90	On Awakening Daily 5:30am	\$210.00	\$560.00
Central Office Donation Box	\$68.33	\$531.88	Primary Purpose W 8:30pm		\$413.00
Deer Park Discovery Group F 8pm		\$29.80	Rise N Shine Su 10am		\$55.00
IFB Meeting	\$99.94	\$751.22	Ross-San Anselmo M 8:30pm		\$82.88
Marin Teleservice		\$1,500.00	San Anselmo Fireside Meeting Su 8pm		\$81.12
Marin Teleservice Spaghetti Feed		\$95.00	San Geronimo Valley Mon. 8pm		\$85.99
MCYPAA		\$9.18	Saturday Serenity Sa 8pm	\$338.50	\$571.15
Mission Fellowship X-mas Potluck		\$30.00	Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6pm		\$75.00
Serenity Group - Alameda		\$44.13	Serendipity Sa 11am		\$240.00
Spirit of SF NYE Event		\$191.06	Sisters in Sobriety Th 7:30pm	\$50.00	\$140.00
Stinson Beach Fellowship		\$223.00	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		\$225.60
Sunday Step Study Su 4pm Pacifica		\$90.00	Sober & Serene Fri. 7pm		\$150.00
Unidentified Group		\$116.00	Sober Mom's F 11:30am		\$74.73
We Are Not St. Francis		\$15.00	Spiritual Testosterone Sunday Men's Stag 8:30am		\$200.00
TOTAL FELLOWSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS	\$205.67	\$3,821.17	Steps to Freedom M 8:30pm	\$341.29	\$563.79
MARIN CONTRIBUTIONS			Streetfighters Sa 9am		\$73.44
11th Step Meeting M 8pm		\$276.91	Sunday Express 6pm	\$140.00	\$140.00
12 & 12 Study Sa 8:15am		\$100.00	Sunday Night Mill Valley Smokeless Su 7:30pm		\$10.00
7am Urgent Care Daily 7am		\$960.00	Survivors M 12pm		\$474.92
Awakenings Sa. 8:30pm	\$100.00	\$280.00	Terra Linda Night Stag Th. 8pm	\$500.00	\$500.00
Attitude Adjustment Hour Daily 7am		\$1,630.00	Terra Linda Th 8:30pm		\$700.00
Awareness/Acceptance M 10:30am		\$136.00	T.G.I'm Sober M 6pm		\$161.61
Back to Basics Sun. 9:30am		\$100.10	TGI Tuesday Tu 6pm	\$24.80	\$84.60
Blackie's Pasture Sa 8:30pm		\$1,177.66	T.G.I.F. F 6pm		\$42.60
Caledonia Su 8pm		\$294.67	The Extra Support Group F 8:30pm		\$217.17
Candlelight Meditation Mon. 7:30pm		\$110.00	Three Step Group Sa 5:30pm		\$643.60
Creekside New Growth Su 7pm		\$85.00	Thursday Night Speaker Th 8:30pm		\$1,330.00
Crossroads Su 12pm		\$1,390.00	Tiburon Beginners Tu 7:10pm		\$491.00
Day At At Time Daily 6:30am		\$600.00	Tiburon Haven Su 12pm		\$400.00
Experience, Strength & Hope Sa 6pm	\$82.50	\$212.50	Tiburon Tuesday Beginners & Closed		\$763.00
Friday Night Book Fr 8:30pm		\$162.50	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		\$33.51
Freedom Finders F 8:30pm		\$80.83	Tuesday Smokeless Tu 8:30pm		\$1.28
Gratitude M 12pm		\$333.92	Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm	\$65.05	\$224.69
Greenfield Newcomers Sun. 7pm		\$80.00	Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm		\$77.00
Happy Hour Th 6pm	\$82.50	\$212.50	Wednesday Night Speaker Discussion W 7pm		\$36.00
Happy, Joyous, and Free M-F 12pm		\$250.00	Wednesday Noon W 12pm		\$236.00
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am	\$50.00	\$100.00	Wednesday Sundowners 6pm	\$56.00	\$56.00
Inverness Sunday Serenity 10am		\$60.00	Women On Monday M 7pm		\$64.61
Island Group Th 8pm	\$69.00	\$111.00	Women on Wednesdays 7pm		\$65.27
Keep It Simple Mon. 8:30pm		\$100.00	Women's Big Book Tu 10:30am		\$212.50
Living in the Solution F 6pm		\$312.76	Women's Step Study Group M 12pm	\$126.52	\$272.54
Marin City M-F 6:30pm		\$250.00	Working Dogs W 12:05pm		\$200.00
Marin Newcomers M 8:30pm		\$83.50	TOTAL MARIN CONTRIBUTIONS	\$3,260.66	\$27,998.11
Marin Sober Group F 8pm		\$45.00	SAN FRANCISCO CONTRIBUTIONS		
Mill Valley 7AM Daily 7am	\$700.00	\$2,546.09	7am As Bill Sees It Fri.		\$150.00
Mill Valley Discussion Wed 8:30pm		\$87.00	7AM Grab Bag M 7am	\$43.16	\$98.16
Mission Fireside Group W 8:30pm		\$40.00	AA As You Like It Tu 5:30pm		\$87.84
M. V. Original Smokeless Th 8pm		\$100.00	AA Step Study Su 6pm		\$327.99
Monday Blues M 6:30pm		\$121.88	A New Start F 8:30pm	\$65.15	\$371.52
Monday Night Meeting M 8pm		\$50.00	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm		\$145.34
Monday Night Stag M 8pm		\$975.00	A Vision For You Su 6:30pm		\$26.11
Morning After Sa 10am	\$181.70	\$1,343.28	A Vision For You II Tu 7:15pm		\$66.00
Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm	\$50.00	\$120.00	Acceptance Group M 5:30pm		\$155.00
Newcomers Step M 7:30pm		\$483.60	Afro American Fr 8pm		\$173.84
Noon Discussion Th 12pm		\$156.50	Alamo Square Su 7pm	\$120.00	\$120.00
Noon Hope F 12pm	\$39.60	\$288.18	All Together Now Th 8pm	\$82.86	\$450.93
Noon Tu 12pm		\$538.58	Alumni Group W 8:30pm		\$74.75
Novato Basics Tu 8pm		\$143.00	Amazing Grace M 7pm		\$440.40
Novato Big Book Tu 12pm		\$196.00			

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Group	Aug ' 03	YTD	Group	Aug ' 03	YTD
Any Lengths Sat. 9:30am	\$67.36	\$67.36	High Noon Friday F 12:15pm		\$741.37
As Bill Sees It Sa 11am		\$147.60	High Noon Thursday Th 12:15pm	\$98.05	\$755.17
As Bill Sees It Th. 6pm	\$123.85	\$123.85	High Noon Tuesday Tu 12:15pm	\$265.04	\$958.47
Back to Basics W 8pm	\$62.00	\$87.57	High Noon Wednesday W 12:15pm	\$105.34	\$790.94
Beginners Step Study Sa 6:30pm		\$81.86	Higher Power Lunch Group Th 12:10pm		\$51.46
Beginners Warm Up W 6pm		\$120.00	High Sobriety M 8pm		\$298.35
Bernal Big Book Sa 5pm		\$1,242.92	High Steppers W 7pm		\$374.67
Big Book Basics F 8pm	\$138.00	\$463.19	Hilldwellers M 8pm	\$300.00	\$420.00
Big Book Study Sun 11am		\$131.67	Home Group		\$127.20
Blue Book Special Su 11am		\$121.30	Hoodlum Haven F 8pm		\$420.00
Boy's Night Out Tues. 7:30pm		\$180.00	Hot Java F 11pm		\$150.60
Brokers Open Book Tu 1:30pm		\$153.44	How It Works Sa 2pm		\$234.06
Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm		\$178.54	Huntington Square W 6:30pm		\$355.29
Bushwackers Sat. 9am	\$60.00	\$60.00	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		\$215.85
CLAADAAGH Sa 8:15pm		\$60.00	Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		\$423.50
Castro Discussion W 8pm	\$558.06	\$792.66	Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		\$554.40
Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm		\$355.03	Keep It Simple Sa 8:30pm		\$124.36
Civic Center Nooners M 12pm		\$134.00	Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm		\$79.47
Cocoanuts Su 9am	\$120.00	\$318.00	Light Steppers Su 7pm		\$180.00
Come N Get It F 6:30pm		\$119.63	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		\$20.00
Common Welfare Th 8pm		\$198.18	Lincoln Park Sat. 8:30pm		\$279.00
Compass Group W 9pm		\$206.00	Live & Let Live Sun. 8pm	\$50.87	\$50.87
Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		\$260.14	Living in the Solution F 6pm		\$310.16
Design For Living Sa 8am		\$721.29	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	\$115.00	\$311.34
Each Day A New Beginning F 7am		\$692.02	Luke's Group W 8pm		\$170.27
Each Day A New Beginning M 7am	\$148.00	\$1,129.47	Marina Discussion F 8:30pm		\$479.00
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		\$225.89	Marina Dock Daily 7am		\$15.00
Each Day A New Beginning Tu 7am	\$358.00	\$746.91	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	\$38.68	\$105.30
Each Day A New Beginning Th 7am		\$409.59	Mid-Morning Support Su 10:30am	\$173.70	\$2,898.91
Each Day A New Beginning W 7am	\$134.40	\$786.58	Midnight Meditation Sa 12pm		\$33.90
Early Start F 6pm	\$147.92	\$526.70	Miracles Off 24th St.		\$50.00
Early, Joyous & Free Th. 7am	\$60.00	\$60.00	Mission Terrace W 8pm		\$128.22
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		\$110.00	Mocha Group Th 12:10pm	\$55.00	\$108.01
Eleventh Hour Tu 1pm		\$100.00	Monday at a Time Mon. 12:30pm		\$95.00
Embarcadero Group We 12:10pm		\$70.35	Monday Beginners M 8pm		\$190.82
Endless Summer F 8:30pm		\$471.71	Monday Men's Stag M 8pm		\$51.12
Eureka Step Tu 6pm		\$101.70	Monday Monday 12:15pm		\$349.27
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		\$292.99	Monday Steps & Traditions M 12:10pm		\$55.20
Faith, Hope & Charity F 12pm	\$60.00	\$120.00	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	New Hope Big Book M 6:30pm	\$55.26	\$196.37
Fellowship of the Spirit Su 1:30pm		\$150.00	Newcomers Tu 8pm		\$200.51
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		\$284.17	New Life W 7pm		\$30.73
Fireside Chat Th 8pm		\$352.43	New Wednesday High Noon		\$889.26
Friday Big Book F 12pm		\$99.44	No Reservation M 12pm	\$143.54	\$200.67
Friday At Five F 5pm		\$195.27	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		\$133.45
Friday Knights	\$30.31	\$150.31	One Liners Th 8:30		\$439.50
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		\$280.00	Parkside Th 8:30pm		\$180.00
Friday Night Womens Mtg. F 7:15pm		\$25.47	Pax West M 12pm	\$23.00	\$423.81
Friday Smokeless F 8:30pm		\$122.51	Pax West Th. 12pm	\$144.06	\$144.06
Friendly Circle Su 7:15pm & 8:30pm		\$1,565.78	Pinehurst Tues. 7:30pm		\$138.65
Friendship Group W 8pm	\$239.64	\$324.24	Pure & Simple Group Su 6pm		\$92.66
Garden Variety Sa 8pm		\$23.50	Richmond Big Book Study Th 7:30pm		\$100.00
Gay Beginners Q&A F 7pm		\$108.00	Rise-N-Shine Su 10am		\$58.00
Greenhouse Meditation Sa 5pm		\$200.00	Rose Garden Big Book Th. 12pm		\$195.00
Gold Mine Group M 8pm		\$132.00	Saturday Easy Does It 12pm		\$565.32
Golden Gate for Seniors Tu 1:30pm		\$205.10	Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm	\$60.00	\$240.00
Goodlands Su 2pm		\$45.76	Saturday Night Regroup Sa 7:30pm		\$315.00
Haight Street Blues Tu 6:15pm		\$309.08	Seacliff Th 8:30pm	\$67.29	\$162.00
Haight Street Explorers Th 6:30pm		\$120.00	Second Chance Th. 2:15pm		\$70.17
Happy Hour F 6:30pm		\$120.00			

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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 1187 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA Wednesday, September 3, 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	Greg S.	Keep Coming Back	X
Bill R.	Early Start	P	Janet B.	As Bill Sees It, Saturday	P
Carol B.	Fireside Chat	P	Jean C.	First Place Fellowship	P
Carol W.	Miracles Off 24 th St.	X	Jeremiah P.	All Together Now	A
Dan C.	Tiburon Haven	P	Joe G.	Beginners Meeting	P
Danny F.	Each Day A New Beginning	P	Johnny G.	High Noon Tuesday	A*
Dan P.	Second Chance	P	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	A*
Dan Z.	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	P	Julia W.	Friendship Group	A*
David A.	Living Sober	P	Julie H.	Terra Linda	X
David B.	Beginner's Warm-up	P	Guy K.	Creekside	A
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Kim O.	Easy Does It	P
David K.	Haight St. Blues	A	Kristine F.	Castro Discussion	P
David P.	Cocanuts	P	Leslie F.	How It Works	X
Dick T.	Attitude Adjustment Hour	P	Li L.	Keep It Simple	P
Doug F.	No Reservation	P	Lisa M.	Friday All Groups	P
Doug S.	As Bill Sees It - Thursday	P	Lynnore G.	Walk Of Shame	P
Erin B.	Sesame Step	X	Marc D.	Bernal Big Book	A*
Gamin C.	Like A Prayer	X	Mary K.	High Noon F	A*
Gary D.	Work In Progress	A**	Maury P.	Office Manager	P
Grant D.	Ten Years After	P	Michael R.	Huntington Square	P
New IFB Reps Present			Non-IFB Liaisons Present		
Scott C.	New Hope Big Book		Dorian W.	San Mateo General Service	P
Ramona A.			Peter M.	SF Teleservice	P
Mary Ellen D.			Paul P.	SF PI/CPC	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.

A. IFB Reports

Chair's Report: Danny F. reminded the board that the IFB will have a table at the Spirit of San Francisco Convention October 10-12 and will need volunteers. November is gratitude month. As each group is autonomous, please check with your groups to see if they want to participate in passing the basket a second time for Central Office during the month of November. Danny attended the 18th Annual Central Office/Intergroup Seminar in San Diego and returned with some wonderful ideas of what we might do to further extend the hand of A.A..

Treasurer's Report: Patrick M. submitted a written report and included a "Group Contributions Analysis" report comparing 2002 Actuals to 2003 Budget for Group Contributions. 2003 group contributions were budgeted 13% higher. As of September we are running 7% behind budget but we are in a healthy cash position. There are no major expense issues for the month; year to date profit and loss net income is \$779.

Central Office Manager's Report: Maury P. submitted a written report and asked for volunteers and filled shifts for the Central Office table for Friday and Saturday at

the convention.

She announced that Frank Brennan passed away on Sat. Sept. 29. There will be a memorial for Frank on Saturday, October 18, at Star of the Seas Church at 18th and Geary. Reps should announce to their groups that Central Office needs subs to answer phones; one year of sobriety is required. Maury hosted a Nor Cal CO Managers meeting here in SF. "What services we provide" was one topic discussed. Maury also attended the San Diego Central Office/Intergroup Seminar and heard presentations by GSO and AAWS and participated in several workshops.

Central Office Committee: Joe G. submitted a written report. The COC discussed a checklist of job related tasks for Maury and Patrick in case either needs to leave their positions. Patrick and Maury will present the 2004 preliminary budget to the COC for review next month. Ben, Patrick and Maury attended Marin Unity Day. Maury is working on a Central Office pamphlet.

B. The Special Orders of Business (Action Item)

1. David P. presented a Special Needs request for financial support for an ASL singer at "Friday All

Groups." David began the discussion by reading the AA "I am responsible" statement from the AA Guidelines. After discussion, a motion passed to provide six months of financial support for an ASL signer not to exceed \$100 a week. The six month time frame includes the 2 months that had previously been approved.

C. Ad Hoc Committee Reports

Literature Review Committee: Doug reported that the committee wants to revise the pamphlet "For Beginners". Danny brought back pamphlets and materials from San Diego, which will provide ideas. The committee needs more members, especially writers. The next meeting is Wed., Oct. 15, at Central Office at 6:30 PM. The committee began a discussion of how we might contribute used literature, which has been donated to the Central Office, to communities in need.

The Point Committee: Maury reported for the committee; she is currently the acting chair and the committee is seeking a new chair. Subscriptions have more than doubled since last year. Maury took some

(Continued on page 13)

Group	Aug '03	YTD	Group	Aug '03	YTD
Serenity House Groups		\$700.00	Sunset II'ers Tu 11am		\$25.00
Serenity Seekers M 7:30pm	\$575.00	\$1,185.20	Sunset Sobriety Th. 7:30pm		\$222.00
Sesame Step Tu 7:30pm	\$116.44	\$472.31	Sunset Speaker Step Su 7:30pm	\$38.46	\$154.46
Seven Seas Su 3pm		\$36.00	Surf Tu 8pm	\$78.40	\$128.40
Sinbar Sun. 8pm		\$240.00	Sutter Street Beginners Sa 6pm		\$1,043.05
Sister's Circle Sun. 6pm		\$58.91	TGI Tuesday 6pm		\$25.20
Sober 5150's W 8pm		\$150.00	Ten Years After Su 6pm		\$269.61
Sober & Centered F 7pm		\$140.43	Thursday Afternoon Step Study Th 1:30pm		\$233.31
Sobriety and Beyond W 7pm		\$54.00	Thursday Beginners Th 8pm		\$73.95
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		\$157.62	Thursday Night Women's Th 6:30pm		\$248.15
South Park		\$83.05	Too Early Sa 8am		\$794.16
Step Talk Sun. 8:30am		\$113.18	Trudgers Discussion Sun. 7pm	\$280.00	\$280.00
Stepping Out Sa 6pm		\$180.00	Tuesday Night Step 7pm		\$30.00
St. Francis Men's Group		\$61.49	Tuesday's Daily Reflections		\$106.12
Stonestown Group M 8pm		\$159.01	Twelve Steps to Happiness Fri. 7:30pm		\$66.00
Sunday Bookworms Su 7:30pm		\$153.00	Unidentified Group		\$52.80
Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 10:30am		\$1,243.90	Unidentified - Starbucks		\$21.00
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group Su 5pm		\$56.40	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$104.03	\$325.80
Sunday Night Castro SD Su 7:30pm		\$469.24	Walk Of Shame W 7:30pm	\$36.66	\$99.51
Sunday Rap Su 8pm		\$57.00	Waterfront Group Su 8pm		\$387.60
Sunday Wawona Su 8pm		\$320.00	We Care Tu 12pm		\$225.06
Sundown W 7pm		\$318.00	Wednesday Sunrise Smokefree Wed. 7am		\$60.00
Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 5:45	\$60.00	\$120.00	We Really Do Meditate Sa 10:30am		\$96.00
Sunset 9'ers Mon.	\$200.00	\$493.51	Weekend Worker Sa 7am		\$54.00
Sunset 9'ers F 9am		\$229.00	West Portal W 8:30pm		\$155.15
Sunset 9'ers Sa 9am		\$1,228.66	Wits End Step Study T 8pm		\$32.19
Sunset 9'ers Sun.	\$90.00	\$90.00	Women's AA W12:05pm		\$51.00
Sunset 9'ers Th 9am	\$84.45	\$490.89	Women's Kitchen Table Tu 6:30pm		\$621.08
Sunset 9'ers Tu 9am		\$202.64	Women's 10 Years Plus Th. 6:15pm		\$255.00
Sunset 9'ers Wed.		\$138.00	Women Who Drank Too Much Tues. 6pm		\$88.68
Sunset II'ers		\$20.00	Work in Progress Sa 7pm	\$57.59	\$213.59
Sunset II'ers Fri.	\$75.00	\$75.00	TOTAL SF CONTRIBUTIONS	\$6,109.57	\$54,168.15
Sunset II'ers Su 11am		\$60.00			
Sunset II'ers Mon 11am		\$80.00	TOTAL ALL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$9,575.90	\$85,987.43

(Continued from page 12)

copies of the newsletter to San Diego and it received high praise. There is a need for people to write articles and to contribute ideas and skills. Correspondence can be sent to the e-mail address: thepoint@aasf.org. Intergroup reps will now receive their copy at the monthly IFB meeting unless they have paid for their subscription.

Orientation Committee: Bill R. began by asking how many members present had attended an orientation and invited all who haven't and all new reps to come to the next meeting Wednesday, October 29, at 6:30 at Central Office. The IFB, how it is organized, and the role of the representative is covered. The by-laws, which govern what we do here, are also reviewed.

Website Committee: Michael R, chair, pointed out that there is a new website sheet, which we can share with our groups. Our website, www.aasf.org, posts the AA meeting schedules for San Francisco and Marin and the monthly service meeting calendar. New to the site are forms for Trusted Servant registration and Group Information changes. The next committee meeting is on Oct. 2 at 6:15 PM. New members are welcome! They will discuss website options and new ideas such as providing a down-loadable and easy to print meeting schedule.

Schedule Committee: Li L. reported that the new and improved 2nd edition of the meeting schedule is out; "How it Works", a suggested meeting format, the

preamble, steps and traditions are included. They are waiting to hear from a Santa Clara company with a proposed printing bid which might reduce our cost.

12th Step Committee: Lisa reported that there is 12th Step Worker Seminar in Marin at St. Isabella's Parish Center on Saturday, October 4, 10 am to 12 noon and she encouraged us to come to support. At Unity Day, Saturday, October 18, at St. Mark's Church, there will be a condensed version of the workshop.

Special Events Committee: Dave B. reported that the committee will have their first meeting, October 7 at 7:30 pm at Central Office. They are anxious to get to work.

Special Needs Committee: see Special Orders of Business

C. New Business

We split into small groups and discussed "What else can the IFB be doing to extend the hand of AA?" All the groups submitted their ideas to Danny; he will compile them for the group.

D. IFB Standing Committee Reports

1. SF Teleservice: Peter M. submitted a written report and informed us that 10% of shifts are without volunteers. They especially have trouble filling overnight shifts; there are always openings and always a need for volunteers. Central Office staff worked to update the Teleservice database and the


committee is in the process of forwarding updated 12th Step volunteer information to Teleservice volunteers. The next meeting is October 20 with orientation at 6:30 pm and the monthly meeting at 7:30 pm.

2. PI/CPC: Paul P. reported that the next PI/CPC speaker workshop is Saturday, October 18, at 10 am at Unity Day at St. Mark's Church. The next regular meeting is the second Monday, Oct. 13, at 7:00 pm, at Central Office.

E. Non -IFB Liaison Reports

1. General Service, SF: Todd M. submitted a written report. The fall inventory assembly is November 1 in Calistoga. SF Unity Day is Saturday, October 18, at St. Mark's Church 10 am to 2 pm. SF is working on an assembly bid for 2006. Todd gave a copy of General Service, *Living AA's Principles through Sponsorships 2003 Final Report*, to Central Office.

2. Spirit of San Francisco: Peter M. reported that the Spirit of San Francisco Convention is October 10 to October 12 at the Ramada Plaza Hotel at 8th and Market. He recommends checking it out and supporting our San Francisco convention. Registration is \$25.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, November 5, at Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Avenue, Sausalito, California at 7 pm. 

POINT IT OUT—

Letters to the Editor

To the editor,

Hi, I am the editor of the North Orange County Central Office newsletter, The Anonymous Times. Our managers were at the conference in San Diego and brought back newsletters from Central Offices all over the nation. I have to tell you that your newsletter, The Point, is top-notch. The layout is fantastic, the graphics are great and the articles are well-written; a truly professional job! You also have great participation from the Fellowship in your region, something we are working hard to develop. I took over the newsletter in May and it's been a bit of a learning curve but a very rewarding experience.

I love reading newsletters from around the country to see what other Central Offices are doing. I plan to incorporate a lot of the ideas from other Central Office publications. Any ideas or suggestions on what worked for you would be greatly appreciated. Thanks again for a great newsletter!

Jenni J.
NOCCO Anonymous Times

Hi Jenni,

We appreciate your kind words and will use them as encouragement to keep doing the best we can. Thank you so much for taking a moment of your time to send them.

We have gotten the majority of our participation from the fellowship by word of mouth. We have tried printing our needs in the newsletter with little success. The informal grapevine has seemed to work best for us. We sure would like an alternate source, but as of yet, have found none. We are constantly seeking input from the members and will keep it up. We are so very fortunate to have been "taken care of" so far.

In service,
Maury P., Point Committee Member

Reading the Big Book with Joe & Charlie

by Jeff O.


After "sponsor hopping" during my early sobriety, I found a sponsor who walked me through the Twelve Steps as described in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. I was surprised at our first meeting when we started reading the "basic text" of *Alcoholics Anonymous*; we began with the preface. I thought I was the only person in San Francisco reading the book with such granularity.

Coincidentally (before I knew that there are no coincidences in God's Universe) a friend of mine announced that two drunks from the South, Joe and Charlie, were hosting a "Big Book Seminar" later that year. She proclaimed, "This'll be a boost to your sobriety." I decided to attend without fully knowing my reasons, but now I know that it was "God being anonymous" in my life. At the seminar, I discovered that my sponsor's method of "passing it on" was not as unique as I thought. On the first day Joe and Charlie opened their Big Books and began reading from the very beginning of the book, just like my sponsor.

In September 2003, four years later, I attended Joe and Charlie's seminar again. They opened by stating that they are most definitely not the gurus of the Big Book. They said that they are not experts on anything at all. They are just two drunks who met years ago and realized they had a mutual interest in the Big Book. They have studied it together over the years, and as Charlie says, "hopefully, hopefully we've learned a few thing about it... those things we just love to share with other people."

One of Joe and Charlie's primary interests is the sequence in which the text of the Big Book is presented. This is important to them because

they have observed people jumping right into Chapter Five, "How it Works," without understanding the nature of the spiritual malady (problem) and its relationship to a necessary spiritual awakening (solution). They used the analogy of a math textbook where algebra is chapter five, and the basics of addition, multiplication, fractions and decimals are covered in the first four chapters. Jumping past these first chapters in the math textbook would leave the chapter on algebra very confusing. The message is simple: The A.A. book makes the most sense when read from the beginning, just like any other basic text book. By following certain directions in the intended order, A.A. members find an individual and personal relationship with their Creator. Complicated drunks like me need simple directions like that, and as with most problem solving, it makes sense to know and accept the problem before taking steps to solve the problem.

Joe and Charlie's enthusiasm and frequent laugh-out-loud humor made a fun weekend. We also learned more about the A.A. program through the context of other A.A. literature. Several of us left the conference with a lighter, but more grounded stride. I felt more connected to God, our program and my fellows. Among the many aspects of recovery from alcoholism, two have become very noticeable to me; one is fellowship and one is program. After my weekend of studying the Big Book with Joe and Charlie and a few other sober drunks, I am more emphatic about doing my part to keep the "program" of *Alcoholics Anonymous* in the "fellowship" of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. 

Financial Statement

AUGUST 2003 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	Aug 03	Jan - Aug 03		Aug 03	Jan - Aug 03
Ordinary Income/Expense			Travel	\$199.00	\$199.00
Income			Training	\$0.00	\$60.00
Group Contributions	\$9,575.90	\$86,105.01	Utilities	\$179.34	\$1,447.89
Individual Contributions			Uncatagorized Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00
Honorary Contributions	\$99.00	\$1,070.00	Total Expense	\$14,536.34	\$111,868.29
Individual -Unrestricted	\$1,262.00	\$6,281.60	Net Ordinary Income	-\$2,226.32	-\$201.11
Individual Contributions - Other	\$0.00	\$59.48	Other Income/Expense		
Total Individual Contributions	\$1,361.00	\$7,411.08	Other Income		
Gratitude Month			Interest Income	\$42.02	\$483.85
Gratitude Month -Individual	\$0.00	\$20.00	Total Other Income	\$42.02	\$483.85
Gratitude Month-Groups	\$0.00	\$2,223.63	Other Expense		
Total Gratitude Month	\$0.00	\$2,243.63	Depreciation Expense	\$105.42	\$1,040.80
Newsletter Subscript.	\$114.00	\$886.00	Total Other Expense	\$105.42	\$1,040.80
Sales - Bookstore	\$6,535.31	\$54,332.12	Net Other Income	-\$63.40	-\$556.95
Total Income	\$17,586.21	\$150,977.84	Net Income	-\$2,289.72	-\$758.06
Cost of Goods Sold					
Cost of Books Sold	\$5,276.19	\$39,310.66			
Total COGS	\$5,276.19	\$39,310.66			
Gross Profit	\$12,310.02	\$111,667.18			
Expense					
Bad Checks	\$0.00	\$0.00			
Employee Expenses					
Wages & Salaries	\$6,750.00	\$51,698.12			
Employer Tax Expenses	\$543.15	\$5,434.45			
Benefits/Pension	\$664.00	\$5,139.00			
Retirement/Annuity Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00			
Workers Comp Ins.	\$600.34	\$966.77			
Total Employee Expenses	\$8,557.49	\$63,238.34			
Bank Charges					
Cr Card Fees	\$181.08	\$637.36			
Bank Charges - Other	\$34.30	\$142.40			
Total Bank Charges	\$215.38	\$779.76			
Equipment Lease	\$565.10	\$4,520.78			
Filing/Fees	\$0.00	\$316.14			
Insurance	\$100.55	\$814.52			
Internet Expense	\$0.00	\$238.35			
Miscellaneous Expense	\$0.00	\$245.94			
Office Supplies	\$242.93	\$2,424.60			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	\$0.00	\$705.15			
Postage - Other	\$87.00	\$604.16			
Total Postage	\$87.00	\$1,309.31			
Shipping	\$14.12	\$146.41			
Printing	\$0.00	\$1,280.77			
Professional Fees					
Computer Consulting	\$0.00	\$250.00			
Total Professional Fees	\$0.00	\$250.00			
Rent - Office	\$3,458.75	\$27,670.00			
Rent - Other	\$0.00	\$680.00			
Repair & Maintenance	\$150.00	\$1,635.39			
Security System	\$33.50	\$301.50			
Telephone	\$733.18	\$4,309.59			

The Point Committee meetings are for present and prospective committee members. The Point Committee meetings are working meetings. They are not to be used as a forum for voicing opinions on content of the newsletter 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.

The Point

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November 2003

ISSUE 1103