

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

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

# The Point

August 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  
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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.

## Single Parenting: A Pleasant Surprise in Sobriety

 by Cynthia H.

My sobriety date is February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1991. In 1998 I met and married another sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous here in San Francisco. Our son Ryan was born on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999. Although our marriage was short lived, Ryan, a wonderfully happy and healthy boy, now five years old, is here to stay.

When I was expecting Ryan, I was in the second year of a two-year commitment for General Service as District Committee Chairperson for The San Francisco district. Having a child would be my next major service commitment.

Had I known how much I would enjoy a child in my life, I would have started my parenting career sooner. Having grown up in an alcoholic household, a war zone, I put motherhood off for as long as I could. Not wanting to repeat the pattern of abuse in my family, I avoided having a family of my own. I always thought I'd have to do a lot of drinking if I had kids. Now, at forty-seven years of age, and thirteen years of sobriety, I have found that I am more capable of keeping up with Ryan than ever before. I am usually going from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m.




My day starts with prayer, meditation and inventory. I try to meditate in the evening as well. I am in touch with my sponsor and sponsees mostly by telephone. Recently, I got a Teleservice commitment for the 24-hour AA Hotline, a very satisfying service, one I can do at home when I am with Ryan. My sponsees are always encouraged to come by my house and see how Teleservice works.

When Ryan visits with his father on the weekend, I try to get to at least three meetings. This is with the support of my boyfriend of two years, also a sober member of AA. Weekdays, I try to make three meetings. One night a week, if I can afford to, I get a babysitter, so I can get to a meeting. We also use the services of a community center that offers parent groups and a weekly AA meeting.

For the last two years Ryan and I have been attending school five days a week at City College. Recently Ryan graduated from preschool and I received a Certificate in Microcomputer Applications. A perfectly happy, joyous and free arrangement was provided by a power greater than us. Ryan has both his parents to model the importance of returning to school to get an education in the face of economic challenges and countless other hurdles. I don't need to be resentful, as my mother was, for lack of an education. I have tools she never had.

(Continued on page 6)

# August 2004....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> <u>FIRST MON</u> The Spirit of San Francisco Committee Central Office, 7 pm	<b>3</b> <u>FIRST TUE</u> Special Needs Committee Central Office, 6 pm  Special Events Committee: Central Office, 7:30 pm	<b>4</b> <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm Meeting 7 pm, Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison St, Sausalito, Marin	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 7 pm	<b>10</b> <u>SECOND TUE</u> 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	<b>11</b> <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm  Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 6:45 pm	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 
<b>15</b> <u>THIRD SUN</u> Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida San Francisco 1 pm	<b>16</b> <u>THIRD MON</u> 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	<b>17</b> <u>THIRD TUE</u> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo, 7:30 pm	<b>18</b> <u>THIRD WED</u> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm	<b>19</b> <u>THIRD THU</u> Outreach Committee Central Office, 6:30pm	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln / Maple (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:30 pm	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <u>FOURTH THU</u> Website Committee Central Office, 6:15 pm  Marin PI Committee 1360 Lincoln Ave (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:15 pm <b>LAST THU</b> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento San Francisco Orientation: 7:15 pm Regular Meeting: 8 pm	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 11 am Business Meeting: 12:30pm  
<b>29</b> <u>LAST SUN</u> Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush, San Francisco 5:30 pm	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 				

# COMING EVENTS

<b>2004</b>	Call or visit the Central Office for copies of any flyers of interest to you or your group. Local events are in <b>bold</b> ; flyers of <u>current</u> local events, if available, are printed as space allows.
August 13-15	Summer Serenity in the Sierras, Oakhurst, CA; More info, call Sioux D.: 559-683-0559
<b>August 28</b>	<b>Hot August Nights! Speaker Meeting &amp; Dance, The Urban Life Center   101 O'Farrell St. SF CA. More info. on p.5</b>
<b>August 29</b>	<b>Teleservice Barbecue/ Picnic, Sharon Meadows, Golden Gate Park, 12-2pm Picnic; 2pm Speaker Meeting</b>
<b>Sept. 3-6</b>	<b>Labor Day Weekend Alcothon; Mission Fellowship, 2900 24th St./ Florida. More info. on p.5</b>
<b>Sept. 3-5</b>	<b>12th Annual Spirit of San Francisco Convention, Ramada Plaza Hotel, S.F., More info: <a href="http://www.spirit-sf.org/">www.spirit-sf.org/</a></b>
Sept. 10-12	17th Annual GLBT AA Roundup, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; More info: <a href="http://www.rationallunacy.com/edmontonroundup/">http://www.rationallunacy.com/edmontonroundup/</a>
Sept. 16-19	19th Annual Northern California Big Book Seminar (Joe & Charlie), Sacramento, CA; 916-456-8836, BBSeminar@yahoo
Sept. 17-19	12th Annual Retreat to Serenity, Mendocino, CA; Camping, hiking, Speaker Meetings; E-mail to Tom B: tbecker@mcn.org
<b>Sept. 18</b>	<b>Marin County Unity Day, 498 Tamalpais Dr., Corte Madera 2pm—11:30pm More info. on p. 18</b>
Sept. 23-26	9th Annual National Archives Workshop; Murfreesboro, Tennessee; <a href="http://area64tnarchives.org/9thworkshop/9thindex.html">http://area64tnarchives.org/9thworkshop/9thindex.html</a>
Sept. 24-26	30th Annual Woman to Woman Conference, San Diego, CA; More info: <a href="http://www.womantowomansandiego.com">www.womantowomansandiego.com</a>
Sept. 24-26	Soberfest '04, Kern River Valley, Sequoia National Forest; More info: e-mail to dean_w_l@hotmail.com
Nov. 11-14	43rd Annual Hawaii Convention, Honolulu, HI; Online Registration & Information: <a href="http://www.lava.net/~hconv/">http://www.lava.net/~hconv/</a>



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## This Month in AA Trivia August

1. When is the birth date of Alcoholics Anonymous?
2. What is the spiritual foundation of Alcoholics Anonymous?
3. What is the name of the physician who wrote "The Doctor's Opinion" in the *Big Book*?
4. According to the physician who wrote "The Doctor's Opinion", what is the phenomenon limited to chronic alcoholics and not to the average drinker?
5. According to the Forward in the *Big Book*, what percentage of alcoholics who came to AA and really tried got sober?



1. June 10, 1935
2. Anonymity
3. Dr. William Silkworth
4. Craving
5. 50%

## MEETING CHANGES

### New Meetings

Tue 6:00 pm Novato THERE IS A SOLUTION, (BB) (CI), (Wh), 1905 Novato Blvd., Senior Access Center.

### Meeting Changes

Tue 12:00 pm Mission ELEVENTH HOUR, Mission Fellowship, 2900 24th St.  
(was 1:00 pm)

Tue 7:00 pm Mission ESTUDIO Y TRABAJO DE PASOS, 3215 Cesar Chavez (was Wed. 7:00 pm).

Wed 6:00 pm So. of Market RED ROAD HEALING CIRCLE, 390 4th St./ Harrison, 1st Floor, ring buzzer  
(was Native American Healing Circle, Fri.-7:00 pm.)

Thu 7:00 pm So. of Market SPIRITUALLY FOUNDED PROGRAM OF ACTION (SFPOA) 510 7th St./ Harrison,  
(was Back 2 Basics, Thu.-8:00 pm.)

Sat 8:30 am Mission OH NO NOT THE BIG BOOK, 2900 24th St./ Florida (Closed Meeting, was Open)  
(was 853 Tamalpais)

Sat 4:00 pm Novato THE BARNYARD GROUP, 1905 Novato Blvd., Senior Access Center  
(was 853 Tamalpais)

### No Longer Meeting

There are no A.A. meetings being held at the **Seven Seas Club**,  
215 Leidesdorff/Commercial. Call 415-392-3330 for updated information.

### 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:

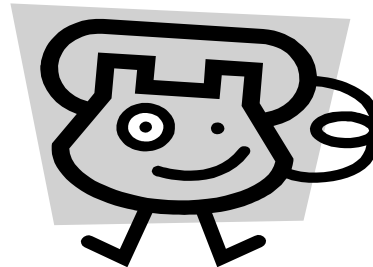
### Hospitals & Institutions

The only purpose of the Hospitals and Institutions Committee of the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic who is confined. The activities of this Committee are based on - and governed by - the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

If you would like more information or would like to participate in the Marin County H&I Committee, please attend our orientation sessions held on the second Tuesday of each month, 6:30-7:00 pm, at St. John's Episcopal Church, 14 Lagunitas, Ross, 94957. You are welcome to stay for our regular monthly business meeting which starts directly after the orientation, 7:10-8:30 pm.

The San Francisco H&I Committee meets on the last Thursday of each month at 1751 Sacramento St. at Van Ness. Orientation is at 7:15 pm and the business meeting follows at 8 pm 

## TELESERVICE BARBECUE & PICNIC!



**Sunday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

**12 noon to 2 pm: Barbecue/ Potluck**

**2 pm to 3 pm: Speaker Meeting**

**Sharon Meadows, Golden Gate Park  
Games, Music, Food & Fellowship!**

**Call Central Office at  
415-674-1821**

**For More Information**

## Group Speakers for August 2004

### TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
08/03/04	Kathleen S.	Outgoing Sec.	01/02/94
08/10/04	Ted R.	Cocoanuts	01/01/85
08/17/04	Pegeen	Sundown	06/04/78
08/24/04	Tim H.	Sobriety & Beyond	10/17/89
08/31/04	Pat C.	Show of Shows	01/06/81

### FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

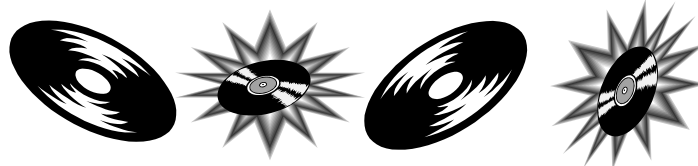
1101 O'Farrell, Urban Life Center, San Francisco  
Friday, 8:30 pm  
Signed for the hearing impaired

DATE	HOST GROUP	SPEAKER
08/06/04	Newcomers at Bush/Gough	Lee
08/13/04	Sunday Night Third Step	Fred
08/20/04	The 24 Hour Plan	Susan D.
08/27/04	Spirit of SF Committee	Kate B.

### BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

DATE	SPEAKER	FROM
08/01/04	Tom T.	Brisbane Breakfast Group
08/08/04	Jack N.	Sunday Wawona, SF
08/15/04	Laura F.	As Bill See It, SF
08/22/04	Jill Mc.	As Bill Sees It, SF
08/29/04	Susan L.	Federal Speaker, SF



**I.F.B. Special Events Committee  
Presents:**

# HOT AUGUST NIGHTS!

**Saturday, August 28, 2004  
A. A. Speaker Meeting @ 7 pm  
Dylan C. from Redwood City  
Followed @ 8 pm by a D. J  
Dance**

At

**THE URBAN LIFE CENTER  
1101 O'Farrell @ Franklin  
San Francisco, CA**

**\$9.00 suggested donation  
(no one will be turned away for  
lack of funds)**

**50/50 \$\$ RAFFLE! & Other-  
SURPRISES!!!!**



## Labor Day Alcothon

2900 - 24<sup>th</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA

**Begins Friday, Sept. 3 at 6 pm  
Last meeting Monday Sept. 6 at 8 pm.  
AA Meetings from 6 am to 10 pm every 2 hours  
on the even hour.**

...  
Potluck

Sunday, Sept. 5th @ 4:00 pm

For more info or to do service contact [alcothon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alcothon@sbcglobal.net)

# Q&A About the New San Francisco Alano Club

A group of dedicated folks are working toward opening a new Alano Club in San Francisco. Like other Alano Clubs throughout the country, the San Francisco club will be a thriving center for our clean and sober community.

**Q: What is the relationship between an Alano Club and A. A.?**

**A:** While the Alano Club of San Francisco will support the sober community, it is an autonomous organization and is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous.

**Q: What is the Mission of the Alano Club?**

**A:** The Alano Club of San Francisco will be a nonprofit organization that offers the recovering alcoholic and addict a place to gather with people who understand the program and the process of recovery. The Alano Club will provide space for 12 step meetings, informational and educational resources, social activities, and a place to enjoy refreshments thereby enhancing the quality of life for the members of the clean and sober community of San Francisco.

**Q: Do We Need an Alano Club in San Francisco?**

**A:** The idea of an Alano Club is nothing new in San Francisco. We are drawing on a rich history of Alano Clubs in our city. Many old timers remember fondly the Grant Street and Sutter Street clubs. It has been more than twenty years since the Alano Club closed its doors. It is difficult to believe that a world class city like San Francisco doesn't have an Alano Club to welcome newcomers and visitors into our community.

**Q: What's Happened to Date?**

**A:** As of January, we have formed an energetic planning committee, have the support of our founding members, filed for our nonprofit 501(C) 3 status, and organized a number of fundraising events.

**Q: Where Will the New Alano Club Be Located?**

**A:** We are working toward our fundraising goal of \$45,000. Once we come close to our financial goal we will go shopping for the ideal spot for our new Alano Club. In the best of all possible worlds, it will be somewhere centrally located such as the Financial District or South of Market.


**Q: Will an Alano Club Duplicate the Efforts of Other Clean and Sober Clubs?**

**A:** In addition to providing space for 12 step meetings, the Alano Club will offer a safe place for people to congregate and socialize with other people in recovery. Also, the club will be large enough to hold dances, plays, talent shows, and large-scale meetings (100 plus). Our aim is not to compete with other sober clubs but to offer more opportunities for socializing in a clean and sober environment. In accordance with our status as a nonprofit organization, the club will have an active board of directors that are voted in by the members and our financial records will be a matter of public record.

**Q: How Will the Alano Club Support Itself?**

**A:** The Alano Club plans to support itself with membership dues, rent from meetings, the sale of coffee and snacks, social events (dances, talent shows, Bingo, etc), and 12 Step gift shop sales. We also plan to apply for grant monies once our nonprofit status is secured.


**Q: How Can You Help?**

**A:** Our goal is to open the doors of the San Francisco Alano Club by January 2005. To reach our goal, we need your ideas, enthusiasm, and support. Everyone is welcome to attend our planning committee meetings—held the first and third Monday of every month at Fort Mason in Building C (see sandwich board outside for room number). Questions? Contact us at 415-468-9197. 

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## *Single Parenting (Continued from page 1)*

When I am resentful, I take a spot check inventory. At seven years sobriety I found a member to show me how to do a written tenth step daily, which I continue to do. I also try to pause when agitated and use prayer to change my attitude. Ryan was lounging with me while I was meditating the other evening and asked me what I was writing. I told him that I write a prayer asking God to take away my fears and resentments and to help me to do God's will, not mine.

Now I have a solution: a daily reprieve from being driven by a hundred forms of fear. I am free to do the work I need to do in order to be useful to others, including my darling son, Ryan. Today I can rest assured that even though I am an alcoholic, I will never have to drink to have the easier, softer way in parenting, or anything else in my life. I owe it all to the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. 

# Dear Alky

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

Dear Alky,

I was visiting friends in L.A. and we went to a meeting. At coffee afterwards several people were discussing which movie and TV stars had been there. I guess I didn't recognize the stars, maybe they weren't made up or dressed up and they must not have shared. I was shocked at the way people talked about these personalities, who I at least didn't even know were in AA. These are not people who have been out front about being in recovery. My friends and their friends even brought up the names of other stars they had seen at AA meetings.

If I were an actor or actress in movies or TV I wouldn't want to go to meetings if I thought people were talking about me afterwards and telling their friends they had seen me at an AA meeting. I believe that this is breaking someone's anonymity big time. I said so privately to one friend. Her opinion was that there is no anonymity within the fellowship. It is OK to mention members' names, as long as it is only to other AA members. This is not the way I understand anonymity at all. At some meetings we say "who you see here, what is said here, let it stay here." You don't discuss who was at a meeting or what they said. I have seen well-known people at meetings here in San Francisco and in New York City too, but I would never tell anyone, even another AA member. Am I too rigid about this? I believe anonymity is very important.

## Anonymous AA

Dear Anonymous,

You are right. Anonymity is important – it is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions. It serves three purposes—it protects the individual member of AA from the repercussions if his addiction becomes known to the world at large, it keeps AA free of outside entanglements and it also keeps all of us humble. No AA is any more important than any other, not by length of sobriety, service, or outside issues like fame or fortune. We are a program of principles before personalities.

I agree with you that if I were a famous person I might not want to attend meetings if I thought the members would be gossiping about me over coffee. In fact, some famous AAs have had to resort to "private" AA meetings to preserve their anonymity. That is a shame, because it deprives them of the wider fellowship of AA. We need each other. Gossip is never a good thing, even if it is only about our non-famous friends.

Alky

Dear Alky,

**My home group meets in a space that is used by a number of AA meetings. Our meeting is doing very well, as far as Seventh Tradition contributions go, and each month the treasurer sends in a substantial amount to Central Office and**



**General Service, here in SF and in NYC. Some other meetings in our same space are not doing so well. Some of them have even stopped meeting.**

**I think it is important to offer as many meetings as possible. We have treatment facilities in the neighborhood with newcomers who need a meeting.**

**I think that the richer meetings, like ours, should help support the poorer meetings, by contributing to their rent so they can stay on the schedule. Quite a few people say no, that every meeting should be self-supporting through its own contributions. If a meeting can't make its expenses then it should shut down. I don't think this is what the Seventh Tradition is about.**

## Panhandle Pete

Dear Pete,

If you read the chapter on the Seventh Tradition in the 12 x 12 it is plain that the founders were concerned about *outside* contributions compromising AA's mission of drunks helping drunks. The concern was that if foundations gave money or wealthy people made bequests in their wills to AA, that "whoever paid the piper" would call the tune. AA might become rich, but it would lose all credibility, within itself and with the outside world. This says nothing about AA groups helping each other financially.

However, if your meeting were to start paying the rent for other meetings, pretty soon you might not be able to send those contributions to Central Office and General Service. Even if a meeting can pay for rent and coffee, it is not really self-supporting if it makes no contribution to AA as a whole. Your group is autonomous but it needs to balance how its decision affects AA. It's like the concept that the best thing you can do for another alcoholic is to stay sober yourself. If you save some other meeting that is going down, will that drag down your meeting? Maybe your group can try helping one other meeting for a short time to see if its members can build their fellowship. Try to find a balance – moderation – always a challenge for us. Good luck!

Alky 

Would you like to work the steps with the support of a group?

If so please join us for a

## Women's 12 Step Workshop

(called AAWOL back East)

Fridays, 7-8:30pm

September 10 thru February 4

Pinehurst Women's Home

30th Avenue @ Wawona

in San Francisco's Sunset District

We will work from the Big Book and the 12X12.

To register or find out more please call Renee M. at 415-672-4992

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

The 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—

Joe G. 415.350-0373

#### VICE CHAIR—

Steve R. calmont1@aol.com

#### TREASURER—

Patrick M. patrick\_m30075@yahoo.com

#### RECORDING SECRETARY—

Don B. 415.777-9374

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE—

TBA

#### ORIENTATION COMMITTEE—

Tim M. gryffindor-house@earthlink.net

#### LITERATURE COMMITTEE—

Gary D. 415.922-1341

#### 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. lynnore1@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

## Sponsorship as Service

By Kathleen C.

My husband recently asked me, “How many women do you sponsor? Isn’t it a burden?” I laughed and told him, “Honey, you don’t understand. This is a team effort. It takes a lot of sober women to keep me sober!”

Being a sponsor is not what I thought it would be. I imagined myself in a coffeehouse surrounded by admiring newly sober women, with them listening to my every word, maybe even taking notes. We would read the Big Book together, go to meetings. They would ask my advice on how to make their lives better. They would want my kind of sober life.

Instead, nobody wanted what I had for my first eight years of sobriety. A dear friend consoled me when I whined to him about it – “Your Higher Power probably doesn’t want you to have any sponsees yet because you are a screaming co-dependent.” He was right. I was dragging people to meetings when they didn’t want to go, sometimes when they were drunk. That isn’t sponsorship.


My first sponsee was passed along to me by her first choice, a woman with terrific sobriety who was on the verge of moving to Arizona. “How about Kathleen?” the first sponsor asked.

So Rosemary and I started working together. She was an inspiration. She and Robert, her significant other, gathered an AA crew around them. They all went to meetings together, got chips together, and celebrated sober birthdays with dinners together. My program up to then had been very solitary and she showed me what fun an AA social life could be. We went to women’s conferences, we worked all the Steps. She moved, after five years, to Nevada, but we stay in touch by e-mail.

I met my own sponsor, Bonnie, at our home group. She didn’t have a rigid format for working the Steps. But if I needed a deadline to finish my Fourth Step, she gave me one. She always did service, so I did too.

We continue to work the steps actively. When I call her, with a Tenth Step list or just to chat, she calls me back. We go to our home group. We go out to dinner together, sometimes with her sponsor, Karin. The three of us show up for each other at chip meetings, sometimes bringing our sponsees. When Karin broke her ankle, Bonnie and I and a bunch of our sponsees took a meeting to her house. We all became family. Today Bonnie and I are like sisters.

The women I sponsor call me and I call them when we are feeling restless, irritable and discontent and need an attitude adjustment. We go to meetings together and chat in coffeehouses—usually about mundane topics like men, money, work or children. We talk about the solution in AA., which of course is spiritual. We make lists of resentments, fears and gratitude, and we pray for people we don’t like.

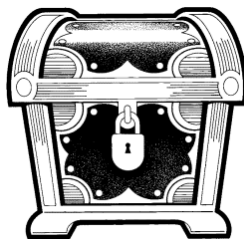
I try to pass along what my sponsor communicated to me in the sixteen years we have been working together. Mostly I try to live my life as a sober woman who insists on enjoying life. I try not to give my sponsees stupid advice. I try not to live their lives for them. My sponsor didn’t tell me how to be a good AA; she *showed* me how to be a good AA. That’s what I hope to do for my own sponsees. 



# Treasures of the Twelve & Twelve: Step Eight

by Suzi K.O.

“Since this step concerns so specifically with humility, we should pause here to consider what humility is and what the practice of it can mean to us.”



Let me illustrate this with a little tale about my favorite topic, which (of course) is me. I also like baby animals, fashion bargains, films, and esoteric philosophy, by the way.

I am currently going through a series of significant crises in my life. Last week I wound up spending three or four days in the hospital near kidney failure. I was released after they filled me with a tanker truck full of fluids and a promise that I would continue to take in that much fluid on a continuous basis forever.

Because I am one of the sicker members of our fellowship, and I mean that in the psychiatric sense, as much as the physical, I am on about 13 medications. Some for my head, some for my body, some for a little bit of each. Since this massive quantity of medication, and its unknown interaction, could be causing some of the problems I am having, there is one solution on which all of my nine doctors agree—I need to detox off the meds.

Now we get to the point of my story and how it relates to the eighth step. After much ranting, I have threatened HIPAA lawsuits against my primary care physician and my psychiatrist forgetting that I need these people to advocate for me through this process, to be my pals, even if I choose to sue them later. These threats are not exactly the embodiment of humility, or any other desirable quality one might strive for in sobriety. Very, very, alcoholic, I believe. (It is always good to know one has joined the right club.)

It is within the realm of possibility that I owe one or two of these doctors an amends. I, of course, hate the idea, and am still thinking lawsuit. Perhaps lawsuit then amends.

My point being: I am as far away from the intent of step eight as one can get without being say, Hitler or Attila the Hun.

In the eighth step we become willing to seek humility and ask forgiveness, often from people against whom we have done grievous harm—financial, emotional, spiritual, or otherwise. I

know many find the fourth step their favorite place to balk. Not me, I much prefer the eighth.

I lack a certain fondness for the “W-word”. And I don’t mean weird, winsome, wanton, wrathful, or whiny. I could keep typing desperately to avoid it, but the word I am loathed using (unless of course it refers to someone else) is WRONG. If it refers to you, I am willing to throw in a little interpretive dance.

The eighth step is an exercise in the development of humility and willingness for me. I have been naturally graced

with neither. As righteous Queen of the World, I must apply myself with extraordinary diligence to this step. It calls for us to “go far beyond those things which were superficially wrong with us, to see those flaws which were basic, flaws which sometimes were responsible for the whole”

This step is the gateway to all the promises—the true entry into everything guaranteed by the diligent effort applied to the steps by any AA member. “If we pause here, we should be absolutely sure that we

are not delaying because we are afraid. Fear dogs our every step through this process, but there are countless members, living and dead, who provide empiric proof that fear is no obstacle to success.” Despite our fear, “we can pray for the readiness to take the full consequences of our past acts, and to take responsibility for the well-being of others at the same time...”

*The eighth step is an exercise in the development of humility and willingness for me.*

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Recent Deaths

Chris H.—20+ years  
Fran H.—35 years



## A.A. On the Road: St. Petersburg, Florida

By Mark A.

Thanks to my working the 12 Steps, I resurrected my relationship with the number one man on my resentment list, my father: a relationship based on mutual respect and acceptance. My father was an alcoholic in denial for his entire life. He moved to Florida over 10 years ago, to become isolated hundreds of miles away from any living family member or friend. Thanks to the Steps, in the past couple of years, I was able to show up for him *without judgment* to reform a father/son relationship.

In August 2003, having not seen him for nearly four years, I felt it was time to fly out from San Francisco and visit him in St. Petersburg. My goal was to show up, be a son, and spend some quality time with him. I was not there to hassle him about his drinking. I also knew I would definitely need a meeting or two during the visit. I'm a firm believer in 'attraction rather than promotion' and thought that maybe Dad would see me going off to meetings during my visit and want to tag along. If so, great. If not, not a problem.

My father had aged quite a bit since the last time I'd seen him. He was shaky and slightly hunched over. He was only 70 but looked closer to 90. His world had shrunk to a small studio apartment with a couch, a bed, a small table and a television. I could see wine stains on the floor and bugs crawling around the walls. His apartment was a startling sight. But beyond that, we had a wonderful visit. We were able to *really* talk. At one point, he even said, "Keep going to those meetings."

In close to three years of sobriety, this was the first time I'd attended a meeting outside of San Francisco. Fortunately, St. Petersburg has a wonderful Alano Club. It was there I was able to 'connect,' and share about my journey and my reason for being there. I was immediately welcomed into the fold. People came up to me to share how they related and embraced me. I was given numbers to call during my stay if I needed to talk. People asked for my number so they could contact me during their future visits to San Francisco. It was a most definitive 'home away from home.' The good people of the St. Petersburg fellowship extended themselves to me in an entirely selfless, supportive way.

In May of 2004, I got a call that I'd been awaiting for many years. My father had fallen while drunk in his apartment and was seriously injured. My sober girlfriend and I flew out to be with him to help out in any we could. My father looked worse than ever. He was delirious,

bed-ridden, and practically unable to speak. His apartment was a complete mess. Blood, broken dishes, and piles of laundry were everywhere. I was almost in shock. Again, the St. Petersburg Alano Club was there for me. Once again I received heartfelt embraces and consolation from my fellow recovering alcoholics. It was a bedrock for me during those trying times. Because of them, I was able to stay 'in service' for my father.



Not three weeks later, I got the call that my father had passed away in the hospital. I flew back out to 'show up' and do whatever I could do to help close down my father's estate. And for a third time in a year, the St. Petersburg fellowship was there for me. I didn't feel far at all from my own San Francisco Home Group.

I learned that wherever I may travel, under whatever circumstances, so long as I reach out to the fellowship, it will be there for me. It could have been a long, lonely trip had I kept to myself, but very early on in my sobriety, it was suggested to me to figure out what meeting I would go to each day. Then everything else would fall into place. Thanks to A.A. in St. Petersburg, Florida, I was able to show up, maintain my sobriety, and 'be there in the moment' for my father in his final days. An incredible gift for this grateful, recovering alcoholic. 🍷

### The AA Grapevine: Digital Archive now Online

The A.A. Grapevine is now offering a new and exciting feature—a digital archive which allows access to sixty years of Grapevine articles, letters, editorials, special features, jokes, and cartoons. The information dates all the way back to the first issue in June 1944! Materials are well organized for easy access. You can browse by department, date, theme, or keyword. More information is available at [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org).

The current rates to use the Digital Archive are: \$2/month or \$15/year. There is a special rate of \$10/year for Grapevine and La Viña subscribers. Sign up before November 1st for only \$5 the first year! Check it out!

And remember, *The Point* is now online, too! Visit [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org)

# *Spiritual Awakenings*—New from A.A. Grapevine By Gary D.


The message of Alcoholics Anonymous is universal. In addition to the primary importance of the fellowship of alcoholics sharing their experience, strength and hope, we have been provided with important guides in our spiritual quest. The “Big Book” and other approved AA literature are often used in meetings for the purpose of discussion.

Something as simple as an AA approved pamphlet given to a friend or a relative may result in a person suffering with the insanity of alcoholism attending a meeting. In the middle of the night when a recovering alcoholic wants to drink and needs spiritual assistance, the wisdom and counsel found in AA approved books and literature can help quell the craving and prevent that person from taking that first drink.

Although Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in the United States, its message of abstinence and spiritual awakening has spread throughout the world. AA

books and literature have tried to keep up by providing translations of most of the books and some of the important pamphlets.

The San Francisco Central Office either has available or can order any of the books listed below. Other literature is available in some languages. Spanish and French translations are available for most AA approved literature. Prices vary because things are published by service offices throughout the world. Contact the Central Office at **(415) 674-1821** to find out more about what is available and to place an order.

The San Francisco Bay Area is as diverse a community as the global community. We pride ourselves in welcoming people from all over the world. What could be a better way to spread the message than to provide an AA approved book or pamphlet to an alcoholic whose first language is not English? 

**Translated Literature Available: Call (415) 674-1821 to Order**

**Alcoholics Anonymous** (the “Big Book”) is available in the following languages: Afrikaans, Arabic, Armenian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch/Flemish, Filipino, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Mongolian, Nepali, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Slovene, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

	Twelve & Twelve	Living Sober	Came to Believe	Daily Reflections	As Bill Sees It
Bulgarian	√	√			
Chinese	√				
Chinese (simplified)	√				
Croatian	√				
Czech	√				
French	√	√	√	√	√
Greek	√	√			
Hungarian	√	√			√
Latvian	√	√			
Lithuanian	√	√	√	√	
Mongolian	√				
Polish	√	√			
Romanian	√	√			
Russian	√	√			
Slovene	√				
Spanish	√	√	√	√	√
Swahili	√				
Turkish	√	√			√
Ukrainian	√				

# AA Group Contributions - May 2004

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	Meets	May '04	YTD	Name	Meets	May '04	YTD
<b>Fellowship Contributions</b>				Nativity Monday Night Big Book	M 8pm		100.00
Annual Christmas Meeting	Christmas 2004		25.00	Newcomers Step	M 7:30pm		300.00
Bingo Extravaganza	Bingo 7th Tradition		115.00	Novato Spirit Discussion	F 12pm		142.18
Brisbane Breakfast	Su 11am	28.00	145.60	On Awakening	7D 5:30am		350.00
Contribution Box	March 2004	128.88	325.43	Pathfinders	Tu 12pm		85.89
Deer Park Discovery Group			4.67	Rise N Shine	Su 10am		102.73
IFB	May Meeting	86.00	484.22	Ross San Anselmo Group	M 8:30pm		54.00
Marin Teleservice			1,282.00	San Anselmo Fireside Meeting	Su 8pm	45.49	45.49
Spirit of San Francisco	2003 Convention		577.56	San Geronimo Valley	M 8pm		58.99
Sunday Step Study	Su 4pm	66.00	126.00	Saturday Serenity	Sa 8pm		125.00
Unidentified			249.03	Saturday Women's Speaker	Sa 6pm		105.00
<b>Total Fellowship</b>		<b>\$308.88</b>	<b>\$3,334.51</b>	Sisters In Sobriety	Th 7:30pm		36.00
<b>Honors</b>				Six O'Clock Sunset	Th 6pm		245.20
Endless Summer	F 8:30pm	58.86	198.22	Sober & Serene	F 7pm		250.00
High Noon	6D 12:15pm		36.00	Sober Moms	Fr 11:30am		18.00
Sesame Step	Tu 7:30pm		6.00	Steps to Freedom	M 8:30pm		474.85
<b>Total Honors</b>		<b>\$58.86</b>	<b>\$240.22</b>	Steps To The Solution	W 7:15pm		50.00
<b>Marin Group Contributions</b>				Stinson Beach Fellowship	Th 8pm		220.60
11th Step Meeting	M 8pm		100.00	Streetfighters	Sa 9am		22.10
12 & 12 Study	Sa 8:15am		106.50	Sunday Express	Su 6pm	80.00	223.84
7am Urgent Care Group	7D 7am		400.00	Sunday Night Corte Madera	Su 8pm		400.00
A Vision For You	Su 7:30pm		68.25	T. G. I'm Sober	M 6pm		26.00
Attitude Adjustment Fairfax	7D 7am	488.00	2,944.92	Terra Linda Group	Th 8:30pm	21.00	521.00
Awareness/Acceptance	M 10:30am		120.00	TGI Tuesday	Tu 6pm		53.20
Back to Basics	Su 9:30am		87.50	The Fearless Searchers	F 8pm		245.00
Beginners	W 7pm		500.00	The Novato Group Fri. Night Discussion	F 8:30pm	112.05	112.05
Bounce Back	M 6pm		200.00	Three Step Group	Sa 5:30pm		400.00
Caledonia	Su 8pm		432.08	Thurs. Night Speaker, MV	Th 8:30pm	756.70	1,390.70
Candlelight	Su 8:30pm		79.23	Thursday Night Miracles	Th 8:30pm		39.00
Candlelight Meditation	M 7:30pm		60.00	Tiburon Beginners	Tu 7:10pm		298.31
Creekside New Growth	Su 7pm		165.00	Tiburon Haven	Su 12pm		120.00
Crossroads	Su 12pm		497.00	Tiburon Women's Candlelight	W 8pm		39.76
Day At A Time	7D 6:30am		180.00	Wednesday Mid-Week	W 6pm		55.73
Experience, Strength & Hope	Sa 6pm		111.00	Wednesday Night Candlelight	W 8pm		152.00
Fairfax Friday Night	F 8:30pm		46.18	Wednesday Night Speaker Discussion	W 7pm		69.52
Fireside	F 8pm		35.50	Women For Women	W 12pm	30.00	30.00
Freedom Finders	F 8:30pm	374.80	763.08	Women on Monday	M 7pm		69.67
Happy Hour	Th 6pm		233.49	Women on Wednesday	W 7pm		64.86
High & Dry	W 12pm	50.00	125.00	Women's Big Book	Tu 10:30am		152.50
Hope Step Group	Tu 7:30pm	150.00	150.00	Working Dogs	W 12:05pm		313.25
Island Group	Th 8pm		72.50	<b>Total Marin Contributions</b>		<b>\$2,268.15</b>	<b>\$16,674.83</b>
Living in the Solution	F 6pm		233.00	<b>SF Group Contributions</b>			
Marin City Groups	M-F 6:30pm		200.00	7AM As Bill Sees It	F 7am	20.50	20.50
Marin Sober Group	F 8pm		39.50	12 Steps to Happiness	F 7:30pm		40.87
Mill Valley 7am	7D 7am		500.00	A is for Alcohol	Tu 6pm		80.70
Mill Valley Original Smokeless SS	Th 8pm		50.00	AA As You Like It	Tu 5:30pm		149.89
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon)	M 8pm	160.11	612.68	AA Step Study	S 6pm		172.52

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				Name	Meets	May '04	YTD
Name	Meets	May '04	YTD				
				Happy Hour	F 6:30pm		381.80
Afro American	F 8pm		36.62	High Noon Friday	F 12:15pm		397.96
Afro American Beginners	Sa 8pm	73.00	132.53	High Noon Monday	M 12:15pm		419.45
After Work	M 6pm		63.00	High Noon Saturday	Sa 12:15pm		78.70
All Together Now	Th 8pm		198.66	High Noon Thursday	Th 12:15pm		270.87
Alumni	W 8pm		60.00	High Noon Tuesday	Tu 12:15pm	201.14	585.86
Amazing Grace	M 7pm		28.80	High Noon Wednesday	W 12:15pm		180.00
Any Lengths	Sa 9:30am		874.21	High Sobriety	M 8pm		168.00
Artists & Writers	F 6:30pm		431.28	High Steppers	W 7pm	157.00	157.00
As Bill Sees It	Th 6pm		138.04	Hilldwellers	M 8pm	139.00	305.80
As Bill Sees It	Sa 11am	190.93	190.93	Home Group	Sa 8:30pm		488.44
Bernal Big Book	Sa 5pm		281.24	How It Works	Sa 2pm		125.01
Beyond 164	F 12:30pm		30.00	Huntington Square	W 6:30pm		648.17
Big Book Basics	F 8pm		213.73	Join the Tribe	Tu 7pm		128.24
Big Book Backwards	Fr 10am	15.00	15.00	Joys of Recovery	Tu 8pm		427.31
Big Book Study	Su 11am		47.57	Keep Coming Back	Sa 11am		1,194.75
Boys Night Out	Tu 7:30pm	345.00	414.73	Keep It Simple	Sa 8:30pm		86.85
Buena Vista Breakfast	Su 12pm		327.60	Light Brigade Discussion	Su 7pm		127.80
Castro Discussion	W 8pm		242.00	Like A Prayer	Su 4pm		158.86
Castro Monday Big Book	M 8pm		329.15	Lincoln Park	Sa 8:30pm	222.91	355.31
Cocoanuts	Su 9am		125.00	Live and Let Live	Su 8pm		119.76
Dignitaries Sympathy	W 8:15pm		150.00	Living Sober with HIV	W 6pm		261.20
Each Day A New Beginning	5D 7am		236.79	Luke's Group	W 8pm		59.47
Each Day a New Beginning F	F 7am		313.00	Lush Lounge	Sa 2pm	69.60	69.60
Each Day a New Beginning M	M 7am		154.00	Meeting Place Noon	F 12pm	133.00	160.06
Each Day A New Beginning Su	Su 8am	90.00	253.24	Mid-Morning Support	Su 10:30am		831.19
Each Day a New Beginning Th	Th 7am		623.88	Midnight Meditation	Sa 11:59pm		11.25
Each Day a New Beginning W	W 7am		459.73	Millionaires Club	Th 6pm		70.00
Early Start	F 6pm		375.00	Miracles Off 24th St	W 7:30pm		144.23
Easy Does It	Tu 6pm		673.00	Mission Terrace	W 8pm		202.33
Embarcadero Group	Daily 12:10pm		328.64	Monday At A Time	M 12:30pm		36.00
Embarcadero Group	F 12:10pm		55.41	Monday Men's Meeting	M 8pm		48.00
Embarcadero Reflections	Tu 12:10pm		89.06	New Highs	W 1:30pm		97.88
Epiphany Group	Th 8pm		25.00	New Hope Big Book	M 6:30pm		501.15
Eureka Step	Tu 6pm	114.00	114.00	New Wednesday High Noon	W 12:15pm		547.47
Eureka Valley Topic	M 6pm		315.64	Newcomers	Tu 8pm		226.20
Federal Speaker	Su 12pm	116.27	251.84	Park Presidio	M 8:30pm		87.00
Fellowship of the Spirit	Su 1:30pm		22.60	Parkside	Th 8:30pm		140.40
Fireside	F 8:30pm	92.35	92.35	Pure & Simple	Su 6pm		28.15
Fireside Chat Sa	Sa 9pm		198.83	Pax West	Annual Dinner	36.00	36.00
Fireside Chat Th	Th 8pm		88.56	Rose Garden Big Book	Th 12:05pm		60.67
Fireside Chat Tu	Tu 8pm		60.11	Rule 62	W 10pm	184.20	580.31
Friday All Groups	Fr 8:30pm Raffle		395.00	Saturday Afternoon Meditation	Sa 2pm	160.93	221.93
Friday Lunchtime	Fr 12pm		140.00	Saturday Night Regroup	Sa 7:30pm		230.24
Friday Knights	Th 7:30am	9.20	9.20	Saturday Serenity	Sa 8pm		362.00
Friendly Circle	Su 8:30pm	44.40	485.70	Seacliff	Th 8:30pm		139.62
Friendship Group	W 8pm		125.00	Serenity House			500.00
Friendship House			9.36	Serenity Seekers	M 7:30pm		784.39
Gay Beginners Q & A	F 7pm	35.38	35.38	Sesame Step	T 7:30pm	32.89	237.13
Golden Gate Seniors	Tu 1:30pm		107.00	Sinbar	Su 8pm		194.24
Gold Mine Group	M 8pm	226.36	226.36	Sisters Circle	Su 6pm	70.20	70.20
Haight Street Blues	Tu 6:15pm		206.00	Sober & Centered	Fr 7pm		168.27
Haight Street Explorers	Th 6:30pm		60.00				

Continued on p. 14

Continued from p. 13

Name	Meets	May '04	YTD	Name	Meets	May '04	YTD
Sometimes Slowly	Sa 11am		57.19	Waterfront	Su 8pm		405.72
Step Talk	Su 8:30am		360.00	Wednesday Sunrise Smokefree	W 7am		60.00
Stepping Out	Sa 6pm		120.00	Weekend Workers	Sa 7am		60.00
Sunday Bookworms	Su 7:30pm		115.01	West Portal	W 8:30pm	60.00	306.50
Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	Su 10:30am		549.43	Women For Women	W 12pm		107.61
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group	Su 5pm	134.40	235.16	Women Who Drank Too Much	Tu 6:15pm		39.00
Sunday Rap	Su 8pm		268.26	Women's 10 Years Plus	Th 6:15pm	80.00	176.00
Sundown	W 7pm	120.00	216.00	Women's Kitchen Table Group	Tu 6:30pm	233.29	233.29
Sundown Steps	Th 6:30pm		102.00	Women's Promises	F 7pm		148.80
Sunrise Sunset	Th 5:45pm		54.00	Work In Progress	Sa 7pm		64.87
Sunset 11'ers F	F 11am		138.40	Total SF Contributions		\$4,124.32	\$32,416.90
Sunset 11'ers W	W 11am		24.00	TOTAL		\$6,760.21	\$52,666.46
Sunset 9'ers F	F 9am	194.00	194.00	<b>INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS - APRIL</b>			
Sunset 9'ers M	M 9am		148.50	<b>HONORS</b>			
Sunset 9'ers Sa	Sa 9am	178.78	178.78	Honorary Contributions		18.00	
Sunset 9'ers Su	Su 9am		100.00	Honorary Contributions		35.00	
Sunset 9'ers Tu	Tu 9am		120.00	Honorary Contributions		30.00	
Sunset 9'ers W	W 9am	38.40	227.84	<b>Total HONORS</b>		<b>\$83.00</b>	
Sunset Speaker Step	Su 7:30pm		60.00	<b>INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>			
Sutter Street Beginners	Sa 6pm		469.49	Individual -Unrestricted		43.00	
T. G. I. Tuesday	Tu 6pm		28.40	Individual -Unrestricted		100.00	
Ten Years After	Su 6pm		474.72	Individual -Unrestricted		20.00	
They Don't Know Who We Are	Sa 7pm		150.00	Individual -Unrestricted		20.00	
Thus We Grow	Th 6pm	81.00	81.00	<b>Total IND. CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		<b>\$183.00</b>	
Too Early	Sa 8am		358.07	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$266.00</b>	
Tuesday's Daily Reflections	Tu 7am		83.62				
Tuesday Sunset Nooners	Tu 12:30pm	60.00	60.00				
Valencia Smokefree	F 6pm	165.19	591.50				
Walk of Shame	W 8pm		12.97				

## Million Dollar Manuscript

By Stephen R.

Hold on to your old Big Books, friends, because the cost of AA memorabilia may soon skyrocket following last month's \$1.576 million auction of Bill W's working draft of the First Edition. That's sixty times the highest price of any vintage Big Book and four times the pre-auction appraisal!

The seller, Joseph B., an AA member, said he ran into "a lot of dead ends" looking for interest within the Fellowship, and that he had hoped the document would end up in "an academic venue." It went instead to a private collector, who hasn't commented publicly. It's not yet known whether the manuscript will be available for viewing or study, and a debate has emerged about the proper place for essentially priceless documents.

The bidders certainly recognized that here was a once-in-a-century opportunity (or even rarer) to acquire the living, pivotal body of work at the dawn of a global

movement that has shaped the lives of millions (and who knows how many more to come!). It was the spiritual moment of truth: whether an individual working alone or alcoholics working together would remain sober in the service of creating the Big Book. With the dozens of different hands writing thousands of comments all over those pages, it's clear that Bill W. wasn't the solitary author but a focal point, channeling the responses along with his own text. And Lois Wilson added her signature in 1978. So for an investor, the value will only increase.

On the other hand, the loss to the Fellowship may be more than historical information alone. Other similar documents may exist and could be sold privately without us ever having the chance to see them. At least in this case, the manuscript was examined by the GSO archivist, Judit Santon, and other historians.

(Continued on page 15)

# Living My Sober Dream

By Russ R.

One of the great gifts of my early sobriety was the discovery that I love books. When I was drinking, I didn't have the attention span to concentrate on reading, so I had not read a novel in years by the time I got sober. I started gobbling up the classics from the time I found this program, and I was startled to find that I had a passion to become a writer. So in typical alcoholic fashion, I decided to give myself a year to get published.

I'm fortunate that I didn't know more about publishing then, or I probably would have given up. But I started pounding out three or four page stories, and sending them off to only the best publications, of course. I was dismayed that the *New Yorker* and *The Atlantic Monthly* did not recognize my brilliance right away. Their form rejection letters, without even a simple signature, were disheartening. But over the years, I have found that pursuing a goal like this has many parallels to staying sober.

Sobriety was the first thing I ever attempted in my life that I did not give up on when it didn't go my way. And the benefits eventually made the effort worth my while. So I applied that same attitude toward writing. Although I couldn't get published, I kept submitting, and I found ways to improve. Doing the footwork. I applied to some Masters Programs for Creative Writing, and was accepted to Boston University. In graduate school, I was again able to apply the principles of the program, and accept criticism, taking what I needed and leaving the rest.

For my thesis, I completed my first novel, and because I was fortunate enough to do an internship at *The Atlantic Monthly* while I was in Boston, I had access to the fiction editor there. He read that novel, and liked it so much that

he offered to help get it published. My alcoholic personality took off at a gallop with this offer. I was sure I was going to be a huge success any day. But of course, my will did not happen. He got some very nice responses from a few publishers, but none of them bought the novel.

At first, I was devastated. But the lessons I've learned in this program kicked in again. Instead of drinking, or giving up, I went on to write three more books. I was still unable to get any of them published for several years. But I never stopped writing. And more importantly, I never stopped going to meetings, and keeping my sobriety as the number one priority.

The short version of this story is that eventually that first novel, the one I wrote in graduate school, was bought by a major publisher. *In Open Spaces* came out in 2002, about fourteen years after my one year goal. It was not a huge success, but it did make the *San Francisco Chronicle* bestseller list. It got a very nice review in the *New York Times*, and was selected among the Best of the West by the *Salt Lake City Tribune*. And I recently finished a new book, which my agent is submitting to publishers.

In the world of publishing, the publisher is your higher power, your agent is your sponsor, and thankfully, I've had the opportunity to teach writing, so I now have a bunch of sponsees. I recently received a MacDowell fellowship, which will give me the opportunity to spend two months working on my next book. I already have the meeting schedule for Peterborough, New Hampshire printed because I know I wouldn't have experienced my dream without this program. 📌

**CONTRIBUTIONS**—to the Central Office were made through July 19, 2004 honoring the following members:

ONGOING MEMORIALS	
Bob	
R.W.	
Curtis C.	
ANNIVERSARIES	
<b>Sometimes Slowly:</b> Mary Lou J. – 16 years	
<b>Join the Tribe:</b> John O'L – 16 years	
<b>High Noon:</b> Vicky C. – 90 days	

*Manuscript (Continued from page 14)*

To many, the spiritual value of directly experiencing AA-related history is immense. For this alcoholic, visiting Dr. Bob's home, and viewing film of Bill W. describing his white-light spiritual awakening were defining moments in early sobriety. These non-AA caretaker foundations and our own General Service archives may now have to compete at a new level for emerging artifacts. A noted academic recently said that "a thriving market" already exists for Alcoholics Anonymous items, similar to those for Elvis and the Civil War.

Fortunately, as Judit S. said after viewing the manuscript, "What really matters for us is the final version of the Big Book, which helped millions of people to recover."

And that belongs to the ages. 📌

# 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, July 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		Intergroup Rep	Group	
Ben N.	Past Chair	P	Greg B.	Cow Hollow Young People's	A*	Monika H.	SFPOA	P
Brian C.	Mission Terrace	P	Greg S.	Keep Coming Back	P	Morningstar V.	High Noon Saturday	P
Carol W.	Miracles Off 24th St.	P	Haven K.	High Noon Friday	R	Nathan M.	Too Early	P
Dallas R.	Early Start	P	Janet B.	As Bill Sees It, Saturday	P	Pascal G.	Marin Stag (Mon. Night...)	P
Dan C.	Tiburon Haven	R	Jeff A.	Eureka Valley Topic	R	Patrick M.	Treasurer	P
Dan P.	Second Chance	P	Jen B.	Midnight Meditation	P	Paul C.	Waterfront	A*
Dan Z.	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	P	Jeremiah P.	All Together Now	R	Penelope P.	Amazing Grace	P
Danny F.	Each Day A New Beginning	P	Joe G.	Beginners	P	Ramona A.	Sunset 9ers M	Alt
David A.	Living Sober	P	Johnny G.	High Noon Tuesday	P	Randall J.	High Sobriety	R
David B.	Beginner's Warmup	P	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P	Ray M.	Sunday Rap	P
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Kate B.	Friday All Groups	A*	Rebekah D.	Fell Street Step	P
David E.	Sesame Step	P	Kim O.	Easy Does It	P	Russell G.	Regroup	P
David K.	Haight St. Blues	Alt.	Kristine F.	Castro Discussion	P	Russell R.	Sunset 9ers Su	A*
David P.	Goodlands	P	Kurt P.	No Reservation	P	Scott C.	New Hope Big Book	P
Dick T.	Attitude Adjustment Hour	R	Lou H.	Mill Valley 7AM	P	Steve N.	Terra Linda Group	A*
Don B.	Friday Fell Street	P	Lynnore G.	Walk Of Shame	P	Steve R.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Doug S.	As Bill Sees It - Thursday	P	Marc D.	Bernal Big Book	P	Steven S.	Homegroup	P
Edward F.	Happy Hour	P	Martha C.	449ers	A	Sue K.	Saturday Serenity	A*
Eric R.	Eureka Valley Topic	R	Mary Ellen D.	A is for Alcohol	R	Tasiah S.	Boys Night Out	R
Francesca K.	West Portal	P	Maury P.	Office Manager	P	Tedra M.	Sisters Circle	P
Gary D.	Work In Progress	P	Michael R.	Huntington Square	P	Tim M.	Join the Tribe	P
Georgia L.	Friendly Circle Beginners	P	Michael H.	Some Are Sicker Than Others	A*	Zoe B.	Mill Valley 7am	P
Grant D.	Ten Years After	A*	Mike A.	Tuesday Downtown	A*			

P = Present; A = Absent; R = Resigned. 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.

New IFB Reps Present				Liaisons Present	
Abby L.	Common Welfare	Mark P.	Beginner Big Book Step	Mike B.	SF General Service
Bob W.	Creative Alcoholics	Mary P.	Sutter St. Beginners	Omar C.	Marin Teleservice
Kara S.	Friendship Group	Tom B.	Eureka Valley Topic	Shannon L.	Marin Gen. Service
Kezia P.	Marina Discussion			Stacey S.	San Mateo Gen. Service

Following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business, and service opportunities discussed at the July 2004 IFB meeting. It is provided for your convenience, and it is not intended to be the complete or approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes, contact the Central Office.

**A. IFB Reports**

*Chair's Report:* Danny F. thanked the board for the opportunity to serve as the IFB chair for the past year. He especially thanked the members who served on committees and worked hard to serve the needs of the fellowship. If you're on a committee, keep up the good work; if you're not, sign up and get involved. A question has come up regarding how many IFB reps a group can have if it meets more than once a week. The bylaws state that each group can have one IFB rep. If your group has multiple meetings, then it has to decide whether or not it is one group or as many groups as it has meetings. Since each group is autonomous, the group gets to decide. In our handout tonight there is a book price matrix that compares the various prices different Central Offices charge for AA literature. Our Central Office (CO) generally charges less than the other Central Offices. Increasing our

literature prices would be in line with what GSO does when it needs to increase income. The CO financial shortfall will not go away. Reps should share the book price matrix information with our groups and get feedback.

*Treasurer's Report:* Patrick M. submitted the Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual and the Balance Sheet through May 2004. In May CO was \$5,629 under budget but June was \$2,900 over so net income May/June was short \$2,700. We are getting closer to dipping into the prudent reserve. The shortfall is continuing month by month. Raising literature prices would be one easy solution to the income problem. Also, reps can make sure that group treasurers are sending in money regularly.

*Central Office Manager's Report:* Maury P. reported that the Central Office pamphlet entitled "Your AA Central Office" is ready. Maury highlighted the "What can you do to help?" section. There are two new items in the bookstore: *Thank you for Sharing* and *Spiritual Awakenings*. Please keep CO informed of any changes to our meetings so the meeting schedule can be kept as accurate as possible.

*(Continued on page 17)*



**IFB Summary** (Continued from page 16)

ble. There are two open phone shifts. Please announce this at our meetings. Next month the IFB meeting is in Marin. Golden Gate Transit's fare and schedule information can be obtained at [www.goldengate.org](http://www.goldengate.org) or 415-455-2000.

*Central Office Committee's Report:* Joe G. reported that the COC discussed the definition of a "meeting" and a "group" and how this relates to IFB reps. Kristine F. volunteered to take CO information to the Living Sober Convention. Going forward, it was suggested that the Outreach Committee contact event committees ahead of time and plan a presentation/table. BACA has increased ASL translation prices effective July 1. The Friday meeting will be billed at \$90 per hour plus travel. The COC discussed the Secretary Workshop held on June 19 and the upcoming Treasurer's workshop, which were hosted by the Special Events Committee.

**B. Special Orders of Business (Action Items)**

1. *Election of 2004-2005 Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and COC members:* Chair: Two members made themselves available. Joe G. and Marc D. Joe G. was elected. Vice Chair: Tim M., Steve R., and Dallas R. made themselves available. Steve R. was elected. Secretary: One member was available, Don B. He was elected by acclamation. COC Members: Ray M. gave the nominating committee's recommendations on the members who had made themselves available to serve. The Board then voted on the recommended candidates for COC. The Board elected Marc D., Tim M., and Greg S.

2. *First reading of revised by-laws (for clarification and questions).* Danny read the proposed by-law revisions. The by-laws revisions will be read and voted on at the August meeting. Additions & changes are underlined; deletions are struck through.

**C. Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

We voted to postpone the committee reports, with the exception of the Special Events Committee, until next month due to the length of the

meeting and elections. Included are recaps of the written reports that were submitted. Committee contact information and the calendar of committee meetings are listed in *The Point*.

**Special Events Committee (SEC):** Dave B, Chair, reported that there are two events in the works: a hot August 28 night dance and a Halloween event. If you have any ideas about a venue for either of these events, please contact Dave at [dbelectric@turnershouse.net](mailto:dbelectric@turnershouse.net). A Treasurer's workshop is in the planning stage. The SEC plans also to participate in the Marin Unity Day planning. More volunteer help is needed to plan all of the upcoming events. The next meeting will be Tuesday, August 3, at 7:30 pm at Central Office.

**Special Needs Committee:** Dan P. submitted a written report. Bruce K., former Central Office manager, addressed the meeting to discuss ASL meetings and Special Needs with comments about some mistakes made in the late 90s in attempting to deal with Carrying the Message, not the deaf. The Deaf Sponsorship Workshop scheduled for July 17 at DCARA in San Jose has been cancelled. Sutter Street Beginners which meets Saturday at 6 pm (Sutter & Steiner St.) is the tentative meeting that will host ASL interpretation. This will be discussed at their business meeting at 7:10 on Sat. July 17. The next Special Needs Committee meeting is Tuesday, August 3, at 6 pm at Central Office.

**D. Standing Committee Reports**

1. **Teleservice, San Francisco:** Peter M. submitted a written report. Teleservice's most pressing need remains for volunteers for Back-up shifts on Fridays from 6 pm to 10 pm. They are also looking for a new Friday Daily Coordinator. They are planning a Teleservice Picnic/ Speaker Meeting for Sunday, August 29, at Sharon Meadows in Golden Gate Park. More details to follow. The next orientation will be held at 6:30 pm and the committee meeting will follow at 7:00 pm on Monday, July 19.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, August 4, at Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Avenue, Sausalito, CA, at 7 pm. ↑

## The Spirit of San Francisco—Labor Day Weekend

This Spirit of San Francisco Committee is gearing up for this year's convention which will take place September 3 – 5, 2004 at the Ramada Plaza Hotel at 8th and Market in SF. This year's theme is "Carrying the Message" and a wide variety of speakers will share their experience, strength and hope over the three day convention.

Al-anon participation is also a large part of the convention, and a variety of Al-anon speaker meetings and workshops will be conducted over the weekend.

This year's theme of "Carrying the Message" will feature a Sponsorship Workshop on Saturday in which a variety of AA members will share their experience of being a sponsor to another alcoholic in recovery. This is a great chance to learn how others practice the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Also, a variety of AA Service Groups will be sharing how they carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Early registration closes on August 6 and is \$20 for the three days. This low rate is possible this year because of arrangements with the hotel, and we are pleased to be able to offer

this lower rate to those that pre-register. Everyone is encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to attend the convention by pre-registering. Online registration is available at [www.spirit-sf.org](http://www.spirit-sf.org). Any questions about registration or the convention can be sent to [info@spirit-sf.org](mailto:info@spirit-sf.org).

The committee is also maintaining a scholarship fund that will assist those that cannot afford to attend the convention. Groups and individuals are encouraged to make contributions to the scholarship fund to make the convention more accessible to everyone.

Greater access to Marathon Meetings and Service Tables will be provided this year, but there are limitations on space availability in those areas, so get involved early to insure that you will be a part of the 2004 convention. Registration is required of everyone attending the convention due to the security regulations of the Ramada Plaza Hotel.

The Spirit of San Francisco Committee meets at 7 pm on the first Monday of each month at Central Office and will have its next meeting on Monday, August 2, 2004. Everyone is welcomed to attend to help make this event a success! ↑

# A Life Beyond My Wildest Dreams

By Anonymous

Things actually do happen as a result of sobriety. What I mean is, *good* things can actually happen as a result of *my* sobriety. Little did I know that after three years and eight months of continuous sobriety I would be owning and running my own business, teaching children and adults various classes on graphic design, and actively participating in a few professional associations that actually want me.

I don't know if this article should be about gratitude or that dreams can come true in sobriety. All I know is that I am a living sober miracle of Alcoholics Anonymous and the 12 Steps.


My life was less than happy or wonderful for a very long time. When I was in the latter part of my drinking days and going to a therapist to get fixed, my constant refrain was, "I just want to be happy." Did my drinking have any part in my unhappiness?

Of course not. I didn't have any problem with my drinking – I was handling my drinks quite well, thank you. After all, I only drank beer and a few shots of whiskey now and then. That's no problem. Well, that denial lasted a long while.

Only when I had lost all hope of a future and felt my life had no purpose did I finally surrender my ego and life to AA. Without any outside concentrated effort on my part, my life slowly changed when I admitted this powerlessness. With a clear mind, I found myself moving forward in

my life both physically and spiritually.

Suddenly, with the tools of AA at my side, I was able to concentrate and apply myself to an educational program that I had wanted to pursue for a long time. I graduated with a second degree, started freelancing in the graphic design field and then set up my own business. I felt that I was also making a difference in some of the other students' lives through my prior marketing experience and was asked to mentor and teach others. I desired so much to give back and to help I eagerly honored this request. I became involved with a few professional groups and am actually on the board of my industry's most respected association. Most recently, I began moving to my own office – away from the home office that I outgrew months ago.

Is this all of my own doing? I don't think so. I think that I am doing what my Higher Power had in mind for me long ago. Only now I am doing the work and showing up for a life that I once was throwing away. I don't regret that past, but I do learn from it. Living my life on a daily basis, doing my humble best and trusting in a Power greater than myself has resulted in a present life beyond my wildest dreams. I guess that the title for this article should be *Being Grateful that Dreams Do Come True in Sobriety*. 

*All I know is that I  
am a living sober  
miracle of  
Alcoholics  
Anonymous and  
the 12 Steps.*

~ Hold The Date ~

## Marin County Unity Day

Sept. 18th, 2004

Corte Madera Recreation Center

498 Tamalpais Drive, Corte Madera, CA

2pm Fellowship, fun, carnival booths, coffee & registration  
(\$5.00 suggested donation)

2:30 Workshop: 12 Step Workers

3:30 Panel: The force of service and carrying the message

4:45 SKIT!!

5:00 BBQ and Potluck—Please bring your favorite dish to share

6:30 AA Speaker Meeting

8pm Dance, Dance, Dance (\$5.00 suggested donation)

Unity Day is sponsored by: Hospitals & Institutions,  
Bridging the Gap, Marin General Service, Marin Teleservice,  
PI/CPC, and Central Office

September 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2004

Labor Day Weekend

## The Spirit of San Francisco 12<sup>th</sup> Annual

Alcoholics Anonymous Convention  
With Al-Anon Participation

“Carrying the Message”

Ramada Plaza Hotel

1231 Market Street @ 8th Street/Hyde Street  
San Francisco, California

Register Online: [www.spirit-sf.org](http://www.spirit-sf.org) or mail registration form to:

The Spirit of San Francisco, P.O. Box 423832,  
San Francisco, CA, 94142

Please make checks payable to The Spirit of San Francisco

# Financial Statement

May 2004 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	<u>May 04</u>	<u>Jan - May 04</u>		<u>May 04</u>	<u>Jan - May 04</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			Shipping	-56.02	-44.27
Income			Printing	0.00	0.00
Group Contributions			Professional Fees		
Honors	0.00	161.32	Accounting	0.00	0.00
Group Contributions - Other	6,701.35	52,446.28	Computer Consulting	0.00	672.93
Total Group Contributions	6,701.35	52,607.60	Total Professional Fees	0.00	672.93
Individual Contributions			Rent - Office	3,583.75	17,918.75
Honorary Contributions	141.86	1,396.86	Rent - Other	75.00	275.00
Individual - Restricted	0.00	0.00	Repair & Maintenance	178.00	904.98
Individual -Unrestricted	183.00	1,787.96	Security System	33.50	201.00
Total Individual Contributions	324.86	3,184.82	Special Events	0.00	135.00
Gratitude Month			Telephone	857.13	2,916.00
Gratitude Month -Individual	0.00	0.00	Travel	0.00	25.00
Gratitude Month-Groups	0.00	1,758.22	Training	0.00	94.67
Total Gratitude Month	0.00	1,758.22	Utilities	125.52	852.84
Newsletter Subscript.	54.00	432.00	Total Expense	14,867.04	75,708.09
Special Event Income	0.00	2,108.00	Net Ordinary Income	-6,186.58	-6,728.73
Sales - Bookstore	5,957.79	36,384.86	Other Income/Expense		
Total Income	13,038.00	96,475.50	Other Income		
Cost of Goods Sold			Other Income	2,615.13	2,615.13
Cost of Books Sold	4,357.54	27,496.14	Interest Income	32.70	195.40
Total COGS	4,357.54	27,496.14	Total Other Income	2,647.83	2,810.53
Gross Profit	8,680.46	68,979.36	Other Expense		
Expense			Depreciation Expense	408.17	2,040.85
IFB Literature	0.00	173.25	Total Other Expense	408.17	2,040.85
Bad Checks	0.00	-27.07	Net Other Income	2,239.66	769.68
Employee Expenses			Net Income	-3,946.92	-5,959.05
Wages & Salaries	7,200.00	35,890.43			
Employer Tax Expenses	577.58	4,154.28			
Benefits/Pension	712.00	3,464.00			
Retirement/Annuity Expense	0.00	-2,218.30			
Workers Comp Ins.	0.00	979.85			
Total Employee Expenses	8,489.58	42,270.26			
ASL Expense					
ASL- Net- Fri All Grps	441.00	2,293.20			
Total ASL Expense	441.00	2,293.20			
Bank Charges					
Cr Card Fees	0.00	402.69			
Credit Card Clearing	0.00	0.00			
Bank Charges - Other	0.00	87.30			
Total Bank Charges	0.00	489.99			
Equipment Lease	565.10	2,825.50			
Filing/Fees	27.00	27.00			
Insurance	100.55	502.75			
Internet Expense	0.00	215.40			
Miscellaneous Expense	0.00	65.15			
Office Supplies	409.93	2,185.76			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	0.00	400.00			
Postage - Other	37.00	335.00			
Total Postage	37.00	735.00			

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**August 2004**

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