

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

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

The Point

May 2004

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.

HEADS-UP 2005 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONEERS

Save the dates now—June 30-July 3, 2005—for AA's 2005 International Convention in Toronto. These Internationals only happen once every five years and are something you shouldn't miss! For Registration, Housing and Transportation information, GSO has posted FAQ's on AA's website: www.aa.org. We have also posted a "Hot Link" direct to the appropriate pages on our website: www.aasf.org. Registrations forms will be available at Central Office in late August.

If you are thinking about attending, you might want to start planning now as Canada has tougher border crossing regulations! For example, if you have drunk driving (DUI/DWI) or felony convictions in your past, additional documentation may be required by a Canadian Visa Office for entry approval. More information regarding criminal convictions may be obtained by contacting the Consulate General of Canada at (213) 346-2700 or Email: Ingls-td@dfait-maeci.gc.ca. Also, a driver's license is no longer sufficient proof of citizenship to use for entry into Canada—a passport is ideal. Read more at www.travel.state.gov/tips_canada

Happy International! ↑

Reflections on Minneapolis in 2000 By Ed K.

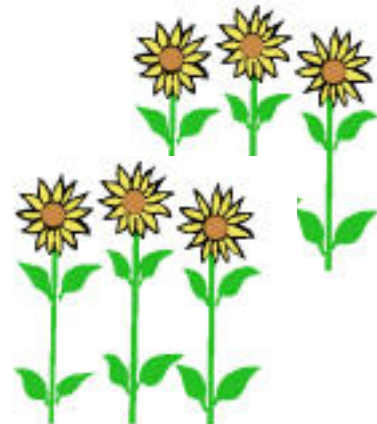
The Minneapolis International Convention of 2000 ended with a dozen Bay Area attendees cruising at 38 thousand feet, having an impromptu meeting. After all, we were alcoholics, right? We had our coffee, right? We were all still buzzing about the events—who we saw, where we went, the meetings, the Dome, marching through downtown to the official opening, the countdown and such... lots of sharing and lots of laughing. The "normies" on the flight were wondering just what we were doing. The Al-Anoners knew and so did one of the flight attendants, who was a member of Bill W.'s gang, and the one that kept the coffee coming.

The meeting was the caper to a week of a citywide welcome hosted by the area AA groups. Between the marathon meetings and the personal tours, they bombarded us with great old fashioned, mid-western hospitality. Nearly every downtown restaurant had a welcome sign in the window and the convention got mentions in the nightly TV newscasts and the morning papers. The coffee shops were doing great business and the mall near the convention center became a great hang for us AAs.

There was music of all kinds—AAs and locals playing jazz-rock-folk plus street performers of all types. As usual the colorful, strong showing of "The Fifth Chapter"—AA motorcyclists—were there as well as recovering people from all over

(Continued on page 6)

May 2004....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 SPECIAL MEETING Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida San Francisco 1 pm	3 FIRST MON Spirit of San Francisco Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7 pm	4 FIRST TUE Special Needs Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6 pm Special Events Committee: Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7:30 pm	5 FIRST WED Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm Meeting 7 pm, Star of the Sea Church 180 Harrison St, Sausalito	6	7	1 FIRST SAT Central Office Archives Committee At Central Office, 10 am <div>8</div>
	10 SECOND MON SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 7 pm	11 SECOND TUE SF Bridging The Gap 1111 O'Farrell, San Francisco 6:30 pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell, San Francisco Orientation: 7 pm Meeting: 8 pm Marin H&I Lagunitas & Shady Ln Ross 7 pm	12 SECOND WED 12th Step Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 6:45 pm	13	14	15
16 THIRD SUN Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida San Francisco 1 pm	17 THIRD MON 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 THIRD TUE San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo 7:30 pm	19 THIRD WED Literature Review Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:30 pm	20	21	22 FOURTH SAT General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 11 am Business Meeting: 12:30pm
23	24	25 FOURTH TUE Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln / Maple (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:30 pm	26	27 FOURTH THU Website Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento San Francisco 6:15 pm Marin PI Committee 1360 Lincoln Ave (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:15 pm LAST THU SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento San Francisco Orientation: 7:15 pm Regular Meeting: 8 pm	28	29
30 LAST SUN Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush, San Francisco 5:30 pm	31 Memorial Day Central Office Closed					

COMING EVENTS

2004	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.
April 30—May 2	Sober & Free Conference Wyndham Hotel, 1350 N. First St. San Jose; (408) 453-6200; www.soberandfree.org
May 1	Spring Fling Drag Thing, Living Sober Event, MHR Church, 100 Diamond/ 18th St., 6pm Meeting/ 7:30pm Show, \$15.
May 7	Bingo Extravaganza; Benefit for New Alano Club; Women's Building, 3542 18th St; 6pm Meeting/ 7:30pm Bingo; \$15
May 7—9	Sober in the Sun 2004, Gay & Lesbian Convention, Palm Springs, CA, Visit: www.soberinthesun.com
May 14—16	20th Annual Tri-State Round-Up, Riverside Resort Hotel & Casino, Laughlin, NV, www.tristate-roundup.com
May 16	Big Book Seminar, Sundays through July 18 (not June 6), 1pm to 3pm, Fairfax Women's Club, 46 Park Rd., Fairfax
May 27—30	47th International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (ICYPAA), Orlando Florida, www.icypaa47.org
May 29	Memorial Day BBQ, Spirit of San Francisco Event, Sharon Meadows, Golden Gate Park, See flier— page 5 this issue
June 4—6	Sunset Round Up 2004, Key West Florida, visit www.sunsetroundup.com for more information.
June 5	3rd Annual Recovery Roundup, Red Bluff, CA, visit www.aanorcal.org for more information.
June 12—13	Women's Sobriety Retreat, White's Mansion, Mill Valley, contact ourretreat@earthlink.net for more information.
June 19	Secretaries' Workshop, 11:30am to 1pm, Central Office, Information & Discussion for Meeting Secretaries, Pizza!

Secretaries: Please make these announcements: Pages two and three list 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.



May
2004

This Month in AA Trivia May

1. Bill W. was an only child, true or false?
2. Bill never graduated high school, true or false?
3. The 70th Anniversary of AA will be celebrated in what city in 2005?
4. What was Dr. Bob's phone number in 1941?
5. Whose personal story is the only one that appears in the "basic text" portion of the Big Book rather than "personal stories"?

1. False
2. True
3. Toronto, Canada
4. UN 2436
5. Bill W.

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MEETING CHANGES

New Meetings

Sun	7:00 pm	Mission	A.A. GAY Y LESBIANAS (Es) (Bk) 418 Valencia St.
Mon	12:30 pm	Haight/ Ashbury	MAMA, DO I NEED A MEETING!! (CC) (Di) 1757 Waller St.
Tue	5:30 pm	Mission	SPIRIT MENDERS SPEAKER DISCUSSION (SD) 2490 16th St. nr. Capp
Tue	6:30 pm	Park Merced	STEPPIN' UP (SS) 777 Brotherhood Way, Church of Christ
Wed	8:00 pm	Pacific Heights	COW HOLLOW MEN'S GROUP (Di) (Me) 2325 Union/ Steiner, Church
Sat	10:00 pm	Mission	REBELLION DOGS (SD) (1.5hrs.) Mission Fellowship, 2900 24th St.

Meeting Changes

Sun	10:30 am	Laurel Heights	MID-MORNING SUPPORT Pacific Medical Center, Buchanan, between Clay & Sacramento, Meeting Space A, (was 3700 California).
Tue	6:15 pm	Mission	WOMEN WHO DRANK TOO MUCH 938 Valencia/ Liberty, (was 483 Guerrero/ 17th St.)
Tue	7:00 pm	Civic Center	NEWCOMERS GROUP 210 Tenth St./ Folsom, (was 818 Steiner/ Grove)
Wed	8:00 pm	Dolores Park	FRIENDSHIP GROUP 19th & Dolores, Church (was Davies Med. Ctr., North Tower)
Thu	6:30 pm	Sunset	BEGINNER BIG BOOK STEP (BB) (SD) 7th & Irving, (was Trudgers Book Study)
Fri	midnight	Outer Sunset	HOT JAVA 1396 LaPlaya/ Judah, Café (was 11:00pm)

No Longer Meeting

Mon	7:30 pm	TV	VIDEO A.A. Viacom 26
Thu	6:30 pm	San Rafael	MARIN STEPS & TRADITIONS 200 N. San Pedro Rd, Osher Marin JCC.
Mon-Fri	8:30 am	Mission	MISSION FELLOWSHIP 2900 24th St.; No 8:30 am Monday to Friday.

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!

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES !!


The San Francisco Teleservice Committee answers the phones for the AA Hotline, (415-674-1821) when Central Office is closed. This means covering shifts Monday through Friday from 6am to 10am, 6pm to 10pm, and overnight from 10pm to 6am. On the weekends, additional shifts are covered by volunteers from 10am to 2pm and 2pm to 6pm. Busy shifts have "back-up" volunteers who can spend more time with callers who need help staying sober or request a visit from a 12th Step Volunteer. That's 180 phone shifts per month!

There are also seven Daily Coordinators, a Chairperson and an Information Chairperson.

Most of the calls Teleservice receives are requests for information about meetings and events from visitors and local AAs (who have misplaced their schedules). Still,

Teleservice volunteers are always encouraged to remember that when they answer the phones, they are the voice of Alcoholics Anonymous. By adhering to the principles outlined in our Twelve Traditions, the San Francisco Teleservice Committee works to assist the alcoholic who still suffers and who is looking for the solution that Alcoholics Anonymous offers.

Volunteers need to have one year of sobriety and to complete an orientation which is at 6:30pm on the 3rd Monday of each month at

Central Office (1821 Sacramento near Van Ness). The Teleservice Committee meeting follows the orientation at 7:00pm. Our next orientation/committee meeting will be at 6:30pm on Monday, May 17th, 2004. Questions can be sent via email to : SFTeleservice@aasf.org 

Group Speakers for May 2004

TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

1101 O'Farrell, Urban Life Center, San Francisco
Tuesday, 8 pm

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
05/04/04	Wendi O.	Tuesday 12 x 12, Redwood City	04/24/88
05/11/04	Samuel B.	2900 24th St,	08/27/94
05/18/04	Mary Mc.	Valencia Smokefree	09/02/86
05/25/04	Larry D.	No Gurus	06/29/92

FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

1101 O'Farrell, Urban Life Center, San Francisco
Friday, 8:30 pm
Signed for the hearing impaired

DATE	HOST GROUP	SPEAKER
05/07/04	Dignitaries Sympathies	Coy D.
05/14/04	Lynne H.	TBA
05/21/04	Bill R.	TBA
05/28/04	Wade	Sesame Step

BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

DATE	SPEAKER	FROM
05/02/04	Carole B.	Tuesday Noon Step Study, Millbrae
05/09/04	Staci F.	Grace Center, SF
05/16/04	Nancy R.	Easy Does It, SF
05/23/04	Ben N.	Miracles Off 24th St., SF
05/30/04	Zack P.	Sunset 9'ers, SF

Are you getting *The Point*?

We do our best to get a copy of *The Point* to the Secretary of each group, free of charge, in order to keep our Fellowship informed about current AA activities and events. *The Point* includes personal stories, AA announcements, reports and financial statements. It is important that this information be directed to as many members as possible. Information expands the Group Conscience, one of the strengths that holds Alcoholics Anonymous together.

If you haven't heard these announcements or seen a copy of this newsletter at your meeting, let us know. And let your Secretary know that registration forms are available on our website: www.aasf.org.

The Spirit of San Francisco Presents

Memorial Day Killer Que

Sharon Meadows, Golden Gate Park
(West of Carousel)

Saturday, May 29th, 2004 from 12 – 4 PM

12 – 2 PM	Killer BBQ
2 – 3 PM	Speaker Meeting
3 – 4 PM	Cleanup

Come celebrate Memorial Day with the best recovery BBQ in SF !

Volunteers needed to provide service,
equipment and food !

Contact Michael at 415.675.9963
or masokoloff@usfca.edu

FREE EVENT ! (Donations Welcome)

CONTRIBUTIONS

to the Central Office were made through April 10, 2004 honoring the following members

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Bob
R.W.
Curtis C.

ANNIVERSARIES

High Noon: Kelly B. – 16 years; Elizabeth S. – 18 years
Sesame Step: Jaime G. – 6 years
Endless Summer: Jerry – 1 Year; Tom G. – 2 Years;
Gammon – 4 Years; Naomi – 4 Years; Derek D. – 5 years

Mike T. – 5 years; Judy W. – 10 years; Peter R. – 20 years

Beyond with Mom

By Marc O.

My earliest memories of my mother are of a sad, vindictive and ambivalent woman. It took years to realize that this had to do with alcoholism. When I was 13, I saw my dad rush my mom out the door slumped in his arms. “Too many pills,” he said. In the bathroom, I found the note in the red ink of her grocery lists: “God forgive me.” She survived. At that point her psychiatrist made it clear she had to stop drinking.

So she went to AA just as my own experiments with alcohol and drugs began. By sixteen I’d scared myself with some bad acid trips, burning black candles in my room and reading about Charlie Manson in the papers. I turned to transcendental meditation and got off drugs and alcohol—for the most part.

This was a great time of rapport with my mother—the first, really. We listened to George Harrison sing “My Sweet Lord” together and blissed out. I went with her to an AA meeting when she was getting a birthday cake. When they asked if there were any other alcoholics in the room I had to control my arm from shooting up. I had no idea why—I figured it had something to do with mob psychology.

Three years of transcendental meditation still didn’t make me high all the time (which I assumed was the point) so I quit. I worked on easier and more familiar methods with a vengeance. Within a year I bounced out of two mental wards from drug-related breakdowns. It took me another eleven years to get sober.

My younger sister died of leukemia. My mother, having divorced dad once she was sober enough to see it had been a loveless marriage, also lost her boyfriend to a heart attack. She stayed sober. Later, with thirteen years sober, she married a newcomer in a shocking move that rippled through the L.A. Program. I attended the marriage stoned.

They remained happily married until her death.

Meanwhile, my mother climbed to prominence as a circuit speaker (My own sponsor later said that hearing “Alma was like taking a valium”). I generally avoided her for obvious reasons, until finally after two weeks sober in AA I called my mom to tell her. “Did you quit the cocaine, too?” she asked. How did she know I’d also been using?

Once more we had a wonderful rapport. This was the mom I had wanted. I think it worked both ways.

My pre-sober Tibetan Buddhist interests deepened now, and I wound up doing a formal three-year retreat in the Santa Cruz Mountains. My mom visited me after two years, took one look at me and said “Whatever you’re doing, it’s good.”

When I got out of my retreat, mom’s health had declined. She’d smoked for fifty years, had a mastectomy and had to quit the butts. Her husband looked after her but still she declined with a variety of aches and complaints. She admitted she wanted to die. After a fall, she started to go very quickly. She moved in and out of confusion. I saw her twice in the hospital. The first time it was like talking to somebody peaking on acid. She kept calling me “Jack.” I don’t think she meant “Kerouac.” The final time she did recognize me. Mom said “Hello, Marc-o” and “Peace.” She had thirty-three years clean and sober. I had eighteen.

I called my Tibetan lama (whom Mom had met) right at her death and requested the proper ceremonies. In the hospital, Mom told a sponsee she’d already seen heaven. “What’s it like?” the sponsee had asked. “Beyond words,” mom smiled beatifically. The sponsee told me this at the funeral, adding, “Your mother was very proud of you.”


Happy Mother’s Day, Mom. The feeling’s mutual. 

the world. This was a truly unique experience—even for those of us who hate “group type planned things” and are not fond of traveling in the summertime. We actually had fun in spite of all that. I told myself time and again, “Oh, get over it, Ed! Relax and enjoy!” Besides, after attending Montreal in ‘85, I knew it would be great.

The week was filled with all those magical moments for which AA International Conventions have become famous: the AA special edition history books, the topical workshops, the art shows, the crafts by AAs, the special meetings small and HUGE, and of course, some 50 thousand strong sober AAs from over 70 countries, all celebrating life. And the close-ups, seeing newcomers like

the late Sandy S. smiling in awe at the Opening Night happenings in the ‘Dome’.

Before the flight home took off, there was a very long delay. We taxied out then sat on the tarmac for nearly an hour! It was easy to see that the people that were the most upset by this event were those ‘normies’ who were very pissed off that the airline was NOT serving drinks during the delay. Remembering how we would have felt during our drinking days during such a thing, it became another point of much laughter at our meeting.

I was thrilled at sharing the week with the love of my life—Libby, my Al-anon wife. It was THE BEST! So now I am on to Toronto—Don’t miss it! Let yourself go! 

Dear Alky

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

Dear Alky,

I thought I left my mother behind forever when I left my hometown years ago. Guess what? She just moved to San Francisco. She lives alone -- My Dad divorced her because of her alcoholism. She still drinks, and smokes.

I don't want to see her or spend time with her. I don't think she really wants to see me either. She calls my voicemail when she knows I'm not home or sends me e-mails and then doesn't e-mail me back if I respond. Neither she nor anyone else in my family acknowledges that I am sober. Our visits end in either fights or tears.

She manipulates me into inviting her over so she can see other family who don't invite her around. I want to meet her at a restaurant so my husband and I can leave when we've had enough. She wants to come to our house where we can't escape. I feel guilty but I can't stand being around her. Do I have to see her?

Electra

Dear Electra,

You don't have to see your mother. She sounds like a toxic personality. Try to limit your exposure. If she insists on dinner together, go ahead and meet her on neutral territory like a restaurant, rather than in your home. It may be better to see her separately from other members of your family, if none of them seem to care about your sobriety. Enlist your husband to support you in setting boundaries. He doesn't have to be a referee, but he can back you up when you say, "It's nine o'clock, time to go." As always, when you resent someone, it may help you feel better if you pray for her to have everything you would want for yourself. Check out pages 551 and 552 of the 4th edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Yours,

Alky

Dear Alky,

I am a heterosexual male and a newly sober alcoholic. I went to a Big Book meeting my sponsor suggested and we were reading a chapter where it talks about how some men become impotent after they get sober. Not me, baby! I am so horny I can't stand it. I notice every girl in every meeting I go to. Now that the weather is getting nice it seems like the streets of San Francisco are full of beautiful girls in short skirts and tank tops. Man, it's Sex and the City out there. Is this Spring Fever or a normal part of being sober?

Romeo



Dear Romeo,

You have received one of the gifts of sobriety – you are in touch with your body, free to feel all your feelings. You are also responsible for what you do about them. If you haven't worked your Fourth Step yet, I suggest you ask your sponsor about the Sex Inventory on page 69 of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. You might also read *Living Sober*. You might want to look at the chapters beginning on page 33 on loneliness and page 60 on emotional entanglements. As the poet said, in spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. If you want love, act in a loving way. Sober sex, what a concept!

Ever responsible,

Alky

Dear Alky,

I am really bored with AA. Everything's a miracle. We have an attitude of gratitude. If I hear one more tired AA cliché I am going to scream. My sponsor smiles and says go to a meeting, help a newcomer. Is this still necessary? My friends say since I have been sober for years it is unlikely I will relapse. I have a good job. I made amends to my family. My finances are in order. Everything is working fine in my life except for AA. I am not learning anything new. I have heard all this stuff before. Don't tell me I am going to drink. That is just a scare tactic.

Been There, Done That

Dear Been There,

You *are* going to drink. In fact you have already slipped, without even taking a sip of alcohol. One early warning sign of a relapse is the assertion of the ego: taking credit for our own sobriety and taking sobriety for granted. Many old-timers explain ego as E.G.O. – Easing God Out. If you stop practicing Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve on a daily basis you are headed out the door of AA and into the door of the nearest bar. Take inventory and make amends, pray every day to maintain a conscious contact with your Higher Power, go to meetings and hold out your hand to the newcomer. You can't keep your sobriety if you don't give it away. Get off your self-satisfied butt.

With tough love,

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

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Following is a list of the names and contact information for the IFB Officers and Chairpersons of most of the service committees.

If you are interested in doing service on a committee or if you wish to receive more information about a committee, please contact these committee chairs.

INTERGROUP OFFICERS:

CHAIR—

Danny F. dannyf112@earthlink.net

VICE CHAIR—

Marc D. 415.999-0290

TREASURER—

Patrick M. patrick_m30075@yahoo.com

RECORDING SECRETARY—

Janet B. 415.396-6125

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE—

Joe G. 415.350-0373

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE—

Bill R. 415.861-7355

LITERATURE COMMITTEE—

Doug F. 415.821-4049

SPECIAL EVENTS—

David B. dbelectric@turnershouse.net

SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE—

Dan P. 650.589-6402

WEBSITE COMMITTEE—

Michael R. 415.392-0458

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE—

Ray M. ramus@prodigy.net

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE—

Peter M. sfteservice@aasf.org

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE—

Laura N. 415.931-2567

12th STEP COMMITTEE—

The Hand of A.A.

By Anonymous

No one has to tell most members of AA that service is one of the essential cornerstones of the program, and that without it we could not stay sober. I personally have had the honor of doing a variety of formal and informal kinds of service; greeter, secretary, cleaning up ashtrays (back when we used to smoke in meetings), Intergroup committees, Teleservice, H&I panels, sponsorship, and making the coffee, to name just a few. If you “keep coming back” long enough, the opportunities are numerous and almost overwhelming.

Another thing that happens over time are changes in one’s feelings about meetings. I know some people hate meetings right from the start, but I didn’t. I got on a good, fluffy pink cloud from the start of my first real sober time. Going to two or three meetings a day was a real joy. I grabbed at commitments greedily, like a drunk going for that first drink of the day. That honeymoon phase lasted for a while, but inevitably, my ardor cooled, and as sobriety gave me a life worth living, I began to resent going to meetings. I found them boring—an imposition—and I was no longer getting much out of them.

“How long do I have to go to meetings?” Till you want to go. This was what I heard. What, however, could make me want to go? Then I was reminded of the most important reason for meeting attendance. I go to meetings not for what I can get out of them, but for what I can give. This does not require me to actually do anything at the meeting. Simply being present, making sure the meeting happens. Ensuring that when the newcomer, or any other alcoholic in need, shows up at the scheduled time and finds the meeting going on, is being of service.

When I feel like I cannot be of service in any other way, this form of service is always available. An hour of my day, and I can be present for all the other alcoholics who need to see another person, even a silent one, who will sit with them in solidarity. This is a service opportunity that can be accomplished even if one only has 24 hours sober, even if one is in the bowels of despair, even when life and everything else seems too overwhelming for anything more complicated to be possible. We can always suit up, show up, and be present for one small hour.

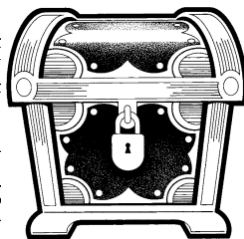
There is that saying, which I may be getting a little wrong, which says, “Whenever anyone, anywhere, reaches out their hand for the help of AA, I want someone to always be there, and for that, I am responsible.” Being in meetings on a regular basis ensures that meetings are there. Each person’s individual attendance really does matter.

“The second night [in AA] I sat in what I now call the ‘new guy chair’ – second row, against the wall (if you sit in back, they know you’re new, and if you sit in front you might have to talk to someone). When it came time to hold hands and pray at the end of the meeting. I had no hand to hold on one side. I remember thinking ‘I will never fit in here’ and hanging my head. I felt my hand being taken – someone in front of me had taken the time to be sure that the circle was complete. To this day I don’t know who it was, but that person is the reason I came back the next night – that person saved my life. And I kept coming back.”¹ ↑

¹ Reprinted from Alcoholics Anonymous, “Empty on the Inside”, with permission from A.A.W.S., Inc.

Treasures of the Twelve & Twelve

by Suzi K.O.



Deep in my alcoholism, I experienced a moment of pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. I have had many more since then, but this was the worst. I was living with the man I loved. He found my drinking and drug use disgusting, and so was seeing other women. One week he disappeared, for how long I cannot recall because I was too smashed. I had been on a multi-day run of booze and drugs, and somewhere around day four I convinced a good friend (against the good friend's protestations that this was a very bad idea) to drive from San Francisco to Marin, to the "other woman's" house, to take back my boyfriend.

When we arrived, there was a lovely, sedate, upscale party going on. Soft jazz, white wine in matching glasses, hors d'œuvres, nice people. There, although barely able to walk or speak clearly, I insisted in front of the astonished crowd that my boyfriend return home with me or face the specter of my suicide. Not a good idea, and very poorly executed—this didn't have the intended effect on the relationship either—an incident that will go with me to my grave. Except, of course, that now I have told god, several sponsors, a few dozen meetings full of people, and of course, all of you.

The 12X12 tells us that if we have "swept the searchlight of Step Four back and forth over our careers...we have come to know how wrong thinking and action have hurt us and others." Many AA's would very much like to leave an item or two off their Fifth Step. They have a secret or two they have vowed never to reveal. It has been the experience of countless AAs, old and new alike, that holding back these little gems denies us the true gifts promised us in the Big Book, and leads to continued suffering of "irritability, anxiety, remorse, and depression." It also leads us to project onto everyone around us the very character defects that we ourselves have been unable to face.


The practice of revealing oneself to another human being, character defects and all, is an old one, with foundations in many spiritual traditions. It is also the root principle behind therapy. Non-alcoholics also may benefit from this practice, but for us alcoholics, it is essential. We say "without a fearless admission of our defects to another human being we could not stay sober...the grace of God will not enter to expel our destructive obsessions until we are willing to try this."

Every time I go to a meeting, I hear someone say that before

coming to AA, they felt that they never quite belonged anywhere. I know for me AA is the first place where I felt truly understood. Yet often, that feeling of not belonging persists even after joining AA. "Step Five was the answer. It was the beginning of true kinship with man and God...we began to get the feeling we could be forgiven, no matter what we had thought or done."

I am a mistress of rationalization, self-delusion minimization, self-pity, and blame. I can tell myself the story of the evening in question, and the reason it wound up on my Fourth Step in the first place. Then I can convince myself that my boyfriend should not have been seeing other women, that he should not have abandoned me for days at a time, and that my friend who drove me to Marin should have worked harder to talk me out of taking the drive. Of course, this sounds ridiculous when said aloud to anyone sober and in his or her right mind. It doesn't matter what anyone else did. I was loaded, selfish,

self-seeking, and mostly, finally at the heart of it all, afraid. I was a horrifying tornado in the lives of everyone I encountered that night. My humiliation is not the point. Gaining some humility about it is. I need the input of God and other human beings to keep from acting like an unmitigated ass. My desire to stop drinking gave me a free ticket into any meeting I ever wanted to attend, and access to the help of any member of the program; sharing my character defects in the manner prescribed by the Fifth Step made me feel like a real member of "the program."

While most of us choose our sponsors as the recipients of our Fifth Step, this is not required. The 12X12 suggests reading it to someone who "not only has stayed dry but has been able to surmount other serious difficulties." This usually means another sober alcoholic, but this may instead be a trusted spiritual advisor or even a stranger. The only real test is one's willingness to do it. In fact, this is one place where the 12X12 tells us our own will comes into play. It takes a great deal of willpower to take contrary action and force yourself to read your secrets to another human being. However, it is just this action that is the act of faith that opens us to a power greater than ourselves. "We may prepare ourselves for the following steps toward a full and meaningful sobriety." 

Excerpts reprinted from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.



A.A. On the Road: Surfing in the Light

By Doug

About two winters ago I decided to take a trip—a trip I had fantasized about for a long time as I had never gotten around to it when I was drunk. There was always a problem, not enough money, no time, too much money, too much time, no one to go with, wrong one to go with...the list went on. After two years of sobriety I decided it was time to go on an adventure of a lifetime—a six-week journey, alone, down the coast of Baja Mexico, to find perfect waves, warm water, and sunshine.

I attended tons of meetings prior to my trip as I was nervous and thought that maybe I could build up some kind of AA reserve just in case I found myself in a slippery situation. I had been to mainland Mexico a couple times, but that was before AA. The thought of letting my fears stifle my sense of adventure made me feel sick. I knew I had to get into faith and let my higher power travel with me. At the time, I had an old Chevy Astro Van; with all of the passenger seats out it was a poor man's RV. It was loaded down with six or seven AA tapes, a couple of Grapevines, a Big Book, two surf boards, my backpack, camping gear, and maps—I was ready to go. Attending AA meetings was not on my agenda—where I was planning on going, there could never be an AA meeting.

It was clear from the moment I arrived at the surf spot in Southern Baja—what I was to call home for the next six weeks—that my higher power was on this journey with me. I pulled into the spot and found a beautiful pristine beach with mellow, perfect shaped waves that rolled in as if generated by a machine. There was a campground 25 yards from shore. It was happening—I had arrived.

In short order, I hooked up with a group right in front of the surf break. A big part of the surf adventure revolves around the nightlife and the campfire tales. Drinking and getting high after a hard day of surf is part of the scene; while some imbibe to excess, others just like to get stoned and stare into the fire. I made a ritual of taking a walk and then hiding in my van after dinnertime, reading from my Big Book, before joining the bonfire. In no particular order, I would just read.

Of all the camp people who were there, I seemed to be right in the middle of the biggest alcoholics. Two of them, Chris and Mike, had not come there together, but the three of us found ourselves living and surfing as a gang. My higher power was truly looking after me. If not for these two

alcoholics living next to me there would have been moments where I might have thought “Everyone else seems to be able to surf and party at night and still function, why can't I?” Mike and Chris were constant reminders of my future if I took just one drink. It was amazing because I had so much fun without drinking.

I was at the bonfire almost every night, sober. After about two weeks of this life-style, one of the ladies at the beach campground asked me to help her move into a room she was going to rent in town. She was going to live in Baja. She had gotten a job in this little town in the middle of nowhere. In the house she was going to rent, I noticed an AA meeting schedule on the fridge.

It turned out that besides a meeting in town, there was a meeting on a nearby beach, and even a noon meeting a hundred and fifty yards from where I was camping. Soon I was going to a meeting a day. I remember one day just surfing perfect waves with the guys then bailing out to go to my noon meeting at the little coffee shop in town. I walked in to find the guys I was surfing with sitting right next to me—it was like coming home. The meetings were in English, mostly Americans, some Canadians, and all different kinds of folks, traveling and staying sober. It was one of the best trips I have ever taken in my life and I did not have to take a drink or a drug to make it any more beautiful. I could not have planned it better. ↑



WRITE TO THE POINT

The Point Committee values your input. You may write to us at:

Central Office
1821 Sacramento Street,
San Francisco, CA 94109

or e-mail us at: thepoint@aasf.org.

While we welcome (and request) your questions and comments, limited time and space make it impossible to reply to or publish every communication.

AA Pamphlets—Four Categories

By Doug F.


While the cover designs of A.A. pamphlets have been around for over 15 years, many members are unaware of their significance. If you're like me, that was certainly the case—I fall into the “sometimes slowly” category and the design of our A.A. pamphlets had escaped me. Even General Service Office (GSO) in New York acknowledges the fact in the Guidelines for Literature Committees—the meaning behind the cover designs may not be immediately apparent.

The pamphlets are divided into four categories – Recovery, Service, Unity and Professional information. Next time you're at the Central Office bookstore check out how these categories are displayed

All pamphlets that deal with recovery have a banner or flag in the upper left hand corner. Pamphlets such as “44 Questions,” “Questions & Answers on Sponsorship,” and “Is AA for You?” fall into this category. They were designed specifically for the newcomer.

When you see a pamphlet that has a stair step design going from lower left to right it means that it falls into either the service or unity categories. If it has a solid colored rectangle in addition to the steps it's a service pamphlet. “Self Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” and “The AA Group” belong in this category. If the cover has the step design but no solid colored rectangle you know it falls in the unity category. “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” is an example of this kind of pamphlet.

Finally, pamphlet covers that have neither a banner nor a stair step design are those created for the professional community. An example of this kind of pamphlet is “Members of the Clergy Ask about Alcoholics Anonymous.”

I now pronounce you “pamphlet design expert *extraordinaire*”. Since you are an expert, see how much your sponsor knows about this subject. 

Spring Fever—and headaches and anxiety attacks and...

by Anonymous

This time of year is always filled with sunny mornings, warmer weather and sleeping at night with the windows open. For me, an alcoholic of the classic kind, this time of year also fills me with gratitude that I am still around to experience spring and have a daily reprieve from my crazy thinking.


In the last months (or was it years?) of my drinking days, this time of year was just another reason to stay drunk as much as possible. I hated the mornings. Sunny mornings disturbed my sleep and I frequently found myself trying to hide from the bands of sunlight coming through the cracks in the shades of my east-facing windows. There's nothing worse than being awakened by an eye-piercing stream of light – especially after passing out an hour earlier.

The warmer weather was also a cause for irritability. I liked to be all covered up in layers to hide my thin, pasty skin. I didn't want to have the warm day help my pores open and allow the alcohol to ooze out making me smell like a walking brewery. Warm weather is horrible for an alcoholic, especially in the morning. Often, by the time I got to work, when I had work, I was so sweaty that I had to spend some quality time in the bathroom to dry out.

I also hated to sleep with the windows open in the warm weather. It was always so noisy outside with garbage trucks and honking horns and happy people going to work. I had just called in sick, give me a break! If I heard one more

child's youthful laughter outside my window, I would scream!

So now, I am grateful to say, that the spring fever, hangovers and nausea that I once experienced so frequently in the mornings are a thing of the past...at least for today. The spring fever I experience now is closer to what other, normal people feel. It is nice to go outside without a jacket and see the blue sky and smell the fresh air. I actually open my shades now. I also get on my knees now and thank my Higher Power for the new day.

I still get irritable when the garbage truck wakes me up, but as we all know, it's “progress, not perfection”. 

Visit our website at:
www.aasf.org

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

AA Group Contributions - February 2004

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	Meets	Feb. '04	YTD	Name	Meets	Feb. '04	YTD
Fellowship Contributions				Women's Big Book	Tu 10:30am		70.00
Annual Christmas Meeting	Christmas 2003		25.00	Working Dogs	W 12:05pm		313.25
Bingo Extravaganza	Bingo 7th Tradition	115.00	115.00	Total Marin		<u>\$4,378.76</u>	<u>\$8,238.13</u>
Brisbane Breakfast	Su 11am	32.60	58.40				
Contribution Box	February 2004	62.19	160.26	SF Group Contributions			
Deer Park Discovery Group			4.67	12 Steps to Happiness	F 7:30pm	40.87	40.87
IFB	Feb. Meeting	92.00	187.00	A is for Alcohol	Tu 6pm		34.20
Unidentified			221.40	AA Step Study	S 6pm	172.52	172.52
Total Fellowship		\$301.79	\$771.73	Afro American	F 8pm		36.62
				Amazing Grace	M 7pm		28.80
Honors				Any Lengths	Sa 9:30am		874.21
Endless Summer	F 8:30pm	44.68	88.90	Artists & Writers	F 6:30pm	250.00	250.00
Total Honors		\$44.68	\$88.90	As Bill Sees It	Th 6pm		47.60
				Bernal Big Book	Sa 5pm	281.24	281.24
Marin Group Contributions				Beyond 164	F 12:30pm		30.00
7am Urgent Care Group	7D 7am	200.00	200.00	Big Book Study	Su 11am		47.57
A Vision For You	Su 7:30pm		68.25	Boys Night Out	Tu 7:30pm		69.73
Attitude Adjustment Fairfax Daily 7am	7D 7am	1,018.92	1,018.92	Castro Discussion	W 8pm		242.00
Back to Basics	Su 9:30am		87.50	Cocoonuts	Su 9am		54.00
Beginners	W 7pm		500.00	Dignitaries Sympathy	W 8:15pm	150.00	150.00
Bounce Back	M 6pm	200.00	200.00	Each Day a New Beginning M	M 7am		154.00
Candlelight	Su 8:30pm		79.23	Each Day a New Beginning Th	Th 7am		434.00
Creekside New Growth	Su 7pm		75.00	Each Day a New Beginning W	W 7am		459.73
Crossroads	Su 12pm	497.00	497.00	Fireside Chat Sa	Sa 9pm		198.83
Fireside	F 8pm		35.50	Fireside Chat Th	Th 8pm		88.56
Freedom Finders	F 8:30pm		388.28	Fireside Chat Tu	Tu 8pm		60.11
Living in the Solution	F 6pm		233.00	Friday All Groups	Fr 8:30pm Raffle	91.00	137.00
Marin City Groups	M-F 6:30pm		100.00	Friendly Circle	Su 8:30pm		441.30
Marin Sober Group	F 8pm		39.50	Friendship House	Deposit	9.36	9.36
Mill Valley 7am	7D 7am	500.00	500.00	Haight Street Blues	Tu 6:15pm		75.00
Mill Valley Original Smokeless Step Study	Th 8pm		50.00	Haight Street Explorers	Th 6:30pm		60.00
Nativity Monday Night Big Book	M 8pm	100.00	100.00	Happy Hour	F 6:30pm	44.60	44.60
Newcomers Step	M 7:30pm		300.00	High Noon Monday	M 12:15pm	222.07	222.07
Rise N Shine	Su 10am		102.73	High Noon Thursday	Th 12:15pm	168.27	168.27
Ross San Anselmo Group	M 8:30pm	24.00	54.00	High Noon Tuesday	Tu 12:15pm	74.81	256.70
Saturday Women's Speaker	Sa 6pm	105.00	105.00	High Noon Wednesday	W 12:15pm	180.00	180.00
Six O'Clock Sunset	Th 6pm		81.20	High Sobriety	M 8pm		168.00
Steps to Freedom	M 8:30pm	296.02	296.02	Hilldwellers	M 8pm	166.80	166.80
Stinson Beach Fellowship	Th 8pm	220.60	220.60	How It Works	Sa 2pm		125.01
Streetfighters	Sa 9am		22.10	Huntington Square	W 6:30pm		125.14
Sunday Express	Su 6pm	143.84	143.84	Joys of Recovery	Tu 8pm		127.31
Sunday Night Corte Madera	Su 8pm		400.00	Keep It Simple	Sa 8:30pm		86.85
Terra Linda Group	Th 8:30pm	500.00	500.00	Light Brigade Discussion	Su 7pm		127.80
TGI Tuesday	Tu 6pm		20.40	Lincoln Park	Sa 8:30pm		68.50
Three Step Group	Sa 5:30pm	400.00	400.00	Live and Let Live	Su 8pm		119.76
Thurs. Night Speaker, MV	Th 8:30pm		634.00	Living Sober with HIV	W 6pm	261.20	261.20
Thursday Night Miracles	Th 8:30pm	39.00	39.00	Luke's Group	W 8pm	59.47	59.47
Tiburon Haven	Su 12pm		120.00	Mid-Morning Support	Su 10:30am	230.99	421.92
Tiburon Women's Candlelight	W 8pm		39.76	Midnight Meditation	Sa 11:59pm		11.25
Wednesday Night Speaker Discussion	W 7pm	69.52	69.52	Millionaires Club	Th 6pm		70.00
Women on Monday	M 7pm		69.67	Miracles Off 24th St	W 7:30pm	116.51	116.51
Women on Wednesday	W 7pm	64.86	64.86				

(Continued on p.13)

(Group Contributions, continued from p. 12)

Name	Meets	Feb. '04	YTD
Monday At A Time	M 12:30pm		36.00
Monday Men's Meeting	M 8pm		48.00
New Highs	W 1:30pm		97.88
New Wednesday High Noon	W 12:15pm	547.47	547.47
Newcomers	Tu 8pm		162.00
Park Presidio	M 8:30pm	47.00	47.00
Parkside	Th 8:30pm	60.00	60.00
Pure & Simple	Su 6pm		28.15
Rose Garden Big Book	Th 12:05pm		19.44
Rule 62	W 10pm		248.51
Saturday Afternoon Meditation	Sa 2pm	61.00	61.00
Saturday Night Regroup	Sa 7:30pm	200.24	200.24
Saturday Serenity	Sa 8pm		362.00
Seacliff	Th 8:30pm		54.47
Serenity House	Deposit		300.00
Serenity Seekers	M 7:30pm	784.39	784.39
Sesame Step	T 7:30pm	145.46	145.46
Sinbar	Su 8pm		70.84
Sober & Centered	Fr 7pm		168.27
Step Talk	Su 8:30am		120.00
Stepping Out	Sa 6pm		120.00
Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	Su 10:30am		549.43
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group	Su 5pm	100.76	100.76
Sunday Rap	Su 8pm		132.00
Sundown	W 7pm	96.00	96.00
Sunset II'ers F	F 11am		113.40
Sunset II'ers W	W 11am		24.00
Sunset 9'ers M	M 9am	148.50	148.50
Sunset 9'ers Su	Su 9am		100.00
Sunset 9'ers W	W 9am		154.04
Sutter Street Beginners	Sa 6pm		213.64
Ten Years After	Su 6pm		474.72
They Don't Know Who We Are	Sa 7pm	150.00	150.00
Too Early	Sa 8am	231.90	258.27
Tuesday's Daily Reflections	Tu 7am		83.62
Waterfront	Su 8pm		276.00
Wednesday Sunrise Smokefree	W 7am		60.00
Weekend Workers	Sa 7am		60.00
West Portal	W 8:30pm		246.50
Women For Women	W 12pm		107.61
Women's Promises	F 7pm		148.80
Total SF		<u>\$5,092.43</u>	<u>\$14,582.82</u>
TOTAL		<u>\$9,817.66</u>	<u>\$23,681.58</u>

Gratitude Contributions Feb. 2004

(they are still trickling in!)

SF Gratitude Month

Dignitaries Sympathy	W 8:15pm	77.00
Haight Street Explorers	Th 6:30pm	40.00
New Wednesday High Noon	W 12:15pm	52.75
Parkside	Th 8:30pm	108.00
Saturday Night Regroup	Sa 7:30pm	142.39
Sesame Step	Tu 7:30pm	<u>232.57</u>
Total Gratitude Month		<u>\$ 652.71</u>

Individual Contributions Jan—Feb. 2004

01/02/2004	Individual	500.00
01/02/2004		42.00
01/02/2004	Unrestricted	100.00
01/06/2004		10.00
01/12/2004	Contributions	20.00
01/13/2004		100.00
01/22/2004		20.00
01/30/2004		20.00
02/03/2004	Thank you!	20.00
02/09/2004		500.00
02/17/2004		20.00
02/27/2004		24.46
Total INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS		<u>\$1,376.46</u>

"We cannot skimp"

With the realization that A.A. must steer clear of outside contributions in order to maintain its autonomy and independence came the understanding that the money necessary for A.A.'s survival would have to come from individual A.A. members and groups."

Reprinted from "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix", p.5

CORRECTIONS

There were a few contribution errors in the April issue: Contributions from the **Marin Sober Group**, for \$39.50, and from **Tiburon Haven**, for \$120.00 were posted in the SF Group Contributions and a contribution from the SF **Mid-Morning Support** group, for \$190.93 was missing. These have been corrected!

Special Needs in A.A.— Come one, come all!

On April 7th, 2004, four members of A.A. gave a compelling presentation on the needs of the deaf to the Intercounty Fellowship Board. They were assisted by Jessica Potter from the UCSF Center on Deafness and an ASL interpreter. The Special Needs Committee arranged for the presentation and suggested that May be declared deaf awareness month, the goal being to raise funds and create awareness of the needs of deaf A.A. members. It was suggested that for the month of May, groups pass a second basket to raise money for the Central Office to pay for these needs. The board initially passed the proposal, but after minority opinion was expressed about money issues and lack of specificity in the proposal a second vote was passed and the proposal failed.

A sign up sheet for sponsorship of deaf members was circulated and signed by 17 members. Sponsorship of deaf members can be accomplished by A.A. members who lack signing skills through written communication. A greater effort to greet them at meetings and communicating through the provided interpreter (when there is one) make the deaf feel more welcome and a part of A.A.

The main problem of special needs in AA is money; the ASL interpreter at Friday All Groups costs approximately \$100.00 per meeting and the Central Office budget cannot currently support this expense.

Talking to other IFB members, we feel it is crucial that A.A. members be encouraged to donate one more dollar to the Seventh Tradition to ensure A.A. is still able to carry the message to all alcoholics—especially the members who are the most burdened with a difficulty in communication.

The Special Needs Committee of the Intercounty Fellowship is gathering a lot of momentum in these areas, but still needs more input. We would like to hear from you. If you are interested in helping us carry the message and find a solution to this challenge, please contact me.

We have also organized a sponsorship workshop for those willing to sponsor deaf and/or hard of hearing AA members. The workshop will be led by two AA members who have vast experience working with deaf and hard of hearing AA members. It will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 8th at Central Office—1821 Sacramento St. in San Francisco.

Please contact me for more information.

Dan P., Chair

Special Needs Committee

Phone: 650.589.6402 or email: sfaslaa@hotmail.com 

Got Something to Share? Share it in *The Point*!

The Point needs articles every month for its regular features –

Dear Alky – Got a problem? A concern? A question? Write *Dear Alky* a letter of 50 – 100 words.

Literature Review – Have a favorite AA book or pamphlet? Up to 600 words.

AA Service – How about a favorite AA commitment or one that challenged your sobriety or taught you something? Up to 600 words.

AA on the Road – Gone to AA meetings while traveling for business or pleasure? Moved from SF or Marin and want to tell SF-Marin AAs about the meetings in your new home? 600-700 words.

Inside Stories – Have an anecdote you would like to share? A moment of clarity? A spiritual awakening? 600-700 words.

Treasures of the 12 & 12 – Want to dig into one of the Twelve Steps or Twelve Traditions of AA? Up to 900 words.

Cover Story – Want to share your experience strength and hope? Cover stories can be about any theme related to sobriety. Recent themes have included shyness, relationships and financial insecurity. Up to 900 words.

Please e-mail as a Microsoft Word attachment to: thepoint@aasf.org

Mission Fellowship

Meeting space is available at the Mission Fellowship - 2900 24th St. at Florida. For more information about times and rates, please contact Larry D. at 415.920-1979.

To get involved come to our Steering Committee meetings on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 1 pm. This month on May 16th. Also this month, a Special Steering Committee Meeting, Sunday, May 2nd at 1pm.

Earlene and Pearlene's Bingo Extravaganza is Back!

**In a benefit performance for the
building fund for the new Alano
Club**

Friday, May 7 at the Women's Building

3542 18th Street (between Valencia & Guerrero)

AA meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**"Low Bottom" Bingo at 7:30
p.m.**

Wear a trashy costume (high hair & tattoos)

Take home a valuable prize

Win at Bingo

Play the Price is Almost Right

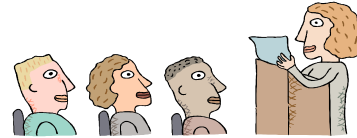
Learn about the new Alano Club

Enter the Mr. or Ms. Trashy Contest

Have fun, fun, fun till your daddy takes the pick-up away!

\$15.00 for Bingo, must be 18 years or older

I.F.B. Special Events Committee Presents:



A.A. MEETING SECRETARIES' WORKSHOP

**To provide information and A.A. literature
to groups and their secretaries on how to
better facilitate a meeting of Alcoholics
Anonymous**

**Saturday, June 19, 2004
11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.**

at

**Central Office
1821 Sacramento Street
San Francisco, CA**

**Panel Speakers
Question & Answer Session
Pizza! Fellowship!**

Contact David B. dbelectric@turnershouse.net or
Georgia L. RedHedd@att.net
for further Information

Updated your meeting?

We are still in the process of updating meeting information for the Intercounty Fellowship. We would like to thank those that have responded to our request, and still need your help in getting a Group Meeting Update form to each of the meetings in Marin and San Francisco. We are doing our best to make sure all of the information on our website—and in the schedules—is current and we can only do it with your help.

If you have access to the internet, your group may submit its information directly online or download forms from our website: www.aasf.org. We need to get this form to all 776 meetings in our area, so if you are able to print a few out – or just let other A.A. members or groups know, we would appreciate it very much.

Please fill out the form and return it to us at your earliest convenience, making sure the street address is included.

Thank you!!



A Fundraiser for
Living Sober / Western Roundup 2004
July 2 - 4
Bill Graham Civic Auditorium

Pink Saturday Dance

Saturday, June 26th

7:00 pm AA/AlAnon meeting — 9:00 pm Dance

Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy

4235 19th Street @ Collingwood



**Pride Day Meeting, Sunday, June 27th
The Holiday Inn; 50 8th Street; 3:00 pm meeting**

*** If ASL is needed for any event, please give 72 hour advance notice.

www.LivingSober.Org

415.978.2478

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, April 7, 2004**

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	
Ben N.	Past Chair	P	Kim O.	Easy Does It	P
Bill R.	Early Start	P	Kristine F.	Castro Discussion	A
Carol W.	Miracles Off 24 th St.	P	Lesley F.	Cocoanuts	P
Dan C.	Tiburon Haven	A	Lou H.	Mill Valley 7AM	Alt.
Danny F.	Each Day A New Beginning	P	Lynnore G.	Walk Of Shame	P
Dan P.	Second Chance	P	Marc D.	Bernal Big Book	P
Dan Z.	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	P	Mary Ellen D.	A is for Alcohol	A
David A.	Living Sober	A	Maury P.	Office Manager	P
David B.	Beginner's Warmup	P	Michael R.	Huntington Square	P
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Michelle C.	Big Book Basics	A**
David K.	Haight St. Blues	A	Monika H.	Back 2 Basics	A
David McC.	Fireside Chat	A**	Nathan M.	Too Early	P
Dick T.	Attitude Adjustment Hour	P	Patrick M.	Treasurer	P
Don B.	Friday Fell Street	P	Paul C.	Waterfront	P
Doug F.	No Reservation	P	Penelope P.	Amazing Grace	P
Doug S.	As Bill Sees It - Thursday	P	Ramona A.	Sunset 9'ers M	P
Francesca K.	West Portal	A	Randall J.	High Sobriety	P
Gary D.	Work In Progress	P	Ray M.	Sunday Rap	P
Georgia L.	Friendly Circle Beginners	P	Rebekah D.	Fell Street Step	P
Grant D.	Ten Years After	P	Robert D.	Gay Beginners Q&A	A
Greg S.	Keep Coming Back	A	Roger R.	Serenity Seekers	A
Haven K.	High Noon Friday	P	Russell G.	Regroup	P
Janet B.	As Bill Sees It, Saturday	A	Sam W.	Monday Night Stag	A**
Jean C.	First Place Fellowship	R	Scott C.	New Hope Big Book	P
Jeff A.	Eureka Valley Topic	Alt.	Steve R.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Jeremiah P.	All Together Now	A	Steven S.	Tuesday Downtown	A
Jen B.	Midnight Meditation	P	Tasiah S.	Boys Night Out	A
Joe G.	Beginners	P	Tedra M.	Sisters Circle	A**
Johnny G.	High Noon Tuesday	P	Tim McC.	Join the Tribe	P
Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P	Todd M.	Mission Terrace	P
Julie H.	Terra Linda	P	Tom K.	Common Welfare	P
Kate B.	Friday All Groups	P	Zoe B.	Mill Valley 7am - Daily	P
New IFB Reps Present			Non-IFB Liaisons Present		
Eric R.	Eureka Valley Topic	P	Georgia L.	Hospital & Institutions Liaison	P
David E.	Sesame Step	P	Omar C.	Marin Teleservice Liaison	P
Karen Z.	Mill Valley 7AM Alternate	P	Russell R.	SF Teleservice	P
Martha C.	449'ers	P	Stacy S.	San Mateo County Liaison	P
Russell R.	Sunset 9'ers Su	P	Todd M.	San Francisco General Service Liaison	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. asked that Reps take the list of fundraising ideas back to the groups and return with comments or new suggestions to be submitted as agenda items for the next meeting.

Treasurers Report: Patrick M. submitted the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statement for February 2004 as well as a written

Internal Controls Review. Group contributions were under budget for the third consecutive month, with February approximately 10% under. Total February income was approximately 4% under budget, even after the deposit of Special Event proceeds (Bingo). Expenses for the month were approximately 14% under budget but would have been slightly over without the return of an annuity

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(IFB Summary—Continued from page 16)

(from a previous Central Office Manager) and the lack of a February ASL charge. Employee Dishonesty Insurance has been purchased but Directors and Officers coverage was seen by Patrick and the COC as cost-prohibitive (IFB raised no objection). The Treasurer and Central Office Manager conducted the annual Internal Controls Review and recommended (and the COC had concurred) that an independent audit not be conducted; our internal controls are sound and the expense would be between five and ten thousand dollars. This will be an agenda item in May.

Central Office Manager's Report: Maury P. reported that information on the 2005 International Convention in Canada is coming in and members may contact the Central Office website and hotlink to the Convention's website. Maury will contact our Delegate (with COC encouragement) to let him know that SF/Marin supports the approval of a Central Office/Intergroup pamphlet illustrating the role of Central Office in the service structure. This pamphlet is an agenda item at the next General Service Conference Assembly. There are open shifts for phone volunteers and there is a great need for substitutes as summer and vacation season approach.

Central Office Committee: Joe G. confirmed COC support of the internal control/audit issue. The COC recommended changing the Operations Manual to allow fundraising by the IFB (see Special Order Of Business #2 below), and then forming a fundraising committee (Ops Manual currently states that neither Central Office nor the IFB shall engage in fundraising activities). The COC also recommended the formation of an outreach committee to enhance financial and service contributions from groups and individuals not currently participating. Case pricing has been eliminated for the fourth edition of the Big Book. Danny F. has volunteered as the temporary special worker, avoiding the need to hire and train for the position. Joe encouraged IFB Reps to share with their groups the pamphlet for birthday contributions to Central Office (created by the Friday High Noon Group and circulated with their permission).

B. Special Needs Presentation

The Special Needs Committee arranged a forum to explore the needs and wishes of the deaf/hard-of-hearing community seeking recovery. Presentations were made by a non-alcoholic hearing substance-abuse counselor, two alcoholic deaf members, two alcoholic late-deafened members, and one alcoholic hearing member. They illustrated the complexity of the issue: Only three signed meetings per week in the Bay Area (including San Jose); The deaf/hard-of-hearing have a range of communication needs besides signing (e.g. electronic devices) to make meetings viable; the community is spread out over a large area with relatively few deaf seeking recovery; high turnover in early sobriety; difficulty of sponsorship. The IFB Reps acknowledged the continuing need, but expressed the inability to define it and meet it now, if ever. Much more analysis will be required for consensus.

C. Special Orders of Business (Action Items)

1. Special Needs Month Collection: The Special Needs Committee recommended that May be dedicated as deaf and hearing impaired awareness and that a second basket be passed at groups choosing to participate with the proceeds being spent to bring meetings to deaf and hearing impaired AA members. Motion

was made and passed. Minority opinion was then expressed and another vote was taken. The motion was defeated. Maury P. suggested we take this discussion back to the groups as a 'heads up' for future resolution. Danny F. asked the Special Needs Committee to come back with a more specific proposal.

2. Operations Manual revision to allow fundraising: Danny F. explained that historically monies have been raised from time to time by the Central Office/IFB, but that at some time previous the Operations Manual had been changed to prevent this, and that the current Officers/COC weren't aware of the prohibition. He stated that an honest mistake had been made in holding the recent bingo event and that the IFB had approved the activity. A motion was made to change the Operations Manual to allow fundraising within Fellowship events, and was passed.

The remainder of the agenda was suspended, but the following summarizes what was contained in the written reports

D. Ad Hoc Committee Reports Suspended, with the following written reports submitted.

1. Orientation Committee: The next Orientation is Wed. May 5 at 6pm immediately prior to the IFB meeting in Marin, at the address listed below.

2. Website Committee: Only 15% of all listed meetings have submitted an update form so a web-based form has been made available and can be filled out on-line. Business cards with the e-mail address were distributed to IFB Reps to take to their secretaries and other groups. The Website has been redesigned and will be reviewed during April. E-mail groups are being set up within the website (webcomm@aaaf.org, for example); contact Michael R. at 415-392-0458.

3. 12th Step Committee: A 12th Step workshop is scheduled for Wed. April 14 at 6:30 p.m. at Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St. Call Maury P. at 674-1821 if you are interested in serving or sharing.

4. Special Needs Committee: A new AA meeting with professional childcare will begin April 26th at 1757 Waller St., San Francisco, on Mondays at 12 p.m. For service or info contact Dara at 415-242-9908 or DLRPEARL@PacBell.net. Special Needs will meet next on Tue. May 4th at Central Office at 6pm.

E. IFB Standing Committee Reports: Suspended, with the following written reports submitted.

1. Teleservice: There are 21 open regular phone shifts (12%) and many substitute openings. The next meeting will be Mon. April 19th (3rd Mon.) at 7 pm. in the Central Office, preceded by orientation at 6:30 pm.

2. PI/CPC: Speakers are wanted to carry the message to schools, DUI classes, the medical community, etc., and a workshop will be held on Sat., April 17th, at 10:00 am., at Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St. (624-1821).

F. Non-IFB Liaison Reports: Suspended, with the following written reports submitted.

1. SF General Service: The General Service Conference will be April 18th to 24th this year and the CNCA Post-Conference Assembly will be May 15th (in Monterey). Help celebrate AA's 70th birthday by attending the 12th International AA Convention in

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Mommy Needs a Meeting

By Kathleen C.

My twin daughters don't remember the times I almost killed them when I was drinking. But I do.

I quit drinking and using drugs while I was pregnant. I was dry, but with no program. My feelings erupted: rage, anguish, and despair. If somebody cut me off on the freeway, I followed their car to the next exit, trying to ram it. If a tragic country song came on the radio, I sobbed as I drove. Hormones? Sure, but mostly the result of life without anesthesia.

After the girls were born I went back to my old ways. When they were a few months old I was driving, hung over, with them in their car seats in the back. I approached a freeway on-ramp next to a lumberyard. There was a railroad track there, and I crossed in front of a moving train. The blast of the horn startled me out of my fog as the train rumbled by. Did the close call make me stop drinking? No.

One morning when the girls were two years old, I was lying down, hung over from the night before. They were jumping on the bed and accidentally one jumped on my stomach and hurt me. Without thinking I threw her onto the floor. I will never forget the surprise and fear on her face when she realized what I was about to do. For years after, she did anything to avoid making Mommy mad. If I couldn't fix her hair the way she wanted it, she said, "That's OK, Mom, never mind, I'll do it".

Then my other daughter wanted to go to the park, on the other side of a busy street. I was hung over as usual and grudgingly agreed to take her as far as the sidewalk in front of our house. The phone rang. I left her, just for a minute, while I answered it. And forgot all about her. I ran outside to find only her security blanket, draped over the low fence in front of our house. No sign of my little girl.

I ran up and down the street screaming her name. One of our

neighbors calmed me down. She directed me to one end of the block while she went to the other. She found my daughter, on the street corner in her fuzzy pink pajamas, staring at the park across four lanes of traffic. Did that convince me I had a problem with drugs and alcohol? No.

I hit bottom and started going to meetings when my daughters were three and a half. Being sober didn't make me a perfect mother. Yes, I began to read them stories at night and made cupcakes for their birthdays and told them how wonderful they were. But I also yelled at them. I often picked them up late from daycare. I was a normal sober mother. Progress not perfection.

At age eight or nine they asked me why I was still going to meetings when I didn't drink. I explained AA as best I could. They met my sponsor and came to my home group's holiday potluck with their Dad. They started watching the clock on meeting nights – "Mom, aren't you going to be late for your meeting?" I couldn't skip meetings with them to remind me!

When they were twelve they went to Alateen meetings. They liked the other kids and went with some of them to a conference. Not a great success. "The older kids smoke," they complained. They didn't think they had as many problems as most of the other kids. I pointed out that alcoholism is only a symptom and wasn't their sober Mom still difficult at times? They agreed about that!

They are twenty-one now, legal drinking age. They ask me if they are going to be alcoholics and I remind them it's a family illness. They tell me that stuff happens when they drink and I thank my Higher Power that we can talk about it. I am grateful that my girls have been to AA meetings with me and that they know AA is there for them too.

They don't remember their Mom's drinking and using. But I do. I hope I never forget. ↑

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Toronto June 30th to July 3rd, 2005.

2. Bridging The Gap: BTG will assist six alcoholics in this district during April and has received twelve contact request cards this month. Presentations will be made soon at San Francisco VA Hospital and San Bruno jail.

3. Spirit Of San Francisco: AA members with little or no money will be able to attend the marathon meetings this year but will still be required by hotel policy to register and get a badge. The scholarship fund this year will be used only for scholarships, not bills. Groups and individuals may contribute to this fund. SOSF will ask the fellowship to host one marathon meeting at this year's

convention, which will require 21 host groups. Groups should contact Peter M. at sfbtg2002@hotmail or Russell G. at rags_57@hotmail. Seven chair positions remain open including Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Secretary. A fundraiser dance will be held on Sat. April 24th at the Urban Life Center, 1111 O'Farrell @ Franklin, San Francisco, from 8 – 11 pm preceded by a speaker meeting at 7pm.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wed. May 5th at Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Ave., Sausalito, at 7 pm., preceded by the Orientation at 6 pm. ↑

Financial Statement

FEBRUARY 2004 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	Feb 04	Jan - Feb 04		Feb 04	Jan - Feb 04
Ordinary Income/Expense			Telephone	507.03	1,018.86
Income			Training	0.00	94.67
Group Contributions			Utilities	0.00	296.28
Honors	44.68	88.90	Total Expense	9,538.70	28,189.91
Group Contributions - Other	9,772.98	23,592.68	Net Ordinary Income	5,788.23	5,591.78
Total Group Contributions	9,817.66	23,681.58	Other Income/Expense		
Individual Contributions			Other Income		
Honorary Contributions	263.00	1,167.00	Interest Income	35.36	72.59
Individual -Unrestricted	564.46	1,376.46	Total Other Income	35.36	72.59
Total Individual Contributions	827.46	2,543.46	Other Expense		
Gratitude Month			Depreciation Expense	408.17	816.34
Gratitude Month-Groups	652.71	1,574.39	Total Other Expense	408.17	816.34
Total Gratitude Month	652.71	1,574.39	Net Other Income	-372.81	-743.75
Newsletter Subscript.	78.00	186.00	Net Income	5,415.42	4,848.03
Special Event Income	2,108.00	2,108.00			
Sales - Bookstore	6,341.67	14,183.54			
Total Income	19,825.50	44,276.97			
Cost of Goods Sold					
Cost of Books Sold	4,498.57	10,495.28			
Total COGS	4,498.57	10,495.28			
Gross Profit	15,326.93	33,781.69			
Expense					
Bad Checks	0.00	21.54			
Employee Expenses					
Wages & Salaries	7,483.25	14,316.59			
Employer Tax Expenses	1,013.73	2,073.28			
Benefits/Pension	350.00	1,014.00			
Retirement/Annuity Expense	-2,218.30	-2,218.30			
Total Employee Expenses	6,628.68	15,185.57			
ASL Expense					
ASL- Net- Fri All Grps	441.00	793.80			
Total ASL Expense	441.00	793.80			
Bank Charges					
Cr Card Fees	99.14	191.88			
Bank Charges - Other	24.50	65.70			
Total Bank Charges	123.64	257.58			
Equipment Lease	565.10	1,130.20			
Insurance	100.55	201.10			
Miscellaneous Expense	0.00	2.49			
Office Supplies	775.83	1,006.41			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	0.00	200.00			
Postage - Other	0.00	87.00			
Total Postage	0.00	287.00			
Shipping	98.87	45.43			
Rent - Office	0.00	7,167.50			
Rent - Other	75.00	75.00			
Repair & Maintenance	156.00	370.98			
Security System	67.00	100.50			
Special Events	0.00	135.00			

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.

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May 2004

ISSUE 0504