

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

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

The Point

January 2005

A publication
of the Intercounty Fellowship
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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The Point

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A.A. members about business and
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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.

Starting My Day Over Again By Anonymous



I'm beginning a new year with four years of sobriety. It's been a great ride so far. I don't really participate in the resolution-making that I did in years past. The resolutions were usually wrapped up in outside influences and conditions that would supposedly make me a happier or "better" person. Inevitably, I would fail. Then I had an excuse to go on a bender. I guess I have learned something in my still-young sobriety.

A great thing is that I can start the day over – anytime I choose. One day I woke up on the wrong side of the bed. I was mad at the cat for using the cat box. I cut myself shaving. I hit my head on something before I'd even left home.

When I got behind the wheel, the day got worse. This guy couldn't use his turn signal, that guy walked against the light in front of my car and yet another guy decided to slam on his brakes right in front of me in the middle of the block! Couldn't they see that I had somewhere to go in a hurry?

After I yelled at the third person on the way to work that morning, something came over me that I heard in A.A. meetings more than once. *I can start the day over.* I can start fresh and have a moment of clarity with my Higher Power! And that's exactly what I did. I slowed down then and there and asked HP to help me start the day over again, according to His will.


What a great sense of surrender. Feelings of relief and peace came over me. Wow! This A.A. tool box hasn't rusted shut quite yet. I started the day over in that moment and I handled things much differently.

If you knew me before this time of willingness and recovery, you'd be scratching your head right now and asking yourself, "*What happened to him?*" Well, I can't answer that for you, but I have realized that my daily activities and routines are not mine to formulate and control. They used to be in my power-driving, demented thoughts and actions.

Sometimes I try to wrestle control away from my HP and do things *my way*. I can catch myself now and have a moment of clarity and my new sense of reality can take over – just like it did over four years ago when I came to my first meeting. ↑

IFB TREASURER NEEDED!
See insert or visit our website at
www.aasf.org for more information
about this service position

January 2005....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3 <u>FIRST MON</u> The Spirit of San Francisco Committee, Central Office, 7:00 pm	4 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Special Needs Committee Central Office, 6:00 pm Special Events Committee Central Office, 7:30 pm	5 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm Meeting 7 pm 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF (Meets in Sausalito in Feb, May, Aug & Nov., Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Ave.)	6	7	1 New Year's Day 8
9	10 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 7 pm	11 <u>SECOND TUE</u> SF Bridging The Gap 1111 O'Farrell, San Francisco 6:30 pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell, SF Orientation: 7 pm Meeting: 8 pm Marin H&I Lagunitas & Shady Ln Ross 7 pm	12 <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Workshop Central Office, 6:30 pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 6:45 pm	13	14	15
16 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida SF 1 pm	17 <i>Martin Luther King Day/ Central Office closed</i> <u>THIRD MON</u> Archives Committee Central Office, TBA SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm	18 <u>THIRD TUE</u> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo, 7:30 pm	19 <u>THIRD WED</u> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm	20 <u>THIRD THU</u> Outreach Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm	21	22 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 11 am Business Meeting: 12:30 pm
23 <u>FOURTH SUN</u> Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush, 5:30 pm	24 Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael GSR Sharing: 7 pm District Meeting: 8 pm	25 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln / Maple (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:30 pm	26	27 <u>FOURTH THU</u> Marin PI Committee 1360 Lincoln Ave (Alano Club) San Rafael 7:15 pm <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Committee Meeting: 8 pm	28	29
30	31 				Note: If a Committee Meeting falls on a day Central Office is closed, please call Central Office to see about scheduling.	

The Point Editorial Policy (adapted from the AA Grapevine)

The Point is published monthly to inform A.A. members about business and meeting affairs of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Francisco and Marin counties.

In addition, The Point publishes original feature articles submitted by local A.A. members that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates its pages, and in determining the editorial content, the editors rely on the principles of the Twelve Traditions.

The Point illustrates the shared experience of individual A.A. members working the A.A. program and applying the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps. Yet what works for one individual or A.A. group may not always work for another. For this reason, from month to month, articles may be published that appear to contradict one another. Seeking neither to gloss over difficult issues, nor to present such issues in a harmful or contentious manner, The Point tries to embody the widest possible view of the A.A. Fellowship.

The Point welcomes submissions from all A.A. members in San Francisco and Marin counties. Nothing published should be construed as a statement of A.A. policy, nor does publication constitute endorsement by A.A. as a whole, the Intercounty Fellowship Board, the Central Office, or The Point Editorial committee. Submissions of letters or articles that help communicate an individual's experience, strength and hope and carry the A.A. message are welcomed.

Please note that submission of an article does not constitute promise of publication. Articles are evaluated based on the Twelve Traditions, and while editing is done for purposes of clarity, style, and length, the editors encourage all writers to express their own experience in their own unique way. No payment can be made for submissions, nor can material be returned. At times, articles may be reprinted without the author's permission, but the author's byline will always be included in these cases. Email submissions to thepoint@aasf.org.

This policy is subject to revision.

Don't miss the new SECRETARY'S MONTHLY insert!!

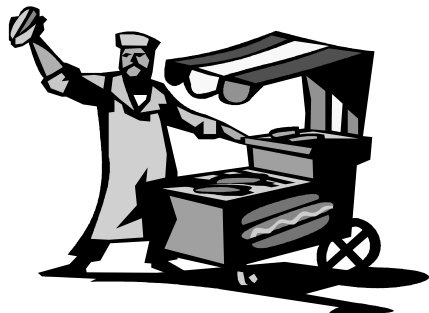
Announce these HOT NEWS ITEMS
at your meetings.
Help Central Office get the word out.
And don't miss the
COMING EVENTS
listed on back.

Thanks to The Point Committee:

Cami W., Kathleen C., Kurt C.,
Maury P., Mike L., Stephen R., Steve S.
and Dave F.

Thanks to all who contribute time and
energy in creating our newsletter! If you
want to help or submit an article, email
thepoint@aasf.org or call 415.674.1821.

Joke of the Month: Hot Dog!



At lunch time, a recovering alcoholic decides to pay a visit to his new sponsee, who sells hot dogs from a push cart.

"Make me one with everything," says the sponsor.

The sponsee fixes up a hot dog with all the trimmings and hands it to the sponsor, who pays with a \$20 bill. The vendor puts the bill in the cash box and closes it.

"Where's my change?" asks the sponsor.

The sponsee responds, "Change must come from within."



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MEETING CHANGES

New Meetings:

Sun 8:30 am Tenderloin GRAB BAG 410 Ellis/ Jones @ First Place (Di, Gy, Ls)

Meeting Changes:

Mon 8:00 pm Cathedral Hill SOUGHT TO IMPROVE 1187 Franklin @ Geary, (Meditation) is **NOT** meeting currently, but is looking for a new location.

Tue 5:30 pm Castro AA AS YOU LIKE IT 1800 Market/ Octavia, Q-13 (was Rm. 302)

Sat 12:30 pm Sunset SEVENTH WONDER GROUP 1329 7th Ave/ Irving is **NOT** meeting currently, but is looking for a new location.

Sat 8:00 pm Mill Valley Saturday Serenity, Methodist Church, 410 Sycamore & Camino Alto, (was 118 E. Strawberry Dr. off Tiburon Blvd.)

No Longer Meeting:

Fri 11:30 am Corte Madera Sober Moms, Lutheran Church (behind B of A) 649 Meadowsweet

Sat 10:00 Mission REBELLION DOGS, 2900 24th St./ Florida

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!

First Things First

By Anonymous

Cliché though they may seem, A.A. slogans give simple, comforting directions for the sometimes turbulence-ridden newcomer—and the occasionally befuddled old-timer. The first of the three slogans found on p. 133 of *Alcoholics Anonymous* suggests we put "First Things First." But what things? And what's first?

In my case, as with most newcomers, first I had to stop drinking. If I didn't, I'd continue to suffer spiritual, emotional and mental derangement (and the increasing likelihood of physical death.)

Finding a sponsor to help me work the 12 steps, attending daily meetings, taking service commitments, making sober friends, learning to practice rigorous honesty to the best of my ability—these stemmed the sometimes intense early cravings. So did staying away from the places where I'd gotten loaded—and the people I'd done it with.

My sponsor repeatedly suggested that I must make working the steps first priority, followed by my job, home and relationships—unless I was prepared to lose those things. When I did what he suggested, the

alcoholic insanity began to lift and things seemed to right themselves naturally.

Like much of the early, pre-Big Book A.A. program, the "First Things First" slogan has biblical roots. In "Dr. Bob and the Good Old-Timers," the conference-approved biography of A.A.'s Akron, Ohio-based co-founder, Dr. Bob's sponsee Clarence S. is quoted as saying that "Doc" told him "First Things First" came from the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 6:33, Jesus, in saying that God provides everything we need, says, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." For those early A.A.s, that meant staying sober with God's help, then aiding struggling drunks.

Today I sponsor a lot of guys, have commitments, attend daily meetings, talk to sober A.A.s, and meet weekly with my sponsor: *first things first*. But first among firsts is God. By his grace, I haven't gotten loaded in seven years. The compulsion to drink is gone and I have a Friend to help me live right. To put anything before that, it seems to me, would be sheer alcoholic insanity. ↑

Group Speakers for Jan. 2005

BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

DATE	SPEAKER	FROM
01/02	Tonus A.	SFPOA, SF
01/09	Katherine K.	Montclair Weekenders, Oak
01/16	Gale S.	Women's Group, 6:30pm
01/23	Pegeen C.	Sundown Group, SF

FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

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

DATE	HOST GROUP	SPEAKER
01/07/05	Eureka Step	Beth C.
01/14/05	Mission Terrace	TBA
01/21/05	Joys of Recovery	Christy S.
01/28/05	Common Welfare	Josh T.

Living Sober / Western Roundup 2005 NEWS and EVENTS

- **New Years Eve Dance**—12/31/04, HMCRA (4235 19th Street @ Collingwood) 7:30 pm AA—Al Anon meeting 9:00 pm DANCE; \$15 Suggested Donation—No one turned away for lack of funds. Please go to www.livingsober.org for the schedule of other fundraising events to benefit Living Sober.
- **Logo Contest**—The ART Committee is accepting submission for the Living Sober 2005 Logo till 1/15/05 from AA and Al-Anon group members. Please go to www.livingsober.org for full submission guidelines.
- **Call for Speakers**—The Speaker Committee is accepting CD or tapes for speakers at the 2005 Conference. All submissions must be postmarked by 3/15/05 and the candidate to have 5 years clean and sober by the conference date. Please see www.livingsober.org for complete requirements for submission.
- **General Planning**—1/23/05 @ 5:00 pm, Trinity Episcopal Church (Bush & Gough). Come and volunteer for a committee, service keeps you sober!
- **Mark your calendars!** Drag Bingo is scheduled for 2/5/04. Please check the website at www.livingsober.org for additional information.
- **Mark your calendars!** Living Sober 2005 will be taking place on July 4th weekend at the Bill Graham Civic Center.

www.livingsober.org

415.978.2478



SPEAKERS WANTED!!

PI/CPC WILL HOLD ITS
ANNUAL
MEETING
&
SPEAKER
WORKSHOP

Carry the AA message to schools, professional organizations, the medical community, drunk driving classes, and into jails and prisons.

PI SPEAKER WORKSHOP at 11:30AM

(Speaker requirement: two years of continuous sobriety in AA)

Saturday, January 29, 2005

Fort Mason, Building C, Room 370

(PI/CPC Annual Business Meeting to follow)

For further information, call the Central Office: 674-1821



12th-Step Workshop

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

Wednesday, January 12th, 2005
at 6:30pm
Central Office
1821 Sacramento St./ Van Ness
San Francisco, CA
415-674-1821

Learn about practicing the 12th Step and become a 12th-Step volunteer. Share your experience doing 12th-Step work and learn from the 12th Step-experience of others. Everyone is welcome!

Memories of My First Meeting: *Three members share*

Flame of Hope By Lord H.

I woke up out of a blackout on the phone with some weird guy yelling at me. It was supposed to be Friday night, but the sun was pouring in through the windows of my crappy little room in the Mission. I had been drinking again, and judging by the church clothes people were wearing outside, I guessed it had been three days.

Freako on the phone was saying, "TAKE THE COTTON OUT OF YOUR EARS AND STICK IT IN YOUR MOUTH, PUT THE PLUG IN THE JUG AND GO TO A MEETING!"

I arrived at Grace Cathedral for the Tuesday Downtown Beginners Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. The room was big enough for the Knicks to play basketball in, and it was filled, and I do mean FILLED, with these stupid folding chairs. There were about three hundred chairs, but only about forty people sitting in them way up front.

It was just the way I had pictured it: two hundred and sixty empty chairs with a few pathetic people huddled around a paltry flame of hope. Some straight chick was talking into a microphone. I didn't understand how this was supposed to make me drink right, but I sat down and watched the show. I woke up out of a grey-out to the sound of my own voice.

"Hey, I know you. I partied with you," I called to Microphone-Chick. She told me we'd talk after the meeting. When she approached me, she asked if I was going to stay for the BIG meeting. She told me that it was a chip meeting, and that I could get my twenty-four-hour chip.

Where I come from, chipping means doing only a little dope just to maintain. Now I got it. That's how these people stayed sober. They chip. You better believe that I stayed for the big meeting. (Nudge nudge, wink wink.) I ran up there to get my twenty-four-hour chip, and I thought, *this is the weirdest dope I've ever seen. This must be Government dope.*

I asked the guy next to me how you do it. He told me that you can put it in a drink, and when it dissolves, you can drink it, or, you can just put it in your mouth, and when it dissolves you can have a drink.

I thought: *Wow, this A.A. thing is gonna be a cinch.*



Coming Home By Kim T.

The first meeting that I attended was on August 13, 2004. It was Friday the 13th, so of course this would be my first day of Rehab and my first AA meeting in San Francisco.

I walked into the Artist's and Writer's meeting in Upper Haight, with my rehab group. I remember feeling really great about the fact that it was going to be with a creative group. The room was packed with artsy-looking people.

The energy in the room was huge. The room felt alive with intelligent and spiritual people who had something in common. They were all there to get well. I sat down and listened to the speaker. He was hilarious, truthful and full of stories of his path to recovery. I loved that there was a lot of laughter in the room from the beginning.

After the speaker finished, I was compelled to raise my hand and share. I felt so much relief. I told about my journey from Monterey to San Francisco that morning to check into rehab. Some of my story was sad, some of it funny. I told of almost missing the bus and how the movers that I had scheduled that morning were about to walk off the job because I was acting so insane. The entire group laughed when I talked of finding a huge stash of drugs and how at the first moment of finding them I was thinking: *Wow, this is great!!* Then I explained how free I felt when I flushed the entire stash down the toilet.

I remember feeling so welcome and accepted at the meeting. After the meeting closed I walked right up to a woman who had shared. She had struck me as someone that I would like to get to know. I wasn't afraid to approach her because I felt that my higher power had created this amazing opportunity to meet my sponsor. We talked quite openly and honestly and I immediately knew that she was the one that I wanted to work with. She was so warm and honest and seemed to have a peace about her that I wanted.

My first meeting was powerful because I had escaped that day from a living hell of drugs and alcohol that was making my world so very small. I had hope and I had a plan and I was in a safe and supportive environment. I was home.

Continued on Page 11.

AA ALCOTHON 2900 24th Street @ Florida, San Francisco

New Years 2004: Starts Friday, December 31st @ 4pm; Through Sunday January 2nd @ 10:00 pm

AA Meetings on the even hour from 6am till Midnight

(Door closes at midnight) (Last Meeting Jan 2 at 8:00pm)

Dear Alky

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

Dear Readers: In May 2003 Alky answered a letter about a "sub-group" in A.A. from a reader concerned about whether the group observed A.A.'s Traditions. Some letters in response came in. Here are excerpts from two of them and Alky's answer.



Dear Alky,

Would you feel justified to make such statements about any other autonomous, contributing, listed-in-the-meeting-schedule A.A. group? An anonymous member of A.A. calls it a sub-group. This group has a name: The Fellowship of the Spirit.

By no means do I speak for this or any other group, but I ask you could this be contempt prior to investigation? Have you ever attended any of their meetings? Yes, they recommend Transcendental Meditation for Step Eleven, but can a "demand" ever be placed on any alcoholic to do anything? And since when is continuing to take a personal inventory being "excessively self-absorbed?"

What is "the rest of A.A.?" Is this group somehow different from "the rest?" The Fellowship of the Spirit members agree to do the Steps on a daily basis. What is so hard to understand about that?

I hope that this group is "affecting other groups and A.A. as a whole," and that someday there will be many, many more alcoholics with more than the five years or less of the majority of A.A.s at present.

Sincerely, Spiritual Sister



Dear Alky,

First, my resentments. Members of this "sub-group" have taken over two meetings which I used to attend regularly. The vibe became too hyper, violent and rude. Eventually those two meetings disappeared. Bigger resentment: the sub-group tried to take over my home group. For weeks, "pods" of strangers arrived just as the meeting started. They shared at length and departed immediately after the closing prayer.

I called everybody on the phone list and asked them to show up for their home group. The following week, the sub-group arrived at the last minute as usual, to be greeted by a room full of regulars. We shared without cross-talk (unlike the sub-group) and the meeting went fine. Gradually the "pods" numbers dwindled and they stopped coming.

The incursion of the sub-group strengthened our meeting, which is now better than ever, with both long-time sober regulars and newcomers. I appreciate that you emphasized love and tolerance. We didn't put the strangers down; we just worked our own program. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking; A.A. should be open to everyone. This too shall pass.

Sincerely, Big Book Brother

Dear Sister and Brother,

Individual A.A.s have differences of opinion on just about everything, including how to stay sober. Any individual can become a member of A.A. by saying so. For every A.A. group, however, A.A. recommends observing the Traditions, which "outline the means by which A.A. maintains its unity and relates itself to the world about it, the way it lives and grows." (From *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*)

A group that has its own name and its own set of practices sets off alarm bells about Tradition Four: "each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole." The endorsement of Transcendental Meditation – a brand-name meditation practice – doesn't jibe with Tradition Six: "An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

However, I am personally not worried about the effect of any group on A.A. as a whole, because of the history of such groups in A.A. In 1968, a well-meaning A.A. wrote to Bill Wilson, in deep concern, about an influx of youthful hippies – or flower children – in local A.A. groups. They brought a distinctive manner of dress, sexual mores, and unorthodox behavior, including the use of drugs. The writer feared that this might be "a very real threat to our wonderful God-Given program."

Bill wrote back with his usual calm humor. Among other things, he said, "All sorts of outfits have tried to move in on us, including communists and heroin addicts, prohibitionists and do-gooders of other persuasions.

"Nearly all of these people who happened to have an individual problem with alcohol, not only failed to change A.A., but in the long run, A.A. changed them. I have a number of them among my closest friends today, and they are among the best A.A.s I know."

Bill wrote further that there was a young people's convention of A.A.s in town and four young A.A.s visited the office, where Bill met them, marveled at their long hair and love beads, and invited them all out for lunch. He enjoyed talking with them and concluded that, "if various hippie addicts want to form their own sort of fellowship along A.A. lines, by all means let us encourage them. We need deny them only the A.A. name, and assure them that the rest of our program is theirs for the taking and using – any part or all of it."

(Reprinted by permission of the A.A. Grapevine, June 2004, "Bill W's Letter about Hippies in A.A.")

I'm not sure the Fellowship of the Spirit as a group is part of A.A., although any individuals can be members of A.A. just by saying they are. Regardless, A.A. will survive, just as it always has.

In love and service,

Alky

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—

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VICE CHAIR—

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TREASURER—

Patrick M. patrick_m30075@yahoo.com

RECORDING SECRETARY—

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SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE—

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Unity: Our Second Legacy

By Steve R.

How often we hear it, "Recovery, Unity, Service." These are the Three Legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous. The phrase has a nice ring to it. But let's try it again: "Recovery, *Unity*, Service." This is the emphasis that evolved through trial and error (and good fortune) by our co-founders and the early A.A.s and was solidified with the formal adoption of our Second Legacy – the 12 Traditions taken as a whole.


Alcoholics Anonymous as we know it today has remained essentially the same for fifty years. But it wasn't always this way. The A.A. Service Manual and the pamphlet *A.A. Tradition* mention many examples of the growing pains that threatened to distract or divide the Fellowship in its early days.

Initial publication of the *Big Book* (and ownership) nearly went to a private firm. A politician openly cited his membership in A.A. as proof of sobriety to the electorate. Another member likewise used it promoting a Prohibition magazine. Philanthropists were solicited for contributions. A liquor-trade association sponsored a member to conduct alcohol "education." A university did the same, successfully, with "A.A. backing."

Around 1943 the General Office (precursor to GSO) asked the A.A. groups to send in lists of their membership rules and, when compiled, these came to "many pages." Had they all been in force in one place, ninety percent of then A.A.s would have been disqualified.

Attempts at A.A. recovery centers and hospitals kept cropping up. Indeed, Bill Wilson's own white-light spiritual awakening included these explicitly and he pursued them for many years. But our co-founder abandoned this part of his personal vision. Ultimately he wrote, "Gradually we saw that the unity, the effectiveness – yes, even the survival – of A.A. would always depend on our continued willingness to sacrifice our personal ambitions and desires for the common safety and welfare. Just as sacrifice meant survival for the individual, so did sacrifice mean unity and survival for the group and for A.A.'s entire Fellowship."

Today, with the groups and individuals having practiced the suggested Traditions, we're unaffiliated with religion, reform, the recovery industry, and real estate, and have a single requirement for membership. The present is secure, but vigilance is required to pass on the legacy of Unity. We current members have the responsibility to participate fully and ask questions when something doesn't feel right.

Why doesn't our group have a GSR or an IFB Rep? Should a large group pay more in rent than a small group at the same meeting room? Is a dollar in the basket enough in today's context? The ensuing discussions will ensure that The Traditions remain alive from today forward so that A.A. will be here next week for the corner drunk and for the unborn alcoholic generations around the globe. 

Treasures of the Twelve & Twelve: Tradition One By Steve S.

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

January is a time of new beginnings, and here at The Point we're starting a series that's both new and old. Following 2004's series unearthing the treasures found in the step-related chapters in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, in 2005 we present a monthly column examining the other twelve chapters of the book. We hope you enjoy this exploration of the twelve traditions.

The chapter on our First Tradition, while brief, is dense with jewels. Of course, unity itself is one of the treasures of our whole fellowship. Bill expands on this, writing about liberty and anarchy and how the individual A.A. member is trusted to act as though his or her life depends on A.A. He so eloquently sums up the spirit of our Twelve Traditions in the words "We ought..." but never "You must!"

These and other treasures abound in this short chapter, and even with a quick skim it's hard to avoid direct and vital truths. It seems every sentence underscores the essential need for unity so that we may continue to rely on A.A. As valuable as these gems are, it is a quick exercise for the reader to pick up the 12&12 and read it through. This article can hardly say better what Bill already wrote.

Finally, like most treasure chests, this chapter offers us something odd. Indeed, it might not make sense to most modern readers. In the second to last paragraph of the chapter, Bill mentions "Eddie Rickenbacker and his courageous company." Who is Eddie Rickenbacker and what is his story?

As it turns out, Rickenbacker was a World War I aviator, well known to someone of Wilson's generation (especially to a WW I veteran like Bill) but somewhat obscure to those of us that have come along since. America's "Ace of Aces," Rickenbacker was widely hailed as a hero for shooting down 26 German airplanes between April 20th and October 30th of 1918. That record would not be broken until the World War II. In that war



"Courage is doing
what you're
afraid to do.
There can be no
courage unless
you're scared."

—Eddie Rickenbacker

he toured the Pacific, speaking to troops to boost morale. In October of 1942, Rickenbacker's plane went hundreds of miles off course and had to be ditched in the Pacific Ocean. He and his crew of seven men were stranded in three tied-together life rafts for 24 days. They had only three days' rations. One man died, and the survivors battled sharks, dehydration, and starvation before rescue.

It seems natural that Bill Wilson used this story of survivors trapped in a life-or-death struggle, with no room for infighting or one-up-manship. After all, the beginning of Chapter Two in *Alcoholics Anonymous* refers to sober A.A.s sharing a "common peril" similar to that of passengers of a shipwrecked ocean liner. People familiar with the Rickenbacker tale

would recall that survivors had to bind together or die—taking shifts to remain alert for an approaching airplane and relying on democracy for critical decisions.

Readers also would likely have recalled a poignant detail from several of the survivors' accounts: the crew could not have long survived without the 60-feet of rope salvaged before their airplane submerged. The crew tied the rafts together with the rope, and therefore remained close enough to confer when problems arose. They had no lifeline to food or civilization, but had one to each other.

Rickenbacker's own account noted that crew members had to practice forgiveness. He wrote that conflicts were inevitable in such close quarters, but had to be set aside for the survival of all. "Tempers turned raw," he wrote, "many things said in the night had best be forgotten."

What more fitting reminder to us alcoholics? Our common survival depends on A.A. unity. Although it's inevitable that we'll have conflicts, for the purposes of our own survival we have to remember what Bill wrote early in this chapter: the "clamor of desires and ambitions ... must be silenced whenever these could damage the group."†



A.A. On the Road: Making Amends Around the Globe

By Jim W.

The disease of Alcoholism travels well. It needs no passport, easily adapts to climate changes, local customs, and languages and quickly acquires a taste for whatever spirits are available anywhere at any time.

After a few years of drinking alcoholically on the East Coast and in Canada, my career brought my disease and me to San Francisco. I landed a job that required extensive travel to about ten major U.S. cities, as well as to several cities in Europe.

The Scorched Earth Policy period of my life was about to begin. My disease and I would get on a plane, travel to a city and tell the taxi driver to find a liquor store before checking into the hotel. Often, I would travel with a quart of vodka in my briefcase.

My drunken offenses against people would begin on the plane and continue at the airport baggage area—and in the taxi, hotel, office, and business associates' homes. The further I traveled from San Francisco, the more I drank. I used to make fun of the Gypsies in Rome for drinking too much. Yet at the end of the evening it was yours truly who was flat on his back on the Via Appia, looking up at some Gypsies having a good laugh at me.


I spent my Saturday at the Roman Forum with my bottle of vodka, loudly telling the tourists not to interrupt my conversations with Julius Cesar. I humiliated my Italian business associates by demanding we stop our meeting at 10:00 a.m. to go to lunch because I was desperate for booze. I would leave everything I touched in a state of destruction. The return welcome mat was withdrawn.

After three years of this behavior, my employers fired me.

I was spiritually bankrupt. I was projectile vomiting blood. I had lost hope. I could no longer get drunk. Yet I saw a dim light at the end of my tunnel. I went to an A.A. meeting, then another and another each day while postponing my next drink. I met a man who said that he would be my sponsor. Hope began coming back.

I worked the steps with my sponsor. I made my Eighth Step list, but I was secretly relieved that I would probably never go back to all the cities and countries where I practiced my Scorched Earth Policy. But my former employers saw me sober one year later and re-hired me. They promptly sent me back to the places I'd left burned and charred. I went to meetings in each city and town. If I could find alcohol, I could find meetings. It worked. I met people with a desire not to drink in New York, Chicago, Boston, Dallas, Miami, Atlanta, Roma, Florence, Milano, ad infinitum.

Each trip brought the opportunity to make amends as suggested in the Ninth Step. I was afraid of negative or angry reactions from people. Was I ready to take the full consequences of my past acts? My sponsor encouraged me to make an honest effort. The fellowship meetings in each city gave me the courage to be willing. Plus, each time I was allowed to make an amends brought me a little more spiritual freedom and emotional sobriety.

The results were usually far beyond my expectations. I was told that I was welcome to keep coming back. I am grateful to have the welcome mat back. 

FAITHFUL FIVERS!



Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously pledge to contribute at least Five Dollars each month toward the support of Central Office in its efforts to carry the A.A. message of hope and recovery to those alcoholics who still suffer in the San Francisco/ Marin area. As a Faithful Fiver, your personal contribution can and will make our vital services possible. We'd like to thank the following members for joining:

AMI JOY Y.
BARBARA M.
BRUCE D.
DAVID B.
DAVID B.
FRANCES L.
FRANK M.
GILES H.
HARRY M.

JANET B.
JERRY N.
JIM H.
KATE B.
KATHLEEN S.
KELLIE A.
KRIS F.
LAURIE L.
LISA C.
LISA & CLAY K.

MICHAEL R.
MONIKA H.
PEGGY M.
PETER F.
PHILIP G.
RICH G.
RICHARD C.
SCOTT N.
RALPH P.



Literature Review: A Biography that Reads Like a Novel

By Gary D.

Review of: *My Name is Bill: His Life and the Creation of Alcoholics Anonymous*, by Susan Cheever, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2004.

A modern biographer tries to evoke the person he or she is writing about by telling the story of the individual in the context of friends, family, and the times; the biographer tells the story more like a novelist.

It was a great pleasure to read Susan Cheever's new biography of Bill Wilson, *My Name is Bill*. The book is divided into four parts: *A Rural Childhood*, *Drinking*, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and *Life After A.A.*


Part One, A Rural Childhood, gives the background of Bill Wilson's family and the influence of his having grown up in rural Vermont. Bill grew up with a love of nature, in an emotional climate where a man was defined by his independence and drive. However, Bill also learned early in life about loss, grief and depression. This section ends with Bill joining the Army during World War I.

Bill's first drink of alcohol, as outlined in *Part II, Drinking*, was as a soldier. Bill's drinking progressed to the point that it began causing him trouble – especially after the War, when Bill became a successful businessman. Like many alcoholics, the drive to succeed was also accompanied by another drive to drink. During this period he met and married his patient, understanding and long-suffering wife, Lois. The story of Bill's hitting bottom is as tragic as that of

any alcoholic, but we also see an intelligent, thinking man struggling to find a solution to his inability to stop drinking.

Part III, Alcoholics Anonymous, outlines the history of how Bill and Dr. Bob discovered that one alcoholic talking with another was the key to abstinence for an alcoholic. There is discussion of the philosophical and spiritual background that led to the formulation of the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. Bill Wilson knew he and others had found a way to stop drinking and he then began to create an organization that would help spread that knowledge to anyone with the same desire. From the earliest gatherings until Bill gave up leadership of A.A. in 1955, we watch a man driven by a cause as important to him as life itself—helping other alcoholics recover.

In *Part IV, Life After A.A.*, we see Bill's spiritual progress. Rather than letting his fame as the author of *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the founder of the organization of the same name go to his head, Bill understood the need for A.A. to grow and thrive without him. Despite bouts of depression, Bill continued to speak about A.A. around the world and to write—much of his writing appearing in "The Grapevine."

Bill's philosophy succeeded where medicine and religion had failed for millions of alcoholics. Reading the story of Bill Wilson's life by an author with Susan Cheever's talent and insight is a study about greatness and humility in a man just as human as you or I. 

Memories of my First Meeting, *continued from page 6*

First of Two By Barnaby

The first A.A. meeting that I went to was not of big note. I was three months sober and really confused. I was met with friendly faces and open arms. But I had problems with the GOD word. Plus, I had a job and a girlfriend, so how was I unmanageable? I felt A.A. was for losers and I was not one.

Fast-forward three years and I WAS DRY and not attending meetings. The girl was gone and I couldn't get a handle on things. Lying had become a huge problem. Girls, money and travel were not distracting me enough any more.


I felt like I had to drink, but knew it was not really going to save me. I had no close friends. Everything was a mess in my head, and I faced a dilemma – to drink or not?

One night I went to a diner and met a hot waitress. She had on a Straight Edge shirt. That was cool, since it meant she didn't drink – at least I hoped not. A couple of days later I went back and talked to this woman. She was sober. I told

her I was too. She asked if I was in A.A. I said yes. She looked at me funny and said, "I don't see you at meetings."

It was true: I didn't go to meetings and was not working a program. She suggested that I go to a Saturday night meeting and said she might meet me there. So I went. I consider this meeting my true first meeting.

It was unnerving to go to a meeting so long after getting sober. God, did I need to get this. The girl was cool, but that meeting was great. It was a spiritual experience for me. I wanted to get what some of the people there had. They were happy, joyous, and free.

I saw a man at the meeting whom I'd drunk with at my favorite bar. Even he seemed to be happy, so I figured maybe, just maybe, A.A. could work for me too. And it has – with some help from my sponsor and my fellowship of men's meetings. I have arrived at a place of peace and happiness that was once only available in the bottle. 

AA Group Contributions - October 2004

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	Meets	Oct. '04	YTD	Name	Meets	Oct. '04	YTD
Fellowship Contributions				Island Group	Th 8pm		208.00
Annual Christmas Meeting	Xmas 2003		25.00	Keepin' It Real	Th 6pm		482.00
Bingo Extravaganza	7th Tradition		115.00	Living in the Solution	F 6pm		455.00
Brisbane Breakfast	Su 11am	48.00	283.00	Marin City Groups	5D 6:30pm		300.00
Contribution Box	Sept. 2004	42.45	539.40	Marin Newcomers	M 8:30pm		249.00
Gay Newcomers Group	Santa Rosa		5.72	Marin Sober Group	F 8pm		86.50
Deer Park Discovery Group			52.67	Mill Valley 7am	7D 7am	750.00	2,250.00
IFB	Oct.	73.36	984.67	Mill Valley Original Smokeless SS	Th 8pm		50.00
IFB Secretaries Workshop			53.25	Monday Blues	M 6:30pm		264.50
Hot August Nights AA meeting			62.53	Monday Night Stag (Tiburon)	M 8pm		1,451.92
Marin Teleservice			1,782.00	Monday Night Women's	M 8pm	179.76	232.11
Spirit of San Francisco	2003		577.56	Nativity Monday Night BB	M 8pm	100.00	200.00
Sunday Step Study	Su 4pm	75.00	201.00	Newcomers Step	M 7:30pm		500.00
Unidentified		216.00	668.45	Noon	Tu 12pm		140.50
Total Fellowship		\$ 454.81	\$ 5,350.25	Noon Discussion	Th 12pm		135.00
Honors				Noon Hope	F 12pm		97.40
Endless Summer	F 8:30pm	45.00	263.22	Novato Fellowship Group			120.00
High Noon	6D 12:15pm		36.00	Novato Spirit Discussion	F 12pm		142.18
Sesame Step	Tu 7:30pm		6.00	On Awakening	7D 5:30am		350.00
Total Honors		\$ 45.00	\$ 305.22	Pathfinders	Tu 12pm		204.02
Marin Group Contributions				Refugee	Th 12pm	150.00	150.00
11th Step Meeting	M 8pm	100.00	200.00	Rise N Shine	Su 10am		158.98
12 & 12 Study	Sa 8:15am		106.50	Ross San Anselmo Group	M 8:30pm		54.00
7am Urgent Care Group	7D 7am		400.00	San Anselmo Fireside Meeting	Su 8pm		79.56
A Vision For You	Su 7:30pm		108.25	San Geronimo Valley	M 8pm		134.47
Attitude Adjustment Fairfax	7D 7am	936.11	5,451.53	Saturday Serenity	Sa 8pm		637.00
Awareness/Acceptance	M 10:30am		264.00	Saturday Women's Speaker	Sa 6pm		105.00
Back to Basics	Su 9:30am	111.00	301.95	Serendipity	Sa 11am		485.00
Beginners	W 7pm		500.00	Sisters In Sobriety	Th 7:30pm		94.00
Bounce Back	M 6pm		200.00	Six O'Clock Sunset	Th 6pm	131.62	491.44
Caledonia	Su 8pm	100.08	532.16	Sober & Serene	F 7pm		492.79
Candlelight	Su 8:30pm	40.83	210.06	Sober Moms	Fr 11:30am		18.00
Candlelight Meditation	M 7:30pm		60.00	Spiritual Testosterone	Su 8:30am		276.00
Closed Women's Step Study	Tu 3:30pm	117.00	117.00	Steps to Freedom	M 7:30pm		677.13
Creekside New Growth	Su 7pm		165.00	Steps To The Solution	W 7:15pm		87.00
Crossroads	Su 12pm	832.50	1,329.50	Stinson Beach Fellowship	Th 8pm		220.60
Day At A Time	7D 6:30am	300.00	720.00	Streetfighters	Sa 9am		22.10
Experience, Strength & Hope	Sa 6pm		197.00	Sunday Express	Su 6pm		283.84
Fairfax Friday Night	F 8:30pm		46.18	Sunday Night Corte Madera	Su 8pm		400.00
Fireside	F 8pm		35.50	Survivors	M 12pm		335.50
Freedom Finders	F 8:30pm		861.60	T. G. I'm Sober	M 6pm		26.00
Gratitude	M 12pm	49.71	49.71	Terra Linda Group	Th 8:30pm		871.00
Greenfield Newcomers	Su 7pm		80.00	Terra Linda Night Stag	Th 8pm		500.00
Happy Hour	Th 6pm		319.49	TGI Tuesday	Tu 6pm		124.80
High & Dry	W 12pm		125.00	The Barnyard Group	Sa 4pm		270.00
Hope Step Group	Tu 7:30pm		150.00	The Fearless Searchers	F 8pm		274.00
Inverness Sunday Serenity	Su 10am		26.00	The Novato Group Fri. Night Di	F 8:30pm		112.05
				Three Step Group	Sa 5:30pm		600.00
				Thurs. Night Speaker, MV	Th 8:30pm	628.25	2,497.24

Name	Meets	Oct. '04	YTD	Name	Meets	Oct. '04	YTD
Thursday Night Miracles	Th 8:30pm		39.00	Common Welfare	Th 8pm		136.96
Tiburon Beginners & Closed	Tu 7pm & 8:30pm	144.50	1,301.85	Cow Hollow Young People's	Tu 7:30pm		350.62
Tiburon Haven	Su 12pm		720.00	Design for Living	Sa 8am	199.20	715.32
Tiburon Women's Candlelight	W 8pm		39.76	Dignitaries Sympathy	W 8:15pm		150.00
Tuesday Twelve Step	Tu 6:30pm		34.60	Each Day A New Beginning	5D 7am		441.24
Wednesday Mid-Week	W 6pm		189.87	Each Day a New Beginning F	F 7am	551.79	1,095.79
Wednesday Night Candlelight	W 8pm		300.44	Each Day a New Beginning M	M 7am		287.68
Wednesday Night SD	W 7pm		69.52	Each Day A New Beginning Su	Su 8am		421.71
Wednesday Noon	W 12pm		56.49	Each Day a New Beginning Th	Th 7am	308.00	1,166.46
Wednesday Sundowners	W 6pm	76.96	76.96	Each Day a New Beginning Tu	Tu 7am	498.65	927.59
Women For Women	W 12pm		327.61	Each Day a New Beginning W	W 7am	394.16	1,307.62
Women on Monday	M 7pm	86.27	155.94	Early Start	F 6pm		375.00
Women on Wednesday	W 7pm		64.86	Easy Does It	Tu 6pm		673.00
Women's Big Book	Tu 10:30am	65.00	312.50	Embarcadero Group	5D 12:10pm		328.64
Working Dogs	W 12:05pm		313.25	Embarcadero Group	F 12:10pm		55.41
Total Marin Contributions		4,899.59	34,954.71	Embarcadero Group	M 12:10pm		144.60
				Embarcadero Reflections	Tu 12:10pm	78.87	249.23
SF Group Contributions				Epiphany Group	Th 8pm		25.00
515pm Smokeless W	W 5:15pm		60.00	Eureka Step	Tu 6pm	58.59	172.59
7AM As Bill Sees It	F 7am	15.60	68.60	Eureka Valley Topic	M 6pm		946.93
12 Steps to Happiness	F 7:30pm		40.87	Federal Speaker	Su 12pm		543.45
A is for Alcohol	Tu 6pm	27.31	159.01	Fellowship of the Spirit	Su 1:30pm		31.80
A New Start	F 8:30pm		124.40	Fell Street Step	Su 8pm		127.09
A Vision for You (SF)	Su 6:30pm		85.00	Fireside	F 8:30pm		92.35
A Vision For You (SF)	Su 7:30pm		123.51	Fireside Chat Sa	Sa 9pm		545.47
AA As You Like It	Tu 5:30pm	184.90	334.79	Fireside Chat Th	Th 8pm		88.56
AA Step Study	Su 6pm		407.29	Fireside Chat Tu	Tu 8pm		60.11
Afro American	F 8pm		103.32	Friday All Groups	Fr 8:30pm		1,568.00
Afro American Beginners	Sa 8pm	23.47	485.68	Friday Lunchtime	Fr 12pm		280.00
After Work	M 6pm	70.62	239.16	Friday Knights	Th 7:30am		9.20
All Together Now	Th 8pm		664.08	Friday Smokeless	F 8:30pm	50.00	150.00
Alumni	W 8:30pm		120.00	Friendly Circle	Su 8:30pm		485.70
Amazing Grace	M 7pm		165.05	Friendly Circle Beginners	Su 7:15pm	127.00	237.34
Any Lengths	Sa 9:30am		1,878.77	Friendship Group	W 8pm		125.00
Artists & Writers	F 6:30pm		1,273.44	Friendship House			9.36
As Bill Sees It	Th 6pm		260.17	Gay Beginners Q & A	F 7pm		35.38
As Bill Sees It	Sa 11am		215.87	Golden Gate Seniors	Tu 1:30pm		107.00
Ass in a Bag	Th 8:30pm		275.00	Gold Mine Group	M 8pm		226.36
Back to Basics	Th 8pm		226.00	Goodlands	Su 2pm		30.60
Beginner's Step Study	Sa 6:30pm	134.82	242.82	Haight Street Blues	Tu 6:15pm		323.34
Beginner's Warmup	W 6pm		90.00	Haight Street Explorers	Th 6:30pm		60.00
Bernal Big Book	Sa 5pm		1,002.21	Happy Hour	F 6:30pm		381.80
Beyond 164	F 12:30pm		90.00	High Noon	5D 12:15pm		200.00
Big Book Basics	F 8pm		453.73	High Noon Friday	F 12:15pm	165.43	1,437.78
Big Book Backwards	F 10am		15.00	High Noon Monday	M 12:15pm		733.25
Big Book Study	Su 11am		69.24	High Noon Saturday	Sa 12:15pm		282.22
Boys Night Out	Tu 7:30pm		414.73	High Noon Thursday	Th 12:15pm	227.43	926.42
Buena Vista Breakfast	Su 12pm	75.92	462.89	High Noon Tuesday	Tu 12:15pm		852.52
BYOL	W 12:30pm	126.00	126.00	High Noon Wednesday	W 12:15pm	273.00	1,018.80
Castro Discussion	W 8pm		763.00	High Sobriety	M 8pm		264.11
Castro Monday Big Book	M 8pm		548.38	High Steppers	W 7pm		157.00
Cocoanuts	Su 9am		125.00	Hilldwellers	M 8pm	236.13	726.59
Come N Get It	F 6:30pm		498.85				

(Continued on p. 14)

Name	Meets	Oct. '04	YTD	Name	Meets	Oct. '04	YTD
Hilldwellers	M 8pm	236.13	726.59	Sesame Step	T 7:30pm	93.21	580.70
Home Group	Sa 8:30pm	77.98	1,212.71	Sinbar	Su 8pm		346.40
Hot Java	F 12am		106.33	Sisters Circle	Su 6pm		70.20
How It Works	Sa 2pm		345.84	Sisters In Sobriety	M 7pm		110.00
Huntington Square	W 6:30pm	657.08	1,305.25	Sober & Centered	Fr 7pm		371.51
Join the Tribe	Tu 7pm		330.79	Sometimes Slowly	Sa 11am		116.11
Joys of Recovery	Tu 8pm		427.31	Step Talk	Su 8:30am	120.00	840.00
Keep Coming Back	Sa 11am		2,327.03	Stepping Out	Sa 6pm		120.00
Keep It Simple	Sa 8:30pm		308.10	Steppin' Up	Tu 6:30pm		42.00
Let It Be Now	F 6pm		300.00	Sunday Bookworms	Su 7:30pm	103.14	218.15
Light Brigade Discussion	Su 7pm		147.80	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	Su 10:30am		549.43
Light Steppers	Su 7pm		113.10	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group	Su 5pm		235.16
Like A Prayer	Su 4pm		158.86	Sunday Night Castro SD	Su 7:30pm	433.20	842.45
Lincoln Park	Sa 8:30pm		444.47	Sunday Rap	Su 8pm		443.26
Live and Let Live	Su 8pm		261.66	Sundown	W 7pm		348.00
Living Sober	W 8pm		241.51	Sundown Steps	Th 6:30pm		168.00
Living Sober with HIV	W 6pm	174.70	435.90	Sunrise Sunset	Th 5:45pm		112.00
Luke's Group	W 8pm		59.47	Sunset 11'ers F	F 11am		138.40
Lush Lounge	Sa 2pm		154.86	Sunset 11'ers Sa	Sa 11am		211.20
Marina Discussion	F 8:30pm	597.20	907.09	Sunset 11'ers Th	Th 11am	24.09	224.09
Meeting Place Noon	F 12pm	83.53	376.91	Sunset 11'ers W	W 11am		187.60
Mid-Morning Support	Su 10:30am		1,771.70	Sunset 9'ers F	F 9am		194.00
Midnight Meditation	Sa 11:59pm		251.25	Sunset 9'ers M	M 9am		327.23
Millionaires Club	Th 6pm		70.00	Sunset 9'ers Sa	Sa 9am		517.25
Miracles Off 24th St	W 7:30pm		322.50	Sunset 9'ers Su	Su 9am		368.00
Mission Terrace	W 8pm		382.33	Sunset 9'ers Th	Th 9am		128.16
Monday At A Time	M 12:30pm		224.10	Sunset 9'ers Tu	Tu 9am		242.95
Monday Beginners	M 8pm		378.85	Sunset 9'ers W	W 9am		453.57
Monday Men's Meeting	M 8pm		48.00	Sunset Reflections	Th 12:30pm		100.00
Monday Monday	M 12:15pm		80.00	Sunset Speaker Step	Su 7:30pm		183.96
New Glasses Tu 6pm	Tu 6pm		108.00	Sutter Street Beginners	Sa 6pm		962.33
New Highs	W 1:30pm		188.10	Ten Years After	Su 6pm	180.00	1,799.42
New Hope Big Book	M 6:30pm		714.26	The 24 Hour Plan	M 7am	63.87	99.37
New Wednesday High Noon	W 12:15pm		1,053.47	The Parent Trap	M 12:30pm		47.52
Newcomers	Tu 8pm		303.76	The Pepper Group	F 12pm	44.00	44.00
No Gurus Meditation	Su 7pm		45.00	They Don't Know Who We Are	Sa 7pm		150.00
No Reservation	M 12pm		353.96	Thursday Night Women's	Th 6:30pm		430.92
Noon Smokeless	M 12pm		65.89	Thus We Grow	Th 6pm		81.00
One Liners	Th 8:30pm		370.15	Too Early	Sa 8am		1,031.16
Park Presidio	M 8:30pm	77.90	239.90	Tuesday Downtown	Tu 8pm		840.00
Parkside	Th 8:30pm	20.00	304.64	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	Tu 7am		162.07
Pure & Simple	Su 6pm		59.35	Tuesday Sunset Nooners	Tu 12:30pm		120.00
Pax West		337.78	373.78	Valencia Smokefree	F 6pm		940.74
Rose Garden Big Book	Th 12:05pm		132.22	Walk of Shame	W 8pm		12.97
Rule 62	W 10pm	271.03	955.14	Waterfront	Su 8pm		961.72
Saturday Afternoon Meditation	Sa 5pm	145.00	366.93	We Care	Tu 12pm		260.23
Saturday Easy Does It	Sa 12pm	268.80	483.80	Wednesday Sunrise Smokefree	W 7am		60.00
Saturday Night Regroup	Sa 7:30pm		230.24	Weekend Workers	Sa 7am		180.00
Seacliff	Th 8:30pm		203.81	West Portal	W 8:30pm		306.50
Second Chance	Th 2:15pm		63.59	Wits End Step Study	Tu 8pm		30.00
Serenity House			800.00	Women Who Drank Too Much	Tu 6:15pm		39.00
Serenity Seekers	M 7:30pm		1,734.35				

(Continued on p. 15)

Group Contributions, con't from p. 14

Name	Meets	Oct. '04	YTD
Women's 10 Years Plus	Th 6:15pm	162.00	538.00
Women's Kitchen Table	Tu 6:30pm		473.29
Women's Lunch Bunch	F 12pm		100.00
Women's Promises	F 7pm		397.80
Work In Progress	Sa 7pm		64.87
Total SF Contributions		\$ 7,761.40	\$ 75,866.60
TOTAL		\$ 13,160.80	\$ 116,476.78

Gratitude Contributions — October 2004

San Francisco

Marina Discussion F 830pm (From 2002)	185.00
Total Gratitude Month	\$ 185.00

Individual Contributions — October 2004

HONORS		IND. CONTRIBRTIONS	
Honorary Contributions	50.00	Individual -Unrestricted	43.00
Honorary Contributions	100.00	Individual -Unrestricted	25.00
Honorary Contributions	60.00	Individual -Unrestricted	25.00
Honorary Contributions	54.75	Individual -Unrestricted	25.00
Honorary Contributions	24.00	Individual -Unrestricted	6.00
Honorary Contributions	25.00	Individual -Unrestricted	25.00
Honorary Contributions	25.00	Individual -Unrestricted	20.00
Honorary Contributions	65.70	Total IND. CONT.	\$ 169.00
Total HONORS	\$ 404.45	TOTAL	\$ 573.45

CONTRIBUTIONS to the Central Office were made through December 15, 2004 honoring the following members:

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Bob R.W. Bud C.
Curtis C. Fran H.

ANNIVERSARIES

West Bay Alano Club: Ralph P. 18 years
Marina Dock Thursday 10am: Donald R. N. 23 years
Big Book Basics: Harold B. 3 years
Surf: Barbara M. 47 years
Mark K. 20 years
Jack W. 22 years
Terry H. 25 years

OUTLINES FOR STEPS 10 AND 11

There are many different ways of practicing the tenth and eleventh steps. Below is an outline paraphrasing the suggested practice found in the Big Book on pages 84 through 88. This was submitted to us by a member who finds it helpful. The original author is unknown.

I. TENTH STEP

As we clean up the past, we:

1. Continue to take personal inventory.
2. Continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along.
3. Vigorously commence this way of living.

"Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness." (Big Book p. 84)

We continue to watch for: (4th step)

1. Selfishness
2. Dishonesty
3. Resentment
4. Fear

When these crop up, we:

1. Ask God to remove them at once. (6th & 7th steps)
2. Discuss them with someone immediately. (5th step)
3. Make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. (8th & 9th steps)
4. Resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. (12th step)

"Love and tolerance of others is our code." (Big Book, p. 84)

We:

1. Have ceased fighting anything or anyone, even alcohol.
2. Carry the vision of God's will into all our activities.
3. Ask, "How can I best serve Thee? Thy will (not mine) be done."

"These are thoughts which must go with us constantly." (Big Book, p. 85)

If we carefully follow directions, we begin to:

1. Sense the flow of the Spirit in us.
2. Become God-conscious.
3. Develop this vital sixth sense.

"It works, if we have the proper attitude and work at it." (Big Book p. 86)

Outline continued on Page 18

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, December 1, 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	
Adrian R.	High Noon W	R	Greg S.	Keep Coming Back	A*	Monika H.	SFPOA	A*
Amber W.	Sisters Circle	P	Janet B.	As Bill Sees It, Saturday	A*	Morningstar V.	High Noon Saturday	P
Bill V.	Attitude Adjustment, Fairfax	P	Jen B.	Midnight Meditation	P	Nathan M.	Easy Does It	P
Bob W.	Creative Alcoholics	P	Jenny M.	Waterfront	A*	Pascal G.	Marin Stag (Mon. Night...)	P
Brian C.	Mission Terrace	P	Joe G.	Beginners	P	Patrick M.	Treasurer	P
Carol W.	Miracles Off 24th St.	A*	John H.	Goldmine Group	R	Penelope P.	Amazing Grace	P
Dan Z.	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	A*	Johnny G.	High Noon Tuesday	P	Peter S.	All Together Now	A**
Daniel B.	Too Early	A*	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P	Ramona A.	Sunset 9'ers M	A**
Danny F.	Each Day A New Beginning	Alt.	Kate B.	Friday All Groups	A*	Ray M.	Sunday Rap	P
David A.	Living Sober	P	Kathleen W.	Common Welfare	A**	Rebekah D.	Fell Street Step	P
David B.	Beginner's Warmup	P	Kristine F.	Castro Discussion	P	Rudi D.	Park Presidio	A*
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Larry L.	The 24 Hour Plan	P	Russell G.	Regroup	P
David E.	Sesame Step	P	Lou H.	Mill Valley 7AM	P	Scott C.	New Hope Big Book	P
David P.	Goodlands	P	Lynnore G.	Walk Of Shame	P	Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sa	P
David S.	High Sobriety	P	Marc D.	Bernal Big Book	P	Shiloh A.	Fireside Chat	P
Don B.	Friday Fell Street	P	Martha C.	449'ers	P	Steve N.	Terra Linda Group	A*
Doug S.	As Bill Sees It - Thursday	P	Mary P.	Sutter St. Beginners	A**	Stephen R.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Edward F.	Happy Hour	P	Maury P.	Office Manager	P	Steven S.	Homegroup	P
Francesca K.	West Portal	P	Meredith R.	High Noon Friday	A**	Tim M.	Join the Tribe	P
Gary D.	Work In Progress	P	Michael R.	Huntington Square	P	Tom B.	Eureka Valley Topic	P
Georgia L.	Friendly Circle Beginners	P	Mike A.	Tuesday Downtown	R	Victor V.	Stepping Up	P
Grant D.	Ten Years After	P						

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		Jim T.	First Place	Rick P.	SF Teleservice
Melanie L.	Second Chance	Liaisons Present		Stacey S.	San Mateo General Service
Nick T.	Cocoanuts	Mikey B.	SF General Service	Trevor F.	Marin General Service
Kathy K.	Each Day a New Beginning	Omar C.	Marin Teleservice		

December 2004 IFB Summary

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

A. IFB Reports

Chair's Report: Chair Joe G. reported that the By-Laws Review Committee will consist of himself as Chair of the IFB, Steve R. Vice-Chair of the IFB, Maury P., Central Office Manager, and Danny F., Central Office Committee Chair. In addition, any interested IFB members are encouraged to join the committee. Joe G. also reported that there are potentially three candidates for the Treasurer position and that interviews are scheduled for later in the month. The January meeting will largely be devoted to a presentation by Laura Clark from the Hearing Society to discuss access to meetings by hearing impaired AA mem-

bers. Joe thanked the Special Events Committee for its hard work in putting on special events which significantly helped us with our financial shortfall this fiscal year.

Treasurers Report: Patrick M. gave the report. October group contributions were under budget projections for the first time in 4 months. The shortfall in group contributions was partially offset by individual gratitude contributions and higher bookstore sales. Total income was \$993 under budget for October.

Patrick M. presented the proposed 2005 budget which had been recommended by the COC. Expenses are projected to be 2.9% over 2004. In addition we received a one time benefit in 2004 for some annuities that were cashed in. In order to cover the increased expenses and loss of annuity income, our 2005 revenue must increase by 6.3% over 2004. Also included in the budget is a \$3,000 per year set aside for the eventual replacement of computer equipment. The prudent reserve needs to be increase by \$5,955. Mark D. made a motion to approve the 2005 budget. Motion passed with no objection.

IFB Summary (Continued from page 16)

Central Office Manager's Report: Maury P. reported that the Holiday Party is scheduled for Thursday, December 16 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The event is hosted by the IFB for Central Office volunteers and IFB members. UPS is raising shipping prices, which will result in an increase in our prices as well. The increase is minimal. Grapevine tapes, which are a discontinued item, are being sold at half-price: \$3.75 per tape. Twenty-nine people have signed up as Faithful Fivers, and contributions to date are \$1,670. There are currently three phone shifts open as well as a need for substitute volunteers. Maury asked members to remind their groups to send in Gratitude Month collections as soon as possible.

Central Office Committee: David P. gave the report. Due to a happy circumstance, there is a need to define a medical leave policy for CO employees. Several COC members agreed to look at examples of other non-profit organizations and draft a policy for review. Part-time and fill-in options for the upcoming medical leave were discussed. Candidates for the Treasurer's position will be scheduled for interviews. The COC discussed the question of adding a sobriety requirement for the Treasurer's position, but deferred it to the By-Laws Review Committee.

B. Action Items

Nominating Committee: Proposed By-laws Changes: IFB By-Laws currently provide that COC members elected to fill out a partial term are ineligible for election to a full term afterward. There is a proposal to change this provision and allow a COC member to be eligible to serve a full term after having served a partial term. The proposed change must be read at three separate meetings before it can be voted on. It was read for the third time at this meeting. The proposed change was voted on and passed with 45 in favor, 0 opposed and 2 abstentions.

C. Ad Hoc Committee Reports:

Outreach Committee: Steve R. gave the report. The committee is developing a pitch for presentations at group meetings, especially those that do not currently have IFB representatives. In addition the committee is working on a satisfaction survey. The next meeting date was changed to Tuesday, December 7 to avoid a conflict with the Holiday Party.

Literature Review Committee: Gary D. reported that the committee continues to work on standardizing the language and format of the literature and is considering a request to develop a piece on the history of Central Office. They declined the request to reprint the articles on Spirituality that ran in the June 2004 issue of *The Point* as a separate piece of literature. The committee also contributes a monthly article for *The Point*. The committee meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

Orientation Committee: Tim M. reported that new IFB members are required to attend an orientation meeting before they are eligible to vote. The orientation of new IFB members takes place at 6:00 pm, one hour prior to the monthly IFB meeting.

The Point Committee: Steve R. gave the report. He clarified that articles reflecting various religious traditions do not constitute endorsement of specific religious beliefs and that there is a disclaimer that appears on the cover of every issue. *The Point* will be doing a series of articles on The Traditions, beginning in the January issue. Persons interested in submitting articles should contact Steve at 415/821-1838.

Website Committee: Michael R. gave the report. The committee continues to develop the new website.

12th Step Committee: No report. The committee meets the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

Special Events Committee: David B. gave the report. Scheduled upcoming events include a Trusted Servant Workshop on February 19, a dance on April 16 and a bingo event on June 18. The committee is considering having six annual events that fall on the same date each year in hopes of

avoiding scheduling events that conflict with other AA related events. There is a need for a member from Marin County to serve on the committee.

Special Needs Committee: Pene P. gave the report. Ray M. and Pene P. attended the November meeting of the Outreach Committee. Steve R. will be the liaison from the Outreach Committee. The Special Needs Survey is now available online and copies are also available for IFB members to pass out to their groups. The survey results may produce a list of AA members who are able to provide rides to and from meetings or help with other special accessibility needs. Sutter Street Beginners meeting, the meeting with ASL translation, needs support. Beginning in January there will be a Wheelchair Access Assessment project. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 4 at 6:00 p.m. at the Central Office.

Archives Committee: Lynnore G. gave the report. The committee continues to catalog materials and is establishing a database. The committee meets the third Monday of the month at 3:00 p.m. at the Central Office.

D. IFB Standing Committee Reports:

Teleservice: The committee needs extra volunteers for the Christmas holiday. There is also a need for volunteers on weekends. There is also a need for two volunteers to serve as Weekly Coordinators. The next orientation meeting is Monday, December 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office. The regular committee meetings are on the third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

PI/CPC: No report. The committee meets the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Central Office.

D. Group Rep Reports:

No reports.

E. Non-IFB Liaison Reports

General Service, SF: Mikey B. reported that elections were held at the November meeting. Two-thirds of the positions were filled at the meeting. Elections will be completed at the December meeting. There is an ad hoc subcommittee working on restructuring the San Francisco District. The committee meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1111 O'Farrell. Orientation is at 7:00 p.m. and business meeting is at 8:00 p.m.

General Service, Marin: No report. The committee meets the third Monday of the month at 9 Ross Valley Road, San Rafael. GSR Sharing: 7:00 p.m. District meeting: 8:00 p.m.

Teleservice, Marin: Omar C. reported that elections will be held in December. The committee meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael.

PI/CPC, Marin: No report. The committee meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:15 p.m. at 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael.

Bridging the Gap: No report. The SF committee meets the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. 1111 O'Farrell, San Francisco. The Marin committee meets the second Wednesday of the month at 6:45 p.m. at 1411 Lincoln, San Rafael.

He/I: Written report. Income and Expense reports were included with the written materials distributed at the meeting. The SF Committee meets the last Thursday of the month at 1751 Sacramento St., SF. Orientation is at 7:15 p.m. The Marin committee meets the second Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at Lagunitas and Shady Lane, Ross.

Spirit of San Francisco: A flyer was distributed at the meeting announcing that there will be a fundraiser dance on New Year's Eve at 1111 O'Farrell Street.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, January 5, 2005 at First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin at Geary at 7:00 p.m.

Step 10 & 11 Outline

Continued from page 15

II. ELEVENTH STEP

At night, we constructively review our day.

1. Were we resentful?
2. Were we selfish?
3. Were we dishonest?
4. Were we afraid?
5. Do we owe an apology?
6. Have we kept something to ourselves that should be discussed with another person at once?
7. Were we kind and loving toward all?
8. What could we have done better?
9. Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time?
10. Were we thinking of what we could do for others?
11. Were we thinking of what we could pack into the stream of life?

Be careful not to drift into:

1. Worry
2. Remorse
3. Morbid reflection

"... for that would diminish our usefulness to others."

(Big Book p. 86)

After making our review we:

1. Ask for forgiveness.
2. Inquire what corrective measures should be taken.

On awakening, we:

1. Ask God to direct our thinking.
2. Ask that our thinking be divorced from:
 - self-pity
 - dishonest or self-seeking motives

"Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives."

(Big Book p. 86)

Then we:

1. Think about the twenty-four hours ahead.
2. Consider our plans for the day.

When we face indecision in thinking about our day and are unable to determine which course to take, we ask God for:

1. Inspiration
2. An intuitive thought or a decision

Then we:

1. Relax
2. Take it easy
3. Don't struggle

"We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while. What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind...we find that our thinking will be more and more on the plane of inspiration."

(Big Book, pp. 86-87)

We conclude the period of meditation with a prayer asking that we:

1. Be shown all through the day what our next step is to be.
2. Be given whatever we need to take care of problems.
3. Have freedom from self-will.

We:

1. Never pray for our own selfish ends.
2. Never make requests for ourselves only, unless others will be helped.
3. Ask our spouses or friends to join us in morning meditation.
4. If we belong to a denomination that requires morning devotion, we attend to that.
5. Select and memorize a few set prayers that emphasize AA principles.
6. Read helpful books.

As we go through the day, we:

1. Pause when agitated or doubtful.
2. Ask for the right thought or action.
3. Constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show.
4. Humbly say to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done."

"We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions. We become much more efficient. We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves."

It works—it really does"

(Big Book, p. 88)

2005 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Ever gotten a DUI?

The 2005 International Convention Coordinator at GSO has requested our continued support in informing the AA fellowship "about obtaining the appropriate papers to get across the border into Canada if members have any criminal convictions in their past including DUI's". This process can take up to six months – or more – and the convention is now only six months away.

Much more information is available at Central Office or on the AAWS website: www.aa.org – see "Frequently Asked Questions – Travel to Canada". And please inform the members of your groups.

Financial Statement

October 2004 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	<u>Oct 04</u>	<u>Jan - Oct 04</u>		<u>Oct 04</u>	<u>Jan - Oct 04</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			Professional Fees		
Income			Accounting	0.00	1,100.00
Group Contributions			Computer Consulting	0.00	817.72
Honors	0.00	260.22	Total Professional Fees	0.00	1,917.72
Group Contributions - Other	13,160.80	116,216.56	Rent - Office	3,583.75	35,837.50
Total Group Contributions	13,160.80	116,476.78	Rent - Other	0.00	650.00
Individual Contributions			Repair & Maintenance	305.26	1,987.22
Faithful Fiver	390.00	1,215.00	Security System	0.00	301.50
Honorary Contributions	404.45	3,304.15	Special Events	0.00	571.20
Individual -Unrestricted	169.43	5,253.39	Telephone	520.98	5,175.86
Total Individual Contributions	963.88	9,772.54	Travel	378.79	741.99
Gratitude Month			Training	0.00	114.67
Gratitude Month -Individual	2,000.00	2,000.00	Utilities	206.77	2,048.21
Gratitude Month-Groups	185.00	1,983.22	Total Expense	14,849.56	161,750.66
Total Gratitude Month	2,185.00	3,983.22	Net Ordinary Income	4,226.95	-7,734.34
Newsletter Subscript.	111.00	1,119.00	Other Income/Expense		
Special Event Income	0.00	2,862.75	Other Income		
Sales - Bookstore	8,004.29	75,641.17	Other Income	0.00	4,833.43
Total Income	24,424.97	209,855.46	Interest Income	47.35	566.03
Cost of Goods Sold			Total Other Income	47.35	5,399.46
Cost of Books Sold	5,348.46	55,839.14	Other Expense		
Total COGS	5,348.46	55,839.14	Depreciation Expense	408.17	4,081.70
Gross Profit	19,076.51	154,016.32	Total Other Expense	408.17	4,081.70
Expense			Net Other Income	-360.82	1,317.76
IFB Literature	0.00	285.38		<u>\$ 3,866.13</u>	<u>\$ (6,416.58)</u>
Bad Checks	-45.57	-27.07			
Employee Expenses					
Wages & Salaries	7,200.00	71,890.43			
Employer Tax Expenses	577.57	7,047.11			
Health Benefits	712.00	7,024.00			
Retirement/Annuity Expense	0.00	7,666.67			
Workers Comp Ins.	0.00	1,988.55			
Total Employee Expenses	8,489.57	95,616.76			
ASL Expense					
ASL Other	130.00	205.00			
ASL- Net- Fri All Grps	0.00	3,478.80			
Total ASL Expense	130.00	3,683.80			
Bank Charges					
Cr Card Fees	106.51	1,048.93			
Bank Charges - Other	45.60	323.70			
Total Bank Charges	152.11	1,372.63			
Equipment Lease	569.62	5,226.58			
Filing/Fees	33.50	189.00			
Insurance	100.55	1,005.50			
Internet Expense	0.00	215.40			
Miscellaneous Expense	0.00	64.11			
Office Supplies	448.35	3,380.40			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	0.00	600.00			
Postage - Other	0.00	770.45			
Total Postage	0.00	1,370.45			
Shipping	-24.12	21.85			

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