

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

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

The Point

June 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
herein should be construed as a
statement of A.A., nor does
publication constitute endorsement
by A.A. as a whole, the Intercounty
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.

THE GOD OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Summer Solstice is the longest day of the year, the day when we are closest to the sun, we balance between the of the half of the year dedicated to growth, renewal, and new things, and the half of the year dedicated to letting go and moving on, reevaluating. Spring and Summer. Autumn and Winter. For many religions, this paired point is a time of worship, of great significance. Here in our Bay Area Fellowship, the part of AA that says each member uses a "god of their own understanding" is not just lip service. We are incredibly diverse. Perhaps more so than the fellowships of any other area in the world. We are Moslem, Buddhist, Jewish, Pagan, Atheist, Christian, Hindu, Native American, Ba'hai, Scientologist, Secular Humanist, Sikh, Agnostic, all the variations thereof, and many other things. Above all, we want every newcomer who walks through the doors of this fellowship to know that we really mean it when we tell them that even when we say "God", or "Him" or "Lord", we want them to substitute the god of their understanding. Whether that is Jesus, Elvis, Shakti, or group. of drunks. Toward that end we have asked a few members who are not Judeo-Christians to share their experience of making this program their own. We hope you find their tales of the spiritual experience as moving as we do. As you take in the warmth of the longest day, we say to you, namaste, a-salaam-alekum, shalom, blessed be, tashi delek, greetings of the two-leggeds, the four-leggeds, the winged ones, the invisible ones, and the old ones, god be with you, may the mysterious part of the year bring you bright blessings and the knowledge of home. 📌

Growing up Pagan in A.A.

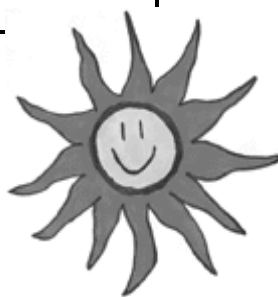
By Angel

Well first I should thank *The Point* for asking me to give some input as to how it felt/ feels to be a Pagan woman getting sober in a Judeo-Christian based program. I have tossed this around in my mind a lot. When I first came around recovery eleven years ago, I have to say I wanted to run for the hills! What kept me in my seat was the desperate fear that if I picked up one more time I would die. I have struggled with the concept of god as the old man in the sky who zaps you with lightning bolts and sends people like me to burn in hellfire for all eternity. When I first started going to meetings I was freaked out by the fact that not only were a lot of them in churches but people said the Lord's Prayer and talked a lot about God. I felt very uncomfortable and had a hard time connecting for fear that people would try to force their religious beliefs on me.

I was raised Pagan and have a deep spiritual reverence for the earth and the turning of the wheel of the year. I remember as a child knowing that I was a witch and doing things like picking flowers and anonymously leaving them on neighbor's steps on

(Continued on page 6)

June 2004....

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|---|--|---|-----|---|
| | | June 1 FIRST TUE Special Needs Committee Central Office, 6 pm Special Events Committee: Central Office, 7:30 pm | 2 FIRST WED Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm Meeting 7 pm, First Unitarian Church 1187 Franklin St. at Geary San Francisco | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 FIRST MON Spirit of San Francisco Committee Central Office, 7 pm | 8 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 | 9 SECOND WED 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 6:45 pm | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 SECOND MON SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 7 pm | 15 THIRD TUE San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo, 7:30 pm | 16 THIRD WED Literature Review Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 THIRD SUN Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida San Francisco 1 pm | 21 THIRD MON Archives Committee Central Office, 3pm SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael GSR Sharing: 7 pm District Meeting: 8 pm | 22 FOURTH TUE Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln / Maple (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:30 pm | 23 | 24 FOURTH THU Website Committee Central Office, 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 | 25 | 26 FOURTH SAT General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 11 am Business Meeting: 12:30pm |
| 27 LAST SUN Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush, San Francisco 5:30 pm | 28 | 29 | 30 |  | | |

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. |
|-------------------|---|
| June 4-6 | Sunset Round Up 2004, Key West Florida, visit www.sunsetroundup.com for more information. |
| June 5 | Founder's Day Barbecue/Picnic, Stafford Lake, Live Music, Games, 12noon-Barbecue, All Day Event, 8am to 6pm |
| 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! |
| June 26 | 21st Anniversary Afro-American Beginners Group, AME Church, 627 Capitol St., S.F., 6pm Potluck/ 8pm Meeting |
| July 1-5 | 20th Annual South Bay Roundup, "A Design for Living," Torrance, CA, more info at www.southbayroundup.org . |
| July 2-4 | Living Sober 2004, Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, 99 Grove St., S.F., more info: www.livingsober.org, 415-978-2478 |
| July 4 | July 4th Alcathon, Frank's Ranch, 563 McClay Rd, Novato, 10am to 6pm, Swimming/ Barbecue, more info: 883-2592 |
| July 9-11 | Summerfest '04, Eugene Hilton Hotel & Conference Center, Eugene, OR, for info: www.aa-summerfest.org |
| July 25 | Broads Without Booze IV, United Irish Cultural Center, 12pm Lunch/ 1:30pm Meeting, for info call: 650-341-8494 |
| Sept. 3-5 | Spirit of San Francisco Convention, Ramada Plaza Hotel, S.F., for info: www.spirit-sf.org/ |

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.



June
2004

| | |
|---|-------|
| The God of Your Understanding | 1 |
| Growing Up Pagan in A.A. | 1 |
| June 2004 Calendar | 2 |
| Coming Events | 3 |
| This Month in A.A. Trivia | 3 |
| Meeting Changes | 4 |
| Service Opportunities | 4 |
| Group Speakers | 5 |
| Memorials, Anniversaries, Announcements | 5 |
| Founder's Day | 6 |
| Dear Alky | 7 |
| Committee Contacts | 8 |
| Payback— A Gift of Sobriety | 8 |
| Treasures of the Twelve and Twelve | 9 |
| A.A. On the Road: Alicante, Spain | 10 |
| Large Print Literature: Available at Central Office | 11 |
| Contributions | 12-13 |
| No Buddha in the Bottle | 14 |
| Atheist in A.A. | 15 |
| Changes with <i>The Point</i> | 15 |
| IFB Meeting Summary | 16-17 |
| Native American Spirituality | 18 |
| Financial Statement | 19 |

This Month in AA Trivia June

1. What were the Twelve Traditions called before being named The Twelve Traditions of A.A.?
2. Which Tradition discusses the classes of 'elder states men' and 'bleeding deacons'?
3. Which Tradition challenged the early members of AA because of Ed, an atheist in their AA group?
4. Which Tradition states that every group has the right to be wrong?
5. Which Tradition saw the rise and failure of an alcoholic center in a town called Middleton?
6. Which Tradition was put through a vital test because of a distilling company that wanted to use a member of AA as the company's Public Relations person in their campaign for responsible drinking? (*Answers on p. 8*)



MEETING CHANGES

New Meetings

| | | | |
|-----|---------|--------------|--|
| Sun | 8:00 am | Mission | AS BILL CC'S IT-MOTORCYCLE MEETING (1st & 3rd Sundays) (Di) 2801 24th St. |
| Sun | 7:00 pm | Novato | NORTH BAY TRUDGERS DISCUSSION (CI) (Di) 1905 Novato Blvd., Se. Access |
| Mon | 6:30 pm | Novato | JUST CAN'T WAIT 'TIL 8 (Wh) (Di) 1905 Novato Blvd., Senior Access |
| Wed | 8:00 pm | Civic Center | A WOMAN'S TOUCH (SS) 711 Eddy St. |

Meeting Changes

| | | | |
|-----|----------|-----------------|---|
| Mon | 12:30 pm | Haight/ Ashbury | THE PARENT TRAP (CC) (Di) 1757 Waller St. (was <i>Mama, Do I Need a Meeting!!</i>) |
| Tue | 7:00 pm | Civic Center | NEWCOMERS GROUP 291 Tenth St./ Folsom, (was <i>818 Steiner/ Grove</i>) |
| Tue | 7:00 pm | Mill Valley | "TIBURON" BEGINNERS MEETING 410 Sycamore & Camino Alto (back drive) (was <i>7:10; in Tiburon</i>) |
| Wed | 10:30 am | Tenderloin | VETERAN'S COFFEE BREAK 1060 Howard St. (was <i>Thursday</i>) |
| Thu | 1:30 pm | Financial | THURSDAY AFTERNOON STEP STUDY 660 California at Grant: through bookstore (was <i>215 Leidesdorff/ Commercial</i>) |
| Thu | 6:30 pm | Sunset | BEGINNER BIG BOOK STEP (BB) (SD) 7th & Irving, (was <i>Trudgers Book Study</i>) |

No Longer Meeting

| | | | |
|---------|---------|--------------|---|
| Mon-Fri | 8:30 am | Mission | MISSION FELLOWSHIP 2900 24th St.; No 8:30 am Monday to Friday. |
| Tues | 8:30 pm | San Geronimo | MOVING TOWARDS SERENITY Cultural Center, 6350 Sir Francis Drake Blvd. |

Reported Missing

| | | | |
|-----|---------|---------|---|
| Fri | 5:30 pm | Mission | SOLO POR HOY NICARAGUA (English Speaking) 3548 Cesar Chavez |
|-----|---------|---------|---|

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 !!

Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB)


The IFB is the policy making group for your local Central Office which serves the groups in San Francisco and Marin Counties. It is also the Board of Directors for the Central Office. The IFB meets at 7:00 pm on the first Wednesday of each month. On June 2, 2004, the IFB will hold it's Annual meeting. This is a wonderful time to get started with this important commitment as an Intergroup Representative.

Intergroup Representative

An Intergroup Representative is the liaison between your group and the AA Central Office in San Francisco. Intergroup Reps comprise the IFB, which advises the Central Office concerning the policies under which it operates.

The IFB Rep is elected by your group to serve a two-year term. Elections are usually held before the Annual Meeting in June, when a new Board is officially installed. Although the term runs from June to May of the following year, groups may elect an IFB Rep. at any time.

The responsibilities of the IFB Rep includes: assisting the group when there is a change of trusted servants, advising the secretary and treasurer to register with the Central Office; reporting the activities of the IFB to the group and bringing feedback from the group to the IFB; and encouraging the group secretary to make sure announcements are read and that other information from *The Point*, Central Office's monthly newsletter, is disseminated.

Serving as an Intergroup Rep is a wonderful way to serve your group, and the Fellowship as a whole, and to make sure your group's conscience is heard. 

Group Speakers for June 2004

TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

| DATE | SPEAKER | HOME GROUP | DOS |
|----------|------------|----------------------|----------|
| 06/01/04 | Doug G. | Gay Men & Women, SJ | 10/03/87 |
| 06/08/04 | Theresa L. | Valencia Smokefree | 09/22/96 |
| 06/15/04 | Kevin S. | Mon. Noon Step Study | 06/01/99 |
| 06/22/04 | Renee McK. | Tues. Sober Mommies | 02/14/88 |
| 06/29/04 | Lord H. | Home Group | 06/10/89 |

FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

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

| DATE | HOST GROUP | SPEAKER |
|----------|-------------------------|----------|
| 06/04/04 | Living Sober Conference | Barbara |
| 06/11/04 | Sobriety and Beyond | Faye |
| 06/18/04 | Sutter Street Beginners | David E. |
| 06/25/04 | Sunday Castro SD | Rich H. |

BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

| DATE | SPEAKER | FROM |
|----------|---------|-------------------------|
| 06/06/04 | Jack D. | Watch Your Step. So. SF |
| 06/03/04 | Kit B. | Dunsmuir |
| 06/20/04 | Russ K. | Watch Your Step. So. SF |
| 06/27/04 | Charlie | Federal Speaker, SF |

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

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 email submission to: thepoint@aasf.org

CONTRIBUTIONS

to the Central Office were made through May 14, 2004 honoring the following members

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Bob
R.W.
Curtis C.

ANNIVERSARIES

Fell Street Step: John W. H. – 24 years
Endless Summer: Rob – 1 Year, Rob – 1 Year, Sam – 1 Year
Bobby – 1 Year, Erin – 1 Year, Armando – 3 years,
Chicago Bob – 3 years, Deborah – 3 years, Barnaby – 5 years
Karen – 6 years, Nick – 17 years
First Place: Walt B. – 18 years, Peter M. – 9 years

Founders Day

By Peter M.

Happy Birthday, Alcoholics Anonymous! Dr. Bob's sobriety date of June 10, 1935 is celebrated within Alcoholics Anonymous as the origins of our fellowship. The 12th Step call that Bill W. paid to Dr. Bob in 1935 marked the beginnings of Alcoholics Anonymous, the program and fellowship that I became a part of in 1995. I am always amazed to remember that the alcoholics who helped to teach me how to stay sober can be linked back to that original meeting of Bill W. and Dr. Bob. I am amazed, but also grateful that a series of seemingly random events led to the Alcoholics Anonymous that helped save my life and that I am a member of today.

You know birthday celebrations can take many different forms. In the Netherlands, the person celebrating the birthday takes everybody out for dinner. "Going Dutch" must refer to something else, but this is how birthdays in the Netherlands are celebrated. Myself, I usually wait by the phone and mailbox for the birthday greetings and gifts to arrive on my birthday. However, I also know a friend who celebrates her own birthday by taking her mother out figuring that her mother deserves a celebration for all that she's done.




The Point is now online!! For stories, AA announcements, reports and financial statements visit www.aasf.org—and tell a friend!

(Continued from page 1)

Mayday (also known as Beltane). In very early recovery I heard someone say, "Keep bringing your body and your mind will follow". I did just that. Eventually I heard folks talking about the God of your understanding. This statement is much easier for me to hear. If God could be one of my understanding then maybe this program could work for me. Wiccans (Pagans) celebrate life. We respect the cycles of nature and of living and dying. We honor the divine in all beings. Through studying religion and spirituality, I have found that indigenous people the world over share very similar beliefs. But I digress! I have found that by working the steps with a sponsor who works the steps that I have become closer to a Higher Power that works in my life. I have a sponsor with similar spiritual values, but more importantly, I have found that the spiritual principals of recovery are far-reaching and non denominational. I have found a wonderful community of recovering people who have become my family. I embrace the diversity of the fellowship and respect others spiritual and religious beliefs.

Celebrating my sobriety anniversary, I make a contribution (a dollar for each year) to my home group. This seems very insignificant when I remember what Alcoholics Anonymous has done for me. Included in this issue of The Point is a form that some groups are using to encourage A.A. members to make a contribution on their sobriety anniversary. Anyone making a contribution to Central Office using this form has their name and home group listed in an issue of The Point.

So, what about Founder's Day and the birthday of Alcoholics Anonymous? Picnics, dances, barbecues and speaker meetings are generally planned, but this is another great chance to express my gratitude for the life that Alcoholics Anonymous and my higher power have given me. Next year in 2005, alcoholics from all over the world will gather in Toronto, Canada to celebrate their sobriety and A.A.'s 70th Birthday. I am going to have to save up if I'm going to make it to Toronto for the International Convention, but this year for the 69th Anniversary of the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous, I will be making a contribution to express my gratitude for the program and fellowship that developed out of that key meeting of Bill W. and Dr. Bob in 1935. 

The Bay Area has a large Pagan community, and we celebrate the traditional Wiccan holidays together. Recently I was pleasantly surprised to run into some new AA friends as I danced around the Maypole and jumped the cauldron for healing and purification at Beltane. I look forward to sharing the bounty of the Goddess at Midsummer with these and more recovering witches. To add to the wonder and beauty of recovery, I have had sponsees who express their gratitude to have found a woman with my beliefs to work their steps with. I am always grateful to share what has worked for me and how I embrace spirituality and recovery. I must admit, I am still much more comfortable when meetings are closed with the Serenity Prayer. Whatever your beliefs, be they Buddhist, Pagan, Judeo-Christian, or otherwise, AA and the 12 Steps are wonderful tools that change lives. The only requirement is a desire to stop drinking.

Blessed Be.

Every Man and Woman is a Star... 

Dear Alky

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

Dear Alky,

Saying the Lord's Prayer at meetings drives me crazy. I'm not religious and that prayer is SO white-bread Protestant. I feel isolated listening to everybody else pray while I stand there holding hands with them but with my mouth shut. I also feel as if others may judge me for not participating. At the end of the meeting, I especially want to feel part of and instead I feel different. It's ironic that a prayer could make me want to not go to meetings!

Son of a Gun

Dear Son,

The way you feel about the Lord's Prayer is a resentment. On page 64 of *Alcoholics Anonymous* we read that resentment "destroys more alcoholics than anything else." It can cut you off from the sunlight of the spirit, deprive you of a connection with your Higher Power, whatever that might be, and kill you dead.

Take inventory and check in with your sponsor. One quick remedy might be to look for the similarities in the Lord's Prayer to beliefs you may already have. Do you believe in a power greater than yourself? Does it want you to be happy joyous and free? Are you tolerant of other people in the hope that they may be tolerant of you?

Take what you like and leave the rest. If it bothers you to hear the Lord's Prayer, go to meetings where they say the Serenity Prayer or the Third Step Prayer instead. Or bring the issue up at a business meeting—you may find that others feel the same way. You have choices. Make it easy on yourself.

Faithfully, Alky

Dear Alky,

How often should I call my sponsor? He doesn't make me call him every day. Should I call him when I have a problem? Or maybe on some kind of schedule like once a week? We don't go to the same meetings so I don't run into him much. I don't want to be a nuisance, but I do want to stay connected.

Not on a Schedule

Dear Not on a Schedule,

My sponsor is pretty easygoing too. In the beginning I went to only one meeting a week. Fortunately she was there and asked me how my week was going and then gently guided me back onto the right path when I was getting off track.

Working with another alcoholic is the best insurance against a slip, so your calling your sponsor helps him stay sober too. Talk to your sponsor even when your life is going well, and meet with him to work the Steps. Look around for potential sponsees, too— then you can ask them to call you every day and help keep you sober!

Stay the course, Alky



Dear Alky,

I have chronic allergic asthma and many times I have been sitting in a meeting when someone walks in with a dog. I immediately experience difficulty breathing and have to leave. This has happened to me at three different meetings. I finally went to the landlord when the meeting secretary would not ask the dog owner to please leave their dog at home.

Once the person claimed it was a service dog but without any kind of certification. I wouldn't mind giving up my seat for a blind member with a Seeing Eye dog, who could only go to meetings with the dog. But I myself am disabled by my asthma and shouldn't be excluded from meetings because someone likes to have their pet with them.

My allergy to dogs is just as real as an alcoholics allergy to alcohol and I wish people would respect it.

Breathing Free

Dear Breathing,

No one should have to leave an AA meeting because his or her allergies are triggered by another member's actions. Many meetings as a group conscience ask members not to wear scented products out of consideration for the health of others. Smoking, that former mainstay of AA meetings, is now banned at indoor meetings in California, by state law.

In addition to the effect on an allergic person, dogs in meetings can frighten anyone unfamiliar with dogs, or if there are several dogs, fight or play, either of which can be distracting.

We go to AA meetings to interact with other alcoholics trying to stay sober, not with our pets. First things first. A genuine service dog is an exception. Part of its job is to help a disabled member attend a meeting.

If a meeting takes a group conscience to be dog-friendly, it can publish the information in the meeting list, so anyone allergic to dogs will know in advance.

I am a lifelong dog lover, but have never taken either of my two dear old dogs to a meeting.

Loyally, 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. michaelr@aasf.org

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE—

Lynnore G. lynnorel@aol.com

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE—

Peter M. sfteservice@aasf.org

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE—

Laura N. 415.931-2567

12th STEP COMMITTEE—

Scott C. 415.614-0249

Payback—A Gift of Sobriety


By Rudi D.

When my dad got sober in 1979, he would take me to meetings at The Industrial Club, at 16th and Guerrero, and at the Mission Fellowship at 1364 Valencia. He had a strong sponsor, a co-founder of the Trudgers, who passed away five years into my dad's sobriety. Those days of sitting in smoke-filled dingy rooms and hearing shares far beyond the scope of my experience at nine years old marked an era of renewed hope and goodwill in my life. AA had performed a miracle: it had restored my dad to me. Ironically, I remember an elderly AA woman telling me how lucky I was hearing about alcoholism and that I would not have to go through the wringer like they all had.

I am living proof that self-knowledge avails us nothing: I spent the next twenty years trying in vain to prove myself an exception to the rule, able to drink like other men. I surrendered and crawled through the doors of AA in June of 2000.

Before I could find a door to crawl through, I called AA. I knew that my dad had not had a drink in 21 years as a result of his participation in AA. That is the greatest gift he has given me, the example of his sobriety in AA. When I called Central Office in June of 2000, a sober member of AA answered the phone and took the time to talk to me about the Big Book (I had one in pristine condition on my shelf. It had been gathering dust for six years.) He explained the program and stated his conviction that, although it may be possible to get sober all alone with the Big Book, in his experience, one needed others for a successful sobriety. I do not know who that phone volunteer was, but I hope he is still sober and happy, joyous and free. Since I could not express my gratitude to him personally for his understanding and patience, I decided the best way to pay him back, along with AA as a whole, was to answer phones at Central Office.

At about two years of sobriety, I began answering the phone at the Los Angeles Central Office. After moving back to the San Francisco Bay Area, I was offered a regular shift during the week at the San Francisco/Marin Central Office. I looked forward to spending a couple hours at our Central Office, talking with visitors who dropped in, joking around with the other volunteers and special workers, and helping my fellow alcoholics find the nearest meeting.

It is a pleasure to be the voice that welcomes the out-of-towner to the Fellowship or consoles the slurring, hiccupping "researcher". I love every minute that I spend immersed in the activity around Central Office and I am filled with gratitude that my Higher Power has seen fit to put me in a position where I can pay back AA for giving me a sober dad and my dad a sober son. 

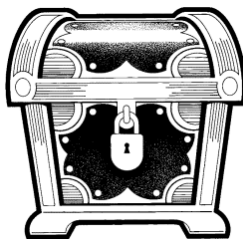
Trivia Answers

1. Twelve Points to Assure Our Future
2. Tradition Two
3. Tradition Three
4. Tradition Four
5. Tradition Four
6. Tradition Six

Treasures of the Twelve & Twelve

by Suzi K.O.

As I sit down to write about the sixth step, I struggle with one of my favorite character defects, procrastination, which the 12&12 describes as “sloth in five syllables”. Since beginning this piece I have dry cleaned (with a home kit) all of the drapes in my bedroom. My first sponsor used to say “God will use your defects until you have some assets.”



Now that I've eaten a bunch of asparagus (very healthy) and gone online (for just a second), back to the Sixth Step. It is fortunate that the 12X12 makes it clear that we can only take the first step perfectly. The rest of the steps, and this step in particular, we can do only with the most perfect willingness we can muster at any given moment. Some moments, that willingness is awfully tiny. The prospect of being willing to have god remove our shortcomings is also awfully frightening.

I am quite fond of some of my character defects. I actually think of them as my personality. Where would I be without my righteous indignation? Let me share a little rant right here — an opinion on an outside issue: The whole world appears to be in an uproar about torture and abuse in the middle of a war. If you want people to behave in a civilized fashion toward each other, stop going to war. Invite them to a nice brunch. Perhaps a movie. Croquet.

Badminton. Table tennis. There are no guns, knives or beheadings in table tennis. No one attaches electrodes to your genitals in badminton, (though I have no real understanding of the game, so I could be wrong). No one is raped in croquet. War — that always turns out badly. No surprise there. I now do the dance of righteous indignation. Ah, how I adore my character defects. I cling to them like a baby chimp to its mother.

Fortunately, the Program does not ask me to become a saint. When it says, “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character,” it also says that, this is “AA’s way of stating the best possible attitude one can take in order to make a beginning on this lifetime job...The key words “entirely ready” underline the fact that we want to aim at the very best we know or can learn.” Though almost no one is “entirely ready” in the most extravagant

interpretation of those words, we have to turn inward and look to our best self. Even the most diligent of us will often find a sticking point here — a feeling that they are not yet ready to give something up. Or perhaps worse yet, that there are some things that they never want to give up. No matter our desire to stay sober, it is always opposed by our inclination to contend with the grace of god against our better interest.

Many of our character defects disturb us, even if they are mild. While I have never been angry enough to murder (or even get in a real fight) or greedy enough to become a professional thief (though there is a little thievery in my adolescence, if I am to be perfectly honest), I do not like these qualities in myself. I gladly and willingly offer them up at once for god to remove. But the 12X12 reminds me that it doesn’t work that way. We all have a list of defects, from severe to mild, from those we enjoy to those we abhor. The implication of their complete removal is the attainment of spiritual and moral perfection. I believe the operative expression is “when pigs fly.”

So, we can relieve ourselves of that concern. Progress, not perfection. We need only to “raise our eyes toward perfection, and be ready to walk in that direction. It will seldom matter how haltingly we walk. The only

question will be ‘Are we ready?’” And as to the defects we love, as long as our answer is “not yet,” rather than “no, never,” we are still moving in the right direction.

As far as those pesky, unpleasant defects of which we are eager to be rid, we must remember that all of this is about readiness to have them removed, not our ability to remove them ourselves. I can be ready for god to remove my anger. I can’t make my anger go away myself. Just as it is my job to turn my will and my life over in the third step, in the sixth step I become ready to have god remove my defects. Thus, when they arise, I try not to cling to them — I cannot be expected to make them disappear — that is not my job. They will be relieved in god’s time. Not mine. ↑

“The key words “entirely ready” underline the fact that we want to aim at the very best we know or can learn.” Though almost no one is “entirely ready” in the most extravagant interpretation of those words, we have to turn inward and look to our best self.

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



A.A. On the Road: Alicante, Spain

By Kathleen C.

Two weeks after the terrorist bombing of the Atocha Railway Station in Madrid, I visited Spain with my family. Both of our daughters studied in Spain and wanted to show us “their” towns. One daughter was still at the University of Alicante, and our other daughter joined us there. We had previously planned our visit around her spring break and then the bombing happened. To our surprise, the security as we traveled in Spain was less intense than it is in the States and no one held it against us that we were Americans.

Alicante in the eighth century was a Moorish city. A magnificent stone fortress high on a cliff overlooks the beach. It has become a resort city of about 1 million people on the southeast Mediterranean coast, called the Costa Blanca for its white sand beaches. I met some terrific AA members at meetings.

My daughter had called AA in Alicante and located the equivalent of an Alano club. One Tuesday evening, we all stopped by the Centro Loyola, a gray stone building a few blocks off the palm tree-lined Explanada, where Spanish and International Twelve Step meetings are held. Lo and behold, the twice-weekly English-language meeting was starting in fifteen minutes.

Ronnie and Arthur, two Brits who live in Alicante, smiled and asked, “Won’t you stay for the meeting?” I joined them, along with Dennis, an Irishman on holiday, and Jose and Marco, Alicante residents from the Netherlands. They go to AA meetings conducted in Dutch, but also attend the English-language meetings. AA is very big throughout Spain. There was a Spanish-language meeting going on upstairs from us, and the International groups are included in conferences. Everyone was excited about a conference coming up the following weekend.

We settled into our molded plastic chairs around the Formica-topped table under fluorescent lights. Well-worn copies of the Big Book, the 12 & 12 and *As Bill Sees It* were scattered on the table among hand-lettered signs with AA slogans – “AA Works, So Work It,” “12 Steps to Freedom,” “Let Go and Let God,” “There But For the Grace of God,” “Gratitude Changes Attitude.” The electric kettle hissed and mugs of fragrant instant coffee were passed around. Ahhh, I felt at home.

We said the Serenity Prayer and Arthur read Chapter Five. I introduced myself as a visitor and then Ronnie started his share. I struggled to comprehend his story through his North of England accent (he probably had a hard time understanding me!)

He began drinking at 19, after he finished high school, went

to work and got married. He spent his nights after work drinking in the workingman’s clubs near Newcastle. Eventually he stopped going to work entirely and his wife took their young son and left. He drank even more until he was committed to a mental hospital.

His long climb to sobriety started in a Salvation Army doss house or shelter near the House of Commons in London. Today he is twenty years sober in AA. He and his second wife own a house in Alicante, where he has a job and is active in AA.

We all shared around the table. Jose had sixty days and talked about the last time he relapsed. He also shared how touched he was by watching the funeral of Queen Julianna of the Netherlands on television, when the minister prayed the Serenity Prayer. We closed with the same prayer and then stood around chatting. Jose and I exchanged cards after he told me he often visited friends in the Castro in San Francisco.

My husband and daughter arrived to take me back to the hotel as my new AA friends and I exchanged *abrazos* and *dos besos*, the hugs and two kisses of Spain.

It felt so good to find fellowship that I returned for the Saturday meeting which was a bit larger and included four women, all Dutch. I shared that I was happy there was a newcomer, Jose, at the meeting—that he was the reason we were all there and that he was keeping us sober. I thanked them for being there and explained how my family would probably thank them as well, since I had been getting squirrely without meetings.

My daughter remarked, “Mom, you’re always so happy after a meeting.” Si! ↑

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.



Large Print Literature Available at Central Office By Gary D.


For a sight-impaired alcoholic, what could be more important than large print editions of approved AA books? “Alcoholics Anonymous” (The Big Book) and other conference approved AA literature have been translated into many languages, as the fellowship grew and reached into many countries. The AA World Services recently began publishing large print editions of six approved AA books available in our continued effort to spread the hope of recovery to all alcoholics, and to provide a spiritual path for living a more serene and peaceful life. These editions are now available at the Central Office Bookstore.

“Alcoholics Anonymous” was first printed in 1939. The 2nd edition was published in 1955; the third in 1976; and the 4th and newest edition in 2001. “Alcoholics Anonymous” was also the first to be printed in large print with the 3rd Edition in 1990. The 4th edition was also made available in large print in 2001.

The first edition of “The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions” (or “12

by 12” as it is often called) came out in 1953, and it was first published in a large print edition in 1991. “Daily Reflections” was originally published in 1990. It became available in a large print edition in 2002.

The three new large print editions—“As Bill Sees It,” “Came To Believe,” and “Living Sober”—are AA favorites and will be welcome reading for the sight-impaired. These 2004 large print editions follow the original publication of “As Bill Sees It” in 1967, “Came to Believe” in 1973, and “Living Sober” in 1975. The addition of these three large print volumes, in addition to the three already available, will make the important messages contained in AA literature available to those alcoholics who have difficulty reading the standard-sized book print.

Please encourage your groups, your literature person, and anyone who might be interested in these large print editions to stop by or call the Central Office to order copies. 

Psst... The Point is online: www.aasf.org

AA Group Contributions - March 2004

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

| Name | Meets | March '04 | YTD | Name | Meets | March '04 | YTD |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Fellowship Contributions | | | | | | | |
| Annual Christmas Meeting | Christmas 2004 | | 25.00 | Sober Moms | Fr 11:30am | 18.00 | 18.00 |
| Bingo Extravaganza | 7th Tradition | | 115.00 | Steps to Freedom | M 8:30pm | | 296.02 |
| Brisbane Breakfast | Su 11am | 24.40 | 82.80 | Stinson Beach Fellowship | Th 8pm | | 220.60 |
| Contribution Box | March 2004 | 36.29 | 196.55 | Streetfighters | Sa 9am | | 22.10 |
| Deer Park Discovery Group | | | 4.67 | Sunday Express | Su 6pm | | 143.84 |
| IFB | March Meeting | 108.47 | 295.47 | Sunday Night Corte Madera | Su 8pm | | 400.00 |
| Marin Teleservice | | 600.00 | 600.00 | Terra Linda Group | Th 8:30pm | | 500.00 |
| Spirit of San Francisco | 2003 Convention | 577.56 | 577.56 | TGI Tuesday | Tu 6pm | 32.80 | 53.20 |
| Sunday Step Study | Su 4pm | 60.00 | 60.00 | Three Step Group | Sa 5:30pm | | 400.00 |
| Unidentified | | | 221.40 | Thurs. Night Speaker, MV | Th 8:30pm | | 634.00 |
| Total Fellowship | | \$1,406.72 | \$2,178.45 | Thursday Night Miracles | Th 8:30pm | | 39.00 |
| Honors | | | | Tiburon Haven | Su 12pm | | 120.00 |
| Endless Summer | F 8:30pm | 30.42 | 119.32 | Tiburon Women's Candlelight | W 8pm | | 39.76 |
| High Noon | 6D 12:15pm | 36.00 | 36.00 | Wednesday Mid-Week | W 6pm | 55.73 | 55.73 |
| Sesame Step | Tu 7:30pm | 6.00 | 6.00 | Wednesday Night Candlelight | W 8pm | 152.00 | 152.00 |
| Total Honors | | \$72.42 | \$161.32 | Wednesday Night Speaker Discussion | W 7pm | | 69.52 |
| Marin Group Contributions | | | | Women on Monday | M 7pm | | 69.67 |
| 12 & 12 Study | Sa 8:15am | 106.50 | 106.50 | Women on Wednesday | W 7pm | | 64.86 |
| 7am Urgent Care Group | 7D 7am | | 200.00 | Women's Big Book | Tu 10:30am | | 70.00 |
| A Vision For You | Su 7:30pm | | 68.25 | Working Dogs | W 12:05pm | | 313.25 |
| Attitude Adjustment Fairfax | 7D 7am | 933.00 | 1,951.92 | Total Marin Contributions | | \$2,530.83 | \$10,768.96 |
| Awareness/Acceptance | M 10:30am | 120.00 | 120.00 | SF Group Contributions | | | |
| Back to Basics | Su 9:30am | | 87.50 | 12 Steps to Happiness | F 7:30pm | | 40.87 |
| Beginners | W 7pm | | 500.00 | A is for Alcohol | Tu 6pm | 46.50 | 80.70 |
| Bounce Back | M 6pm | | 200.00 | AA Step Study | S 6pm | | 172.52 |
| Candlelight | Su 8:30pm | | 79.23 | Afro American | F 8pm | | 36.62 |
| Creekside New Growth | Su 7pm | | 75.00 | Afro American Beginners | Sa 8pm | 59.53 | 59.53 |
| Crossroads | Su 12pm | | 497.00 | After Work | M 6pm | 63.00 | 63.00 |
| Experience, Strength & Hope | Sa 6pm | 111.00 | 111.00 | All Together Now | Th 8pm | 198.66 | 198.66 |
| Fireside | F 8pm | | 35.50 | Alumni | W 8pm | 60.00 | 60.00 |
| Freedom Finders | F 8:30pm | | 388.28 | Amazing Grace | M 7pm | | 28.80 |
| Happy Hour | Th 6pm | 111.00 | 111.00 | Any Lengths | Sa 9:30am | | 874.21 |
| High & Dry | W 12pm | 75.00 | 75.00 | Artists & Writers | F 6:30pm | 181.28 | 181.28 |
| Island Group | Th 8pm | 72.50 | 72.50 | Artists & Writers | F 6:30pm | | 250.00 |
| Living in the Solution | F 6pm | | 233.00 | As Bill Sees It | Th 6pm | | 47.60 |
| Marin City Groups | M-F 6:30pm | | 100.00 | Bernal Big Book | Sa 5pm | | 281.24 |
| Marin Sober Group | F 8pm | | 39.50 | Beyond 164 | F 12:30pm | | 30.00 |
| Mill Valley 7am | 7D 7am | | 500.00 | Big Book Study | Su 11am | | 47.57 |
| Mill Valley Original Smokeless SS | Th 8pm | | 50.00 | Boys Night Out | Tu 7:30pm | | 69.73 |
| Monday Night Stag | M 8pm | 348.42 | 348.42 | Castro Discussion | W 8pm | | 242.00 |
| Nativity Monday Night Big Book | M 8pm | | 100.00 | Castro Monday Big Book | M 8pm | 329.15 | 329.15 |
| Newcomers Step | M 7:30pm | | 300.00 | Cocanuts | Su 9am | 71.00 | 125.00 |
| Pathfinders | Tu 12pm | 85.89 | 85.89 | Dignitaries Sympathy | W 8:15pm | | 150.00 |
| Rise N Shine | Su 10am | | 102.73 | Each Day a New Beginning M | M 7am | | 154.00 |
| Ross San Anselmo Group | M 8:30pm | | 54.00 | Each Day A New Beginning Su | Su 8am | 163.24 | 163.24 |
| San Geronimo Valley | M 8pm | 58.99 | 58.99 | Each Day a New Beginning Th | Th 7am | | 434.00 |
| Saturday Women's Speaker | Sa 6pm | | 105.00 | Each Day a New Beginning W | W 7am | | 459.73 |
| Six O'Clock Sunset | Th 6pm | | 81.20 | Early Start | F 6pm | 375.00 | 375.00 |
| Sober & Serene | F 7pm | 250.00 | 250.00 | Embarcadero Group | Daily 12:10pm | 328.64 | 328.64 |
| | | | | Embarcadero Reflections | Tu 12:10pm | 89.06 | 89.06 |

(Continued on p. 13)

(Group Contributions, continued from p. 12)

| Name | Meets | March '04 | YTD |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------|--------|
| Eureka Valley Topic | M 6pm | 315.64 | 315.64 |
| Federal Speaker | Su 12pm | 135.57 | 135.57 |
| Fireside Chat Sa | Sa 9pm | | 198.83 |
| Fireside Chat Th | Th 8pm | | 88.56 |
| Fireside Chat Tu | Tu 8pm | | 60.11 |
| Friday All Groups | Fr 8:30pm Raffle | 112.00 | 249.00 |
| Friday Lunchtime | Fr 12pm | 140.00 | 140.00 |
| Friendly Circle | Su 8:30pm | | 441.30 |
| Friendship Group | W 8pm | 125.00 | 125.00 |
| Friendship House | | | 9.36 |
| Golden Gate Seniors | Tu 1:30pm | 107.00 | 107.00 |
| Haight Street Blues | Tu 6:15pm | 131.00 | 206.00 |
| Haight Street Explorers | Th 6:30pm | | 60.00 |
| Happy Hour | F 6:30pm | 337.20 | 381.80 |
| High Noon Friday | F 12:15pm | 397.96 | 397.96 |
| High Noon Monday | M 12:15pm | | 222.07 |
| High Noon Saturday | Sa 12:15pm | 78.70 | 78.70 |
| High Noon Thursday | Th 12:15pm | | 168.27 |
| High Noon Tuesday | Tu 12:15pm | | 256.70 |
| High Noon Wednesday | W 12:15pm | | 180.00 |
| High Sobriety | M 8pm | | 168.00 |
| Hilldwellers | M 8pm | | 166.80 |
| How It Works | Sa 2pm | | 125.01 |
| Huntington Square | W 6:30pm | | 125.14 |
| Join the Tribe | Tu 7pm | 128.24 | 128.24 |
| Joys of Recovery | Tu 8pm | 300.00 | 427.31 |
| Keep It Simple | Sa 8:30pm | | 86.85 |
| Light Brigade Discussion | Su 7pm | | 127.80 |
| Lincoln Park | Sa 8:30pm | | 68.50 |
| Live and Let Live | Su 8pm | | 119.76 |
| Living Sober with HIV | W 6pm | | 261.20 |
| Luke's Group | W 8pm | | 59.47 |
| Meeting Place Noon | F 12pm | 27.06 | 27.06 |
| Mid-Morning Support | Su 10:30am | 202.17 | 624.09 |
| Midnight Meditation | Sa 11:59pm | | 11.25 |
| Millionaires Club | Th 6pm | | 70.00 |
| Miracles Off 24th St | W 7:30pm | | 116.51 |
| Mission Terrace | W 8pm | 142.33 | 142.33 |
| 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 |
| Newcomers | Tu 8pm | | 162.00 |
| Park Presidio | M 8:30pm | 40.00 | 87.00 |
| Parkside | Th 8:30pm | 80.40 | 140.40 |
| Pure & Simple | Su 6pm | | 28.15 |
| Rose Garden Big Book | Th 12:05pm | 41.23 | 60.67 |
| Rule 62 | W 10pm | 147.60 | 396.11 |
| Saturday Afternoon Meditation | Sa 2pm | | 61.00 |
| Saturday Night Regroup | Sa 7:30pm | | 200.24 |
| Saturday Serenity | Sa 8pm | | 362.00 |
| Seacliff | Th 8:30pm | | 54.47 |
| Serenity House | | 200.00 | 500.00 |
| Serenity Seekers | M 7:30pm | | 784.39 |
| Sesame Step | T 7:30pm | | 145.46 |

| Name | Meets | March '04 | YTD |
|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Sinbar | Su 8pm | 123.40 | 194.24 |
| Sober & Centered | Fr 7pm | | 168.27 |
| Sometimes Slowly | Sa 11am | 57.19 | 57.19 |
| Step Talk | Su 8:30am | 120.00 | 240.00 |
| Stepping Out | Sa 6pm | | 120.00 |
| Sunday Bookworms | Su 7:30pm | 115.01 | 115.01 |
| Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag | Su 10:30am | | 549.43 |
| Sunday Night 3rd Step Group | Su 5pm | | 100.76 |
| Sunday Rap | Su 8pm | | 132.00 |
| Sundown | W 7pm | | 96.00 |
| Sunset 11'ers F | F 11am | | 113.40 |
| Sunset 11'ers W | W 11am | | 24.00 |
| Sunset 9'ers M | M 9am | | 148.50 |
| Sunset 9'ers Su | Su 9am | | 100.00 |
| Sunset 9'ers W | W 9am | | 154.04 |
| Sutter Street Beginners | Sa 6pm | 255.85 | 469.49 |
| Ten Years After | Su 6pm | | 474.72 |
| They Don't Know Who We Are | Sa 7pm | | 150.00 |
| Too Early | Sa 8am | 99.80 | 358.07 |
| Tuesday's Daily Reflections | Tu 7am | | 83.62 |
| Valencia Smokefree | F 6pm | 426.31 | 426.31 |
| 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 Who Drank Too Much | Tu 6:15pm | 39.00 | 39.00 |
| Women's Promises | F 7pm | | 148.80 |
| Work In Progress | Sa 7pm | 64.87 | 64.87 |
| Total SF Contributions | | \$6,455.59 | \$21,038.41 |

TOTAL **\$10,465.56** **\$34,147.14**

Gratitude Contributions March 2004

SF Gratitude Month

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|-------|
| Castro Monday Big Book | M 8pm | 64.56 |
| Each Day A New Beginning Su | Su 8am | 52.02 |
| Mission Terrace | W 8pm | 42.25 |

Total Gratitude Month **\$158.83**

Individual Contributions March 2004

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Janet M. | 25.00 |
| Jane McF. | 43.00 |
| John L. | 22.50 |
| Barbara M. | 20.00 |
| Total | \$110.50 |

"We cannot skim"

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
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No Buddha in the Bottle

By Li L.

Over 2,500 years ago, after he had attained that fruition of human potential known as Enlightenment, Shakyamuni Buddha established four primary precepts for his lay and monastic followers. They were that one should refrain from killing any sentient being; that one should refrain from taking what was not given freely; that one should refrain from lying and that one should refrain from sexual misconduct. Ten years later he added a fifth precept, that one should refrain from intoxicants, as these would certainly lead to the other four. To this day, Buddhism is the only world religion that asks its adherents to renounce intoxicants (not that all Buddhists, by any means, do so.) There are as many flavors of international Buddhism as restaurants in San Francisco, but they all share the same Four Noble Truths. Entering the path is similar to an alcoholic's bottoming out. One begins by recognizing that one's suffering is based on self-centered ego and the way out, the wisdom of cutting through ego, is realized by following a prescribed path of correct outlook, meditation, and conduct.

When I first came to AA, I identified as a Buddhist practitioner of 20 plus years (in the Tibetan Gelug tradition) who happened to be an alcoholic and a less than enthusiastic member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Now, quite a while later, strangely and without ever specifically thinking about it, I identify as a member of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, an alcoholic in recovery who happens to be a Buddhist. This is true despite the fact that my time in sobriety has, if anything, intensified the *actual practice* of Buddhism in my daily life. It wasn't until I came to Alcoholics Anonymous that I was able to even think about putting the fifth precept into action. And, as we learn in AA, action is the key to sobriety.

At first, the Judeo-Christian context of AA literature was a barrier, but with time I began to see the similarities between Buddhist practice and the Twelve Steps. In fact, I have never found anything that contradicts the teachings of the Buddha in any of the AA program of recovery as laid out in the books Alcoholics Anonymous and The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. This remains true to this day. When one considers that generally Buddhism is a non-theist spiritual path based upon the development of human potential motivated by a desire to benefit others, I guess this shouldn't be too surprising.

When asked to close a meeting with a prayer of my choice, I have often been tempted to say, "Let the circle represent the

healing power of all the Buddhas, bodhisattvas and protectors in the ten directions... Let us close with a repetition of 100 Medicine Buddha mantras for the benefit of all sentient beings." But, I don't. Usually I just use the Serenity Prayer because it is the most universal of all prayers used in AA. I still feel uncomfortable with the "Lord's Prayer" and do not wish to recite it because it is specifically Christian (found in the Gospels). Instead, while others recite it, I simply repeat the Medicine Buddha mantra under my breath.


There are actually Buddhist practices that correspond exactly to some of the steps. For instance, there is a practice called "Taking Refuge" in which, on a daily basis, one reaffirms a commitment to the "Buddha, Dharma (the teachings) and the Sangha (the community of practitioners)". This is repeated at the beginning of all practices and meditation sessions, and has the same underlying sense as the Third Step prayer. There is also a daily inventory of "downfalls" and a confession of shortcomings corresponding to the Sixth, Seventh and Tenth Steps.

In monastic communities, monks are required to publicly admit their shortcomings twice a month. And of course, prayer and meditation are heavily emphasized as in the Eleventh Step. Buddhism is a font of detailed meditation practices extending back centuries. Even some in Catholic contemplative communities have turned to Buddhism to reestablish or reinvigorate their meditative traditions.

Like AA, Buddhism has always emphasized religious tolerance. I remember once in a public talk, in reply to a question about sharing

Buddhism with others, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said "What we need are better Buddhists, not more Buddhists. In this way we are able to benefit others."

And again, like AA, emphasis is always placed upon helping others as a spiritual practice. I remember once, in a discussion with a learned Tibetan Lama about the value of praying for others, he said, "It may not help them very much, but it sure will help you." If that doesn't sound like something your sponsor would say, I don't know what does!

The practice of looking for the similarities instead of the differences pays off. I feel very strongly that all the words and concepts used to define a higher power are accurate within their context, and someone else's definition in no way diminishes mine. We are, after all, afloat in the same boat but we all see the captain from our own perspectives. Regardless of that perspective, we really need to help each other. 

*"Just as a tree when cut down
sprouts up again if the roots
remain firm and uninjured, even
so this suffering returns again
and again if the root of craving
is not completely destroyed."*

*Shakyamuni Buddha – from the
Dhammapada*

Atheist? In A.A.?

By Barnaby W.

As a man who had lost his faith, being an alcoholic in recovery in a 12 step way posed a challenge. As a child I was very involved in the Church, and was raised with the capital G of the Christian religion, but came to believe there could be no god. This led to a spiritual problem which, I believe, led to a lot of my drinking, drug use and other problems.

In my college years I tried to understand spirituality and faith without god, and it left me lacking. This led to an understanding of a theory of the universe with hydrogen as the simplest atomic structure. So that, and other distractions, worked even after I entered the rooms. But at three years of sobriety, having not honestly worked the steps because of the “god” word, life became chaotic. That led to a spiritual bottom where even though the financial parts of the promises had come true, the spirituality and serenity I desired was completely lacking. This led to an absolute need to do the steps and forget the ways I had understood of staying sober before, but left me with the “god” word.

The beginning of doing the steps was admitting not only that I was powerless over alcohol, but also that my life was truly unmanageable. But, coming to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity was another matter. What I could believe was that other people had become sane through the tools of AA. So the power to restore me to sanity was the steps. Making the decision to turn my will and my life over to god as I understood god required turning my thoughts and actions over to the group of A.A. — yes, that’s a bit cultish, but it gave me something that was not me to be the center of my universe.

The rest of the steps are really quite easy if I understand the Golden Rule — Do unto others as I would have them do unto me. Not that that had always been the case. Admitting to god, was just telling my sponsor the truth and hearing it out loud myself— once it was said out loud, I knew whether it was really the truth or not.

Removing my defects of character and asking for my shortcomings to be removed was simply the tool for removing the chaos from my life and never having to repeat it again. One of these defects of character, which I discovered in my fourth step, was my discovery that childhood abuse/abandonment issues had led me to the renunciation of God. What I came to understand was, prayer and meditation are just vocalization and remaining calm, and that carrying the message is more important than arguing with someone about whether or not I need god. Honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness, the three cornerstones of sobriety, don’t say god. Honesty in your fourth step doesn’t say god. And having had a spiritual awakening does not say god.

One of the greatest things I ever heard in AA is that we all have faith if we have fear, because fear is faith that everything will go horribly wrong. Thus, if I can have faith in the negative, why can’t I have faith in the positive? This is the kind of faith that has proof that it works without beads, drinking red wine on Sundays, or getting on your knees.

What I do know now is Group Of Drunks has kept me sober, and given me the serenity and peace of mind that I so desperately wanted. ↑

Changes with *The Point*: Subscription price is going up—and its now online!

If your subscription to *The Point* is expiring soon, you might consider renewing now! On July 1st of this year, subscriptions to *The Point* are going to increase to \$9/year and \$0.75/issue. In July of 2005 they will increase to \$12/year and \$1.00/issue. This is the first price increase since *The Point*’s inception in 1996.

At this time we are also only providing complimentary copies to registered secretaries or treasurers (one per group), and Intergroup (IFB) representatives. These measures are being taken in an effort to reduce expenses. If you have been reading the Financial Statements on p. 19 of each issue you know that we are currently running at a deficit., approximately fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) each month so far this year.

The good news is that *The Point* is now available on our website! This is an exciting development that has been in the works for some time. We encourage members to keep

subscribing and/or to make use of the website.

The Point is the main form of communication Central Office has with the groups and the membership—and while each registered secretary and Intergroup (IFB) representative receives a free copy to share at the group, out of the 776 meetings listed in the San Francisco and Marin Schedules, we only have 67 registered secretaries, 40 registered treasurers, 67 IFB representatives. Please encourage your Trusted Servants to register and consider giving gift subscriptions to your sober friends!

The Point committee has worked diligently to improve the quality of our newsletter over the last couple of years—we hope you enjoy reading is as much as we enjoy putting it together! And we hope you find it to be a valuable tool to your recovery. ↑

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 180 Harrison St., Sausalito, CA Wednesday, May 5, 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 | Intergroup Rep | Group |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-------|
| Ben N. | Past Chair | P | Haven K. | High Noon Friday | A* |
| Bill R. | Early Start | P | Janet B. | As Bill Sees It, Saturday | P |
| Carol W. | Miracles Off 24 th St. | P | Jeff A. | Eureka Valley Topic | A* |
| Dan C. | Tiburon Haven | A* | Jeremiah P. | All Together Now | A* |
| Danny F. | Each Day A New Beginning | P | Jen B. | Midnight Meditation | A* |
| Dan P. | Second Chance | P | Joe G. | Beginners | P |
| Dan Z. | Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag | P | Johnny G. | High Noon Tuesday | A* |
| David A. | Living Sober | P | Judi C. | Tuesday's Daily Reflections | A* |
| David B. | Beginner's Warmup | P | Julie H. | Terra Linda | P |
| David B. | Federal Speaker | P | Kate B. | Friday All Groups | P |
| David E. | Sesame Step | A* | Kim O. | Easy Does It | A* |
| David K. | Haight St. Blues | A* | Kristine F. | Castro Discussion | P |
| Dick T. | Attitude Adjustment Hour | A* | Lesley F. | Cocanuts | P |
| Don B. | Friday Fell Street | P | Lou H. | Mill Valley 7AM | A* |
| Doug F. | No Reservation | A* | Lynnore G. | Walk Of Shame | A* |
| Doug S. | As Bill Sees It - Thursday | P | Marc D. | Bernal Big Book | P |
| Eric R. | Eureka Valley Topic | A* | Martha C. | 449'ers | P |
| Francesca K. | West Portal | P | Mary Ellen D. | A is for Alcohol | A* |
| Gary D. | Work In Progress | A* | Maury P. | Office Manager | P |
| Georgia L. | Friendly Circle Beginners | A* | Michael R. | Huntington Square | P |
| Grant D. | Ten Years After | P | Monika H. | Back 2 Basics | A* |
| Greg S. | Keep Coming Back | Alt. | Nathan M. | Too Early | P |
| New IFB Reps Present | | Non-IFB Liaisons Present | | | |
| Steve N. | Terra Linda Group | P | Dave M. | Marin Teleservice | P |
| Kelley G. | Keep Coming Back Alternate | P | Russell R. | SF Teleservice | P |
| Lynn E. | Ten Years After | P | Todd M. | SF General Service | P |
| Mike H. | ? | 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

Chairs & Central Office Committee Report: Danny F. encouraged all IFB members to get on at least one committee because this is where the work gets done. Central Office is currently running about a \$1,500 per month deficit. The two biggest sources of revenue are group contributions and literature sales; when GSO is running a deficit they increase the price of literature. Highlights from the COC April meeting: 1) Patrick M., Treasurer, will present the board's recommendation on the best ways to fund retirement for CO employees. 2) Maury P. raised the idea of looking at ways for the IFB to work more closely with General Service. 3) Kris F. will work on the bylaws to determine what changes need to be presented to the IFB. 4) The possibility of increasing the price of *The Point* was discussed. Maury P. will take the proposal to *The Point* committee. The 2004 Annual Business Meeting will be held in June in conjunction with the IFB meeting. Danny F. thanked all of the committees for their hard work and especially the Special Needs Committee for their work in bringing the presentation to the board meeting in April.

Treasurer's Report: Patrick M. submitted a written report of the balance sheet for March and profit and loss budget vs. actuals for January through March 2004. Total income was \$4,394 below budget, basically \$1,500 per month. Our cash position has gone down from last year. Patrick reported on the COC's discussion of retirement plans for CO employees and outlined the motion that they proposed. After discussion, the following motion was approved: upon the anniversary of each full-time employee, the Intercounty Fellowship will make a contribution of one month's current salary into a highly liquid insured account. Payment is due upon separation of employment as long as employee has fulfilled vesting requirement of five years continuous service. Interest accrues to the benefit of the Intercounty Fellowship. Plan will be funded quarterly in arrears. Patrick discussed the Internal Controls review, conducted by Patrick and Maury, which was handed out last week. Patrick noted that overall we have good controls in place; he highlighted some exceptions and resultant new controls that will be implemented. Patrick recommended that based on the internal control

(Continued on page 17)

IFB Summary—Continued from page 16)

review that we do not do an independent audit. This motion was made and passed.

Central Office Manager's Report: Maury reported that Michael R. has volunteered to redesign the database. She is working with the website committee to set up a list-serve for periodic announcements and Inter-group information. CO has put together a binder with 2005 International Convention information for interested members. Maury will attend the Post-Conference Assembly in Monterey on May 15. CO has a couple open shifts for phone volunteers and needs subs. The Annual meeting is next month. If you are rotating out, please ask your group to elect a new representative. If you are a member of an ad-hoc committee, you can continue to participate even if you are no longer an IFB member.

C. Special Orders of Business (Action Items)

1. **Vote to make ASL a budget item:** After discussion, motion was made and passed.

2. **Vote to have fundraising events become the domain of the Special Events Committee:** After discussion, motion was made and passed.

3. **Establish an Outreach Committee.** After discussion, motion was made and passed. Marc D. will chair the new committee. Rebekah D., Nathan M., Martha C., and Steve R. volunteered to be on the committee.

4. **Discussion of which logo to use for locally printed materials.** IFB reps should take this back to their groups to get an informed group conscience. Dan Z. will post both logos on the website in the news section for members to view.

D. Ad Hoc Committee Reports

Literature Review Committee: No report. The next committee meeting is Wed., May 19, at Central Office at 6:30 PM.

The Point Committee: The Point is online now. The committee meets the second and fourth Tuesdays at 5:00 PM at Central Office.

Orientation Committee: Bill R., Chair, announced that the next orientation will be Wed., June 2, at 6pm, the same evening as the IFB meeting but an hour earlier. Any outgoing IFB reps. could bring their replacement to this orientation. All new board members are required to attend an Orientation meeting before they have voting privileges.

Website Committee: Michael R., Chair, reported that only about 15% of Group Meeting Update forms have been returned. A web-based form is now available online; the date to respond has been extended to June 30. The website redesign prototype is complete and ready for review. Reviewers to actively review the site are needed. The committee is setting up e-mail groups within aasf.org. If you are interested in having an e-mail for your committee, please contact Michael R. The next meeting will be Thursday, May 27, at 6:15 PM at Central Office.

12th Step Committee: Lesley F. announced that the recent 12th Step Orientation Workshop was great but had low attendance. The committee is considering having three workshops a year rather than four. The pilot from 6pm to 9 pm is doing well and still has some openings. The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 12, at 6:30 pm at Central Office.

Special Events Committee (SEC): Dave B, Chair, announced the AA Meeting Secretaries' Workshop will be held Saturday, June 19, 11:30 to 1 pm, at Central Office which will include panel speakers, Q&A session, and pizza. For further information and to volunteer to help at the workshop, contact Dave at dbelectric@turnershouse.net or Georgia L. at redhedd@att.net. The next committee meeting will be Tues., June 1, at 7:30 pm at Central Office.

Special Needs Committee: Dan P., Chair, announced a sponsorship workshop for AA and the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Community at Central

Office on Sat., May 8, 11am to 2pm. He announced a new childcare meeting, Oh Momma Do I Need a Meeting, at 1750 Waller. The next Special Needs Committee meeting is Tuesday, June 1, at 6 pm at Central Office.

E. IFB Standing Committee Reports

1. **SF Teleservice:** Russell R., Information Chair, informed us that Teleservice has 19 open Teleservice shifts. New volunteers for these shifts as well as subs for back-up shifts are needed. The e-mail address through Central Office is sfteservice@aasf.org. The next meeting is Monday, May 17, with orientation at 6:30 PM and the monthly meeting at 7:00 PM.

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

F. Non -IFB Liaison Reports

1. **General Service, SF:** Todd M. reported that AA's 70th B-Day will be celebrated at the 2005 International Convention in Toronto, Ontario, which will be held June 30 – July 3, 2005. For District 06, Linda H. was elected as the new PI/CPC liaison. Lynn gave a detailed report on her experience at the 37th PRAASA in Irvine. The next District meeting is May 11. The Post Conference Assembly is on Monterey on May 15.

2. **General Service, Marin:** Shannon L. reported that Marin County Unity Day will be September 18, in Corte Madera. They have full participation and support from the Marin service entities and CO and would ask that the IFB become involved by having two volunteers. Their next meeting is May 15, at 4:00 pm in San Rafael at the Alano Club.

3. **Teleservice, Marin:** Dave reported that there are openings for backup shifts. The committee is planning to do a group inventory. Their next meeting is May 25, 7:30 pm, at the Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael.

4. **Spirit of San Francisco:** Russell G. announced that the theme of the September 3 – 5 Convention is "Carrying the Message" and it will be held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel at 1231 Market Street. Early registration is \$20. There are many volunteer opportunities available: Operations chair, Literature/Commemoratives chair, and Raffle chair. There will be a Memorial Day BBQ on Sat., May 29, at Sharon Meadows in Golden Gate Park. The event is free (everyone and donations welcome.) The next meeting is Monday, June 7, at 7 pm at Central Office. The committee's web site is www.spirit-sf.org.

G. Old Business

a. **Discuss the ideas we generated for ways to increase revenue; what did the groups say?** Several representatives reported back with the ideas from their groups. Many were in favor of using the birthday flyer that was put together by the Friday High Noon group. More reps should take this question to their groups and report back.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, June 2, 2004, at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA, at 7 pm in the chapel.

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 — as of May 2004 — *The Point!!!*

Native American Spirituality

By Gary B.

When asked to contribute to The Point I puffed up big like a buffalo and realized I reached the proportion of a puffed up toad. I am not qualified to describe, defend or otherwise speak to; "Native American Spirituality." I will however tell part of my story and share some of my experience as an Indian in recovery.

I am Cayuse, one of three tribes of the Confederated Tribes of The Umatilla Indian Reservation in the Columbia plateau region of northeast Oregon. The bones of my ancestors are scattered throughout that vast terrain. Due to attitudes in the early fifties my mother felt forced to secretly give birth to me and turn my care over to the Sisters of Providence Catholic Orphanage. From there I entered the foster system and was eventually adopted into a good Catholic family, raised and schooled in the way of Catholicism. I guess I didn't grasp the concept of discipline. Although I'd received plenty of it, I was clueless. The nuns did their best but I was not capable of "self discipline." I did however learn to loathe myself and my inability to live up to the purity expected of me and I knew I wouldn't be worthy of grace doled out by the great white father who sat on a throne of puffy white clouds. By my teens I abandoned all notions of religion, not because I thought I had a better way, but because I was seeking the easy way—and preferred indulging myself with booze, dope and the forbidden fruit. Thus began my journey into a dark world only alcoholics and addicts know of.

I went on to make a family, start a successful business and accumulate lots of "stuff," while my spirit became weak and cried out in pain. I reunited with my Indian family, but didn't feel worthy of the honor they bestowed on me. My abuse of everything that made me "feel good" progressed out of control and robbed me of any self-respect I had left. By the time I reached the age my father was when he died from alcoholism I was having symptoms of liver failure. Around that time I showed up to a ceremony drunk and was scolded for the disrespect I brought to my people. The old men told me I must stop worshiping the creator of my own ideas. They asked me to stay and they would pray for me. Then shame and remorse became the bigger part of my alcoholic existence. My spirit cried out into a void – "Why do they pray for me? They should have run me off. Whom are they praying to?".

On January 2, 1992, when I was 38 years old, I walked into the Indian health clinic and asked for help. I didn't know who I was or what to do but I couldn't go on in the form I had made of myself. I surrendered. I soon became a member of the Good Medicine Group of Alcoholics Anonymous. I started on a new path that involved 12 steps. Those steps began to show me principles that the church could not talk into me. I saw in the steps the old ways my elders tried to teach me by their example, walking quietly and contributing to their community. Today I have a wonderful life and I travel on a path given to me by my ancestors and made visible to me by the 12 steps. I participate in ritual and ceremony, including meetings of AA, not to impress God but to humble myself before a Creator of the way things are.

Today is a good day. I see clearly the Creator's instructions being obeyed by all of nature. Humility allows me to defer to the wisdom of the simplest of the creatures and things I don't understand. The creator of my own ideas (ego) still misinforms me from time to time and causes ugly emotions that I used to temper with substance abuse. Now I can turn to my spirit and ask my Creator to relieve me of the bondage of self and to set me on a useful path. Whether or not my notion of Higher Power, Great Spirit, Creator, or God is The Great Fact or merely a figment of my imagination, I have found that embracing the "Way Things Are" brings peace to my heart, serenity to my mind and a profound sense of belonging to the world I walk and breathe in. I am now 50 years old and love and feel loved. I'm a father and grandfather to young ones on loan to me from the old ones going back to the beginning of the Way Things Are. All that is left for me to do is pick up that simple kit of spiritual tools laid at my feet each day and honor all that is good. Maybe I will fulfill some purpose of which I am not yet aware but will see clearly when this world is finished with me and I become part of the Way Things Were. Kats-ya-ya 📌

"The creator of my own ideas (ego) still misinforms me from time to time and causes ugly emotions that I used to temper with substance abuse. Now I can turn to my spirit and ask my Creator to relieve me of the bondage of self and to set me on a useful path."

WRITE TO THE POINT

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

Financial Statement

March 2004 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

| | Apr 04 | Jan - Apr 04 | | Apr 04 | Jan - Apr 04 |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Ordinary Income/Expense | | | Rent - Office | 3,583.75 | 17,918.75 |
| Income | | | Rent - Other | 0.00 | 200.00 |
| Group Contributions | | | Repair & Maintenance | 178.00 | 726.98 |
| Honors | 0.00 | 161.32 | Security System | 33.50 | 167.50 |
| Group Contributions - Other | 11,759.11 | 45,744.93 | Special Events | 0.00 | 135.00 |
| Total Group Contributions | 11,759.11 | 45,906.25 | Telephone | 505.61 | 2,036.38 |
| Individual Contributions | | | Travel | 25.00 | 25.00 |
| Honorary Contributions | 74.00 | 1,255.00 | Training | 0.00 | 94.67 |
| Individual -Unrestricted | 118.00 | 1,604.96 | Utilities | 125.52 | 852.84 |
| Total Individual Contributions | 192.00 | 2,859.96 | Total Expense | \$13,636.45 | \$62,630.49 |
| Gratitude Month | | | Net Ordinary Income | \$326.06 | -\$2,335.62 |
| Gratitude Month-Groups | 25.00 | 1,758.22 | Other Income/Expense | | |
| Total Gratitude Month | 25.00 | 1,758.22 | Other Income | | |
| Newsletter Subscript. | 84.00 | 378.00 | Interest Income | 37.35 | 153.89 |
| Special Event Income | 0.00 | 2,108.00 | Total Other Income | 37.35 | 153.89 |
| Sales - Bookstore | 7,817.27 | 30,515.01 | Other Expense | | |
| Total Income | \$19,877.38 | \$83,525.44 | Depreciation Expense | 0.00 | 1,224.51 |
| Cost of Goods Sold | | | Total Other Expense | 0.00 | 1,224.51 |
| Cost of Books Sold | 5,914.87 | 23,230.57 | Net Other Income | \$37.35 | -\$1,070.62 |
| Total COGS | 5,914.87 | 23,230.57 | Net Income | \$363.41 | -\$3,406.24 |
| Gross Profit | 13,962.51 | 60,294.87 | | | |
| Expense | | | | | |
| IFB Literature | 50.00 | 173.25 | | | |
| Bad Checks | 0.00 | -27.07 | | | |
| Employee Expenses | | | | | |
| Wages & Salaries | 7,200.00 | 28,690.43 | | | |
| Employer Tax Expenses | 714.84 | 3,576.70 | | | |
| Benefits/Pension | 712.00 | 2,752.00 | | | |
| Retirement/Annuity Expense | 0.00 | -2,218.30 | | | |
| Workers Comp Ins. | -2.59 | 979.85 | | | |
| Total Employee Expenses | 8,624.25 | 33,780.68 | | | |
| ASL Expense | | | | | |
| ASL- Net- Fri All Grps | 0.00 | 1,499.40 | | | |
| Total ASL Expense | 0.00 | 1,499.40 | | | |
| Bank Charges | | | | | |
| Cr Card Fees | 0.00 | 282.67 | | | |
| Bank Charges - Other | 0.00 | 60.70 | | | |
| Total Bank Charges | 0.00 | 343.37 | | | |
| Equipment Lease | 0.00 | 1,695.30 | | | |
| Filing/Fees | 60.00 | 60.00 | | | |
| Insurance | 0.00 | 301.65 | | | |
| Internet Expense | 215.40 | 215.40 | | | |
| Miscellaneous Expense | 0.00 | 65.15 | | | |
| Office Supplies | -27.10 | 1,028.86 | | | |
| Postage | | | | | |
| Bulk Mail | 200.00 | 400.00 | | | |
| Postage - Other | 75.00 | 298.00 | | | |
| Total Postage | 275.00 | 698.00 | | | |
| Shipping | -12.48 | 16.45 | | | |
| Professional Fees | | | | | |
| Computer Consulting | 0.00 | 622.93 | | | |
| Total Professional Fees | 0.00 | 622.93 | | | |



The Point

Subscription Form

\$6.00 for one year — 12 issues!!!

(Please circle one)

NEW RENEW GIFT

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO :
INTERCOUNTY FELLOWSHIP OF ALCOHOLICS
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NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

MAIL THIS FORM & PAYMENT TO THE
Central Office 1821 Sacramento St.
San Francisco CA 94109-3528 ☎ (415) 674-1821



June 2004

Moving? Please Give Us Your New Address and Phone Number!!

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ISSUE 0604

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Founder's Day

at *Stafford Lake*

June 5th, 2004 ♦ Saturday

All day 8am to 6pm ♦ Celebrating 69 years of A.A.

Coffee starts at 8:00am ~
Bar-B-Que at Noon - \$5.00 donation*

~

50/50 Raffle ♦ Live Music *by* Friends of Bill & Bob

~

Volleyball, Softball, Horseshoes, & Fishing

~

No Dogs allowed in the County Park ~ Thank you ~

~

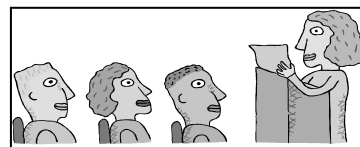
\$7.00 per car fee for entering the Park,
so bring your friends

~

for group sponsoring or individual commitments
please call

Frank 415-269-6075 or Laura 415-302-1086

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



The Point is now online!!
For personal stories, AA
announcements, reports
and financial statements
visit www.aasf.org—and
tell a friend! Or subscribe
now—subscription prices
are going up in July—from
\$6/year to \$9/year. Sub-
scriptions make wonderful
AA Anniversary gifts!



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

\$15 suggested donation

- but no one turned away for lack of funds.

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

BROADS WITHOUT BOOZE IV

Have you ever been to an A.A. women's meeting that begins with a fabulous luncheon and is attended by over a hundred happy and excited sober women from around the Bay Area? If not, mark your calendar for Sunday, July 25th, when the Broads Without Booze group meets again!

This 4th semi-annual extravaganza will take place at the United Irish Cultural Center, 2700 Sloat Boulevard, in San Francisco. Fellowship begins at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon sharp (\$20.50, with a choice of three entrees—price includes coffee, tea, entrée, dessert, tax and tip)!

The one-hour, speaker-only meeting starts at 1:30 p.m. The sobriety countdown is quite special because it ends with the woman who has the most sobriety presenting the woman with the least sobriety a Big Book signed by all those attending the luncheon. You won't find a dry eye in the house!

Look for flyers at your local meetings, or call Linda W. (650-341-8494) or Gerry H. (650-654-7666) for information.



4th of July Alcathon

Sunday – Sunday - Sunday
10am – 6pm

Frank's Ranch
563 McClay Road, Novato

Take Novato Blvd to McClay Road
563 McClay Road is on the right towards the very end
—before you go 'round the bend.

Some Parking is available at Frank's.

for information call Jerry 415-883-2592
Bring the Kids
Swimming ~ bring your own towel

No Pets, please

Bar-B-Que from 1-3pm

Burgers, hot dogs, beans and refreshments

Potluck ~ please bring salad, desert or side dish

LIVING SOBER / WESTERN ROUNDUP 2004

Friday, July 2nd - Sunday, July 4th
Bill Graham Civic Center Auditorium
99 Grove Street, San Francisco

Meetings – Workshops – Dance – Musical – Art

Archives – Bingo – Raffle – Fellowship

Sobriety "Def" Jam – Childcare – Meditation Room

For more information & to register, go to:

www.Livingsober.org



LIVING SOBER IS A CONFERENCE OF
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
HOSTED BY GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL,
AND TRANSGENDERED MEMBERS OF
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WITH
AL-ANON PARTICIPATION.

