

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

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

# The Point

June 2005

A publication  
of the Intercountry 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 Intercountry  
Fellowship of Alcoholics  
Anonymous (San Francisco and  
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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.*

## Founders' Day: The Long Day of Grace *by Steve R.*



Dr. Bob

BILL W.

On an ordinary morning it would be unremarkable for a wife and a houseguest to escort a physician to the hospital where he would perform surgery. But this would be no ordinary day. The friend produced a "goofball" and a bottle of beer, which the jittery surgeon consumed to settle his nerves. The wife and friend returned home and waited long, anxious hours for the doctor's sober return. Following the procedure, the doctor busied himself around town with amends and restitution for twenty-five years of alcoholic behavior.

Thus Alcoholics Anonymous was born on June 10, 1935, as documented in our literature. It was the day of Dr. Robert Smith's last drink and the day of William Wilson's first success using the techniques of identification and disease theory, while downplaying religious preaching. Two long years would pass before they looked back together and confidently acknowledged that A.A. was a growing force, by then having reached forty hard-core cases and thirty higher-bottom alcoholics.

Only an astonishing string of events could have resulted in Bill W. and Dr. Bob meeting in the first place, much less sticking around for the miracle of what we now call Founders' Day.

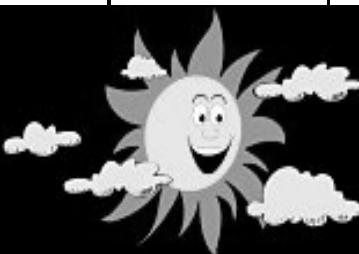
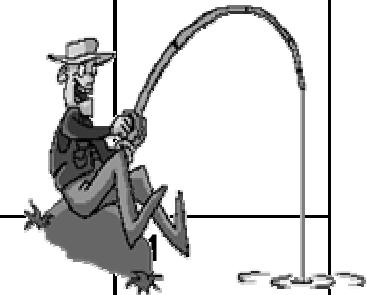
Bill's lonely, precarious Saturday in the hotel lobby on May 11 is well known, when he hesitated between a seductive bar scene and the church directory on display. Two less familiar things happened then. Bill became aware *for the first time* that to stay sober he needed another alcoholic as an *equal*. Then, Bill, five months sober in the New York Oxford Group, randomly chose the strongest "Grouper" from the roster of Akron ministers. The good Rev. Tunks provided a list of ten contacts who didn't pan out, but one person provided an eleventh name – a "most-surrendered" member who had been working with Dr. Bob and his drinking for more than two years.

When Bill called Henrietta S. and introduced himself as "an Oxford Grouper and a rum-hound from New York," she considered it "like manna from heaven." Bob met Bill the next evening after telling his wife, Anne, that he'd "make it snappy – fifteen minutes of this stuff, tops." Yet he stayed with Bill for over five hours and *for the first time* Bob talked with an alcoholic equal and heard the obsession-plus-allergy concept.

Bill later wrote that on that first night together "the spark was struck" in realizing how to approach alcoholics: identification first, disease aspect next, and *then* the spiritual side. We can also see the seeds of A.A.'s eventual split from the Oxford Group (OG) – after two years in New York and about four years in the Midwest – in the strong secular emphasis evident in the conversation. Initially, all alcoholics would

*(Continued on page 6)*

# June 2005....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1 FIRST WED</b> 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.)	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>5</b>	<b>6 FIRST MON</b> Archives Committee, Central Office, 6:00 pm  <b>Spirit of SF Committee</b> , Central Office, 7:30 pm	<b>7</b>	<b>8 SECOND WED</b> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm  <b>Marin Bridging the Gap</b> 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 6:45 pm	<b>9 SECOND THU</b> Website Committee Central Office, 6 pm	
<b>12</b>	<b>13 SECOND MON</b> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 7 pm	<b>14 SECOND TUE</b> SF Bridging The Gap 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF, 6:30 pm  <b>SF General Service</b> 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF Orientation: 7 pm Meeting: 8 pm  <b>Marin H&amp;I</b> Lagunitas & Shady Ln Ross, 7 pm	<b>15 THIRD WED</b> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm	<b>16 THIRD THU</b> Outreach Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19 THIRD SUN</b> Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida SF 1 pm	<b>20 THIRD MON</b> SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm  <b>Marin General Service</b> 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael GSR Sharing: 7 pm District Meeting: 8 pm	<b>21 THIRD TUE</b> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo, 7:30 pm	<b>22</b>	<b>23 FOURTH THU</b> Marin PI Committee 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael—Alano Club 7:15 pm	<b>24</b>	<b>25 FOURTH SAT</b> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 10 am Business Meeting: 12:30 pm
<b>26 FOURTH SUN</b> Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush, SF 5:30 pm	<b>27</b>	<b>28 FOURTH TUE</b> Special Needs Committee, 6:30 pm Special Events Committee Central Office, 7:30 pm  <b>Marin Teleservice</b> 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30 pm	<b>29</b>	<b>30 LAST THU</b> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. Orientation: 7:15 pm Business Meeting: 8pm		



# MEETING CHANGES

## New Meetings:

Mon	6:00 pm	SOMA	LIVING SOBER ON SIXTH STREET, Bayanihan House, 88 6th St., Basement
Tue	7:30 am	Bernal Hts	BERNAL NEW DAY 515, Cortland Ave./ Andover (SD)
Thu	7:30 am	Bernal Hts	BERNAL NEW DAY 515, Cortland Ave./ Andover (Di, Bk)

## Meeting Changes:

From Wed, June 1 to Tue, June 7 SOBER ACROSS THE BOARD meetings at 8:30am at 366 Eddy St. will be canceled due to construction.

Wed 8:00 pm Mill Valley MILL VALLEY GAY/ LESBIAN ALL ARE WELCOME, 8 Olive St./ Throckmorton (was Mill Valley Gay)  
 Thu 6:00 pm SOMA RED ROAD HEALING CIRCLE 555 De Haro St. (Pioneer Sq. Bldg.)  
 No meeting on 3rd Thu. of the month (was Wed. 6pm @ 390 4th St)

Sat 6:00 pm Mission BIRTHDAY PARTY SHARING OUR SOBRIETY 601 Dolores/ 19th St., Last Saturday (was 7:00 pm)

## No Longer Meeting:

Tue 10:30 am MOM AND BABY A.A., Neighborhood Varies

**Please note: At the time of the publication of this issue, all meetings are scheduled to return to 7th & Irving at their regularly scheduled times on June 1, 2005. Please check our website at [www.aASF.org](http://www.aASF.org) or call Central Office at 415-674-1821 for current information about any meetings.**

**Please Note:** The Central Office occasionally receives reports that meetings listed in our schedules are not there. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken—and sometimes not. The office relies primarily on information that is given to us by A.A. 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, 415-674-1821. If we hear no objections during the month following publication here, the meeting will be assumed disbanded and removed from the schedule. **Thank You!**

## Recently Registered Trusted Servants

April 2005 We'd like to thank and recognize the 12 San Francisco Trusted Servants and six Marin Trusted Servants who registered with Central Office during March 2005.

### San Francisco:

AA As You Like It Tue. 5:30pm; Brokers Open Book Tue. 1:30pm; Each Day a New Beginning Tue. 7am; Early Joyous & Free Thur. 7am; Living Sober on Sixth Street Mon. 6pm; New Hope Big Book Mon. 6:30pm; Red Road Healing Circle Thur. 6pm; Richmond Step Study Mon. 7:30pm; SFPOA Thur. 7pm; Sober at State Wed. 12:10pm; Steppin' Up Tue. 6:30pm; Valencia Smokefree Fri. 6pm;

Marin: Day at a Time Sat. 6:30am; Fairfax Friday Night Fri. 8:30pm; Intimate Feelings Sat. 10am; Mill Valley Gay/ Lesbian All Are Welcome Wed. 8pm; Twice Blessed Wed. 7:30pm; Wednesday Sundowners Wed. 6pm.

## 'Artists & Writers' meeting of AA presents

### Benefit Talent Show and Raffle for Central Office

### DRUNKS ON DISPLAY

Saturday, July 16th  
 7:30-10:00pm  
 Doors Open at 7:00pm

All Saints Church  
 1350 Waller Street  
 (between Ashbury and Masonic)  
 Suggested Donation \$5.00

## Group Speakers for June 2005

### BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

DATE	SPEAKER	FROM
6/05	Doug O.	San Bruno
6/12	Julian	San Bruno
6/19	Bob F.	Sunshine Group, San Mateo
6/26	Frank S.	Back to the World, Burlingame

### TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
6/07	Steven F.	Huntington Square	6/1/84
6/14	Ramona	First Place	11/17/99
6/21	Paul R.	A Step Beyond	6/5/86
6/28	Shirley	Mid-morn Support	12/28/68

### FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

1101 O'Farrell, Urban Life Center, San Francisco  
 Friday, 8:30 pm

DATE	HOST GROUP	SPEAKER
6/03	Miracles off 24th St.	Lisa R. San Rafael
6/10	Ten Years After	Eileen C., Chino Hills
6/17	Progress Not Perfection	TBA
6/24	TBA	Margie A., East Bay

### Recent Deaths

Tom F.



Dr. Bob                    Bill W.

## Founders' Day Celebration

Saturday,  
 June 18, 2005

6:00 pm: A.A. Archives & Fellowship

6:30 pm: Spaghetti Feed/ Potluck

8:00 pm: A.A. Meeting-Oldtimers' Panel  
 Dance to Follow!

\$8 per person/ \$15 per couple

Presented by the I.F.B. and S.F. General Service

The Women's Building, 3543 18th St./ Valencia  
 More info and tickets at [ohmout@aol.com](mailto:ohmout@aol.com);  
 650-222-7227



## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: Who Runs A.A.? You do!

To: The trusted servants of the San Francisco and Marin A.A. Fellowship

From: The Intercounty Fellowship of A.A.

Re: 2005 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held June 1, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at 1187 Franklin St., SF

- Annual Report to the Fellowship
- Vote on Bylaws changes
- Seating of new Intergroup Reps

PLEASE HELP US ENSURE THAT EVERY A.A. GROUP IS REPRESENTED IN DETERMINING THE POLICIES TO OPERATE THE CENTRAL OFFICE BY HAVING YOUR GROUP SEND A DELEGATE TO THIS MEETING.

Call Central Office if you have any questions:  
 (415) 674-1821

## Founders' Day

(continued from page 1)

join the OG, but the objectives soon diverged: sobriety vs. salvation. The OG sought public visibility and would soon attract political controversy. Dr. Bob told his daughter on the night he met Bill, "Members of the Oxford Group just didn't have the same type of problem."

In the three weeks that followed, Bill moved in and observed with Bob and Anne the OG's morning practice of meditation, religious reading, "guidance" and discussion. One morning Bob announced his desire to attend the American Medical Association convention in Atlantic City as he did annually. Anne was aghast, remembering twenty debacles in twenty years. Bill encouraged him, saying alcoholics need to "live in the world." Bob attended and promptly went on a five-day bender, returning to Akron in a blackout.

Anne and Bill swung into action while Dr. Bob's medical practice hung in the balance, and for three days they tapered him off with a concoction of tomatoes, sauerkraut, and corn syrup with an occasional beer chaser. And so arrived the early hours of the momentous day.

The two men lay together in the same room, wide awake, little realizing their day wouldn't really end until Bob cautiously brought the Midwest groups' support to the ratification of the Twelve Traditions at the first 1950 convention, in Cleveland, and until he privately approved our Conference structure shortly before his death that year.

Dr. Bob broke the silence, turning to Bill. "I am going through with this."

"You mean you are going through with the operation?" Bill asked.

"I have placed both the operation and myself in God's hands. I'm going to do what it takes to get sober and stay that way."

To our great benefit, Bob did go through with it, this alcoholic "thing" he and Bill had been talking about... and he never attended another AMA convention. 

## Gearing up for the 2005 International Convention of A.A.

by Kathleen C.

Toronto, CANADA—This city is gearing up for the arrival of 50,000 A.A. members from around the world, for the June 30-July 3, 2005 International Convention, celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the founding of A.A.

A.A.s will share their experience, strength and hope in meetings, panels, workshops, and over coffee, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, the SkyDome, and at other locations throughout this exciting city. The fellowship begins Thursday night with a "Party in the Park" and continues through the Sunday Big Meeting in the Stadium. There are also many Al-Anon and Alateen programs Friday and Saturday.

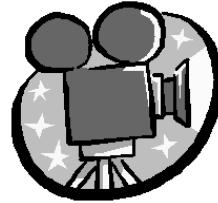
Toronto A.A. is now training 2500 volunteers to be at the Convention sites to meet, greet, give directions, solve problems, and do "all the things that friends do for each other."

Meetings and panels will address such topics as the Steps, Traditions, staying sober over time, sex and security in sobriety, the home group, unity recovery and service, H.A.L.T., A.A. in various parts of the world, laughter in sobriety, making amends, spirituality, and a myriad of other subjects. A.A.s will meet in English, American Sign Language, Portuguese, Japanese, Polish, German, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, French and Spanish.

The Preliminary Program of meetings, panels, workshops and online registration is available at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org). Onsite registration at the Convention Centre in Toronto is \$95.00 U.S. 

## Morbid Reminder of the Effects of Alcoholism

by Anonymous



I recently watched *Leaving Las Vegas* starring Nicolas Cage and Elizabeth Shue for the second time. The first time I viewed this film it was in the theatre and I'm certain I went out drinking after it. This time, however, I saw a whole different film.

The film is about a man, named Ben, bent on self-destructing after losing his wife and child. He deals with the pain of loss like I used to – drowning in alcohol. After losing another job because of his drinking, he decides to make one last, final geographic and go to Las Vegas to drink himself to death. Many of the scenes that follow are stark reminders of what it was like for Ben (and me) – nervousness, desperation, sweating profusely, making sure there was enough money for the next drink, etc. A bartender in one of the scenes even tells Ben, "If you could see what I see, you wouldn't be doing this to yourself." I wonder how many bartenders felt that way about me in those bottoming-out days.

Ben ends up having a chance meeting with a Vegas prostitute, Sera, who is dealing with some of her own demons by allowing men to abuse her. The

*(Continued on page 10)*

# Dear Alky

For a more in depth discussion, CALL YOUR SPONSOR!

**Dear Alky,**  
**My head is starting to spin this spring because many responsibilities are coming due at the same time. Briefly, my house is a mess and starting to fall down, the scope of my service commitments is expanding, I need to replace lost income as my partner goes to school full-time, my relatives back east are aging and dying, and my own health needs long-term analysis and decision-making. A great deal of guilt comes over me as I ponder paring down to a single, easy service position, but then another dirt devil rolls by.**

**-Dusty**

Dear Dusty,  
 Welcome to life, sober style. It's not easy sometimes, is it? But let's start with gratitude: at least you have a house that can fall down.

(For a quick gratitude check, sponsor a homeless alcoholic.) You have a partner and relatives who love you, right? Now, where did all this "stuff" – including the bedevilements – come from? Hint: not you or me. My sponsor reminds me that a higher power runs life. Any "managing" I do is doomed to failure, because it evolves from the alcoholism-infected ego, which operates from fear. The antidote is love and faith, states we achieve through working the Twelve Steps and maintain through prayer, meditation – and, yes, service. Why not ask for your higher power's help, and that of beloved A.A. friends, even as you do A.A. service and attend to life's demands? That way lies relief, and in relief lies another day sober.

**-Alky**



**Dear Alky,**  
**I am a sober guy and am now responsible for assisting my ailing father, who is still a practicing alcoholic. His alcoholism is affecting my sobriety. How do I make sure my sobriety comes first and still help my Dad?**

**-Sonny Boy**

Dear Sonny Boy,  
 The A.A. preamble tells us that "our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety," and the *Big Book* reminds us on p. 77 that "our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." Our sober job, then, is to provide loving



**Dear Friends,**  
*I'm grateful for the chance to serve you by passing on what has been so freely given me. But this is one alcoholic's experience; be sure to check things out with your sponsor, other A.A.s, friends and spiritual advisors.*  
**-Alky**

service whenever and wherever we're asked. A tall order? You bet – especially, at times, with family. But to shrink from service is to risk being blindsided by alcoholism – including, in the end, drinking. With your dad in mind, you might try repeating the fourth step prayer on p.67 of the Big Book – "This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God, save me from being angry. Thy will be done" – as well as the serenity prayer. And be sure to maintain your steady diet of A.A. meetings, calls to your sponsor and service commitments. Perhaps then you'll be able to offer, as Bill W. liked to put it, "the love that asks no reward."

**-Alky**



**Dear Alky,**  
**I've been working on my ninth step and don't feel ready to make amends to my dad. There was a lot of violence between us while I was growing up and I'm not ready to forgive him. Do you have any suggestions that might help me gain some willingness to make amends?**

**-Daddy's Girl**

Dear Daddy's Girl,  
 Perhaps you might first ask yourself, "Am I willing to drink over my resistance to freeing myself from resentment through forgiving my father?" Like you, I balked when my first sponsor suggested that I put my dad at the top of my Eighth Step list and become open to mending a long estrangement. But, willing to do anything to beat alcoholism, eventually I took the suggestion. Each day I prayed both for willingness to make amends and for Dad's happiness. I examined my selfish motives in having maintained the estrangement, and prayed to have them removed. Finally, I softened and contacted Dad. We had a wonderful time and became fast friends. Three months later, unexpectedly, he died of a heart attack.

To this day I'm grateful to A.A. for letting Dad and me reconcile through the power of the steps. So, D.G., you might also ask yourself, "Am I willing to lose my father to my own stubbornness?" Then go from there, in consultation with your sponsor and others. Remember that our aim is to be helpful and loving, that in forgiveness we find "a new freedom" – and that your dad is imperfect, just like you and me.

**-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—**

Joe G. 415.350-0373

#### **VICE CHAIR—**

Steve R. calmont1@aol.com

#### **TREASURER**

Danna P. dannajp@earthlink.net

#### **RECORDING SECRETARY**

Don B. 415.777-9374

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

#### **CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE**

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#### **12th STEP COMMITTEE**

Rudi D. rudral7@comcast.net

#### **ARCHIVES COMMITTEE**

Lynnore G. lynnrel@aol.com

#### **LITERATURE COMMITTEE**

Steve N. snolan12000@yahoo.com

#### **ORIENTATION COMMITTEE**

Tim M. gryffindor-house@earthlink.net

#### **OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

Lou H. ljhmarin@hotmail.com

#### **THE POINT**

Steve R. calmont1@aol.com

#### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

David B. ohmout@aol.com

#### **SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE**

Pene P. 415.200-6261

#### **WEBSITE COMMITTEE**

Michael R. michaelr@aaf.org

#### **SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE**

Rick P./Mary P. sfteleservice@aaf.org

#### **SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE**

Laura N. 415.931-2567

## **Feature Story**

# **I Stopped in Time... Thanks to Him** *by Patty Mc.*

The *Big Book* introduces the second set of stories by describing “the fortunate ones” among us who came to A.A. early enough to be “saved years of infinite suffering.” While my dad wasn’t so lucky, I’m pretty sure I have him to thank for being one of those people myself.

My dad, John Mc., was a binge drinker, and his binges were hideous. When he was sober, we could set our clocks by his routine. When he was drinking, the routine was gone.

We knew a binge had started when he’d stumble in, hours late from work, stinking of booze and often passing out before making it to the bedroom. Within a couple of days he’d be missing work. By the end of a run, all the money was gone, he’d shamed himself and our family in front of our neighbors, and we’d suffered weeks of chaos, violence, and insanity.

As I write this, I find myself amazed, again, at the miracle of my dad’s recovery. It was indeed a happy ending but it didn’t happen overnight. For years he went in and out of A.A., years that included financial ruin, jail terms and a near divorce from my mom. He’d cry and he’d promise, hating himself and everything he had become.

At the end, he had been in jail nearly six months when he was released early for good behavior to attend his sister’s funeral. The day he returned from the East Coast, he and I were home alone. From the room next to mine, I began to hear sobbing from such deep sorrow it scared me a little. But even at twelve years old, I knew something was different, something I now have a name for: surrender. And I knew my father was finished drinking. Even when he had his one last bout, I could tell it wasn’t the same. His heart wasn’t in it. It was brief and then it was over. And his recovery had begun.

I watched my unemployed, broken dad go to A.A. meetings every day, do service and all kinds of funny things I know now as amends. One time, he brought home a raggedy little kid whose mother was trying to sober up. The kid was so young he couldn’t even tell us his name, so my dad just called him “Sonny.” My dad gave him a bath and made him lunch.

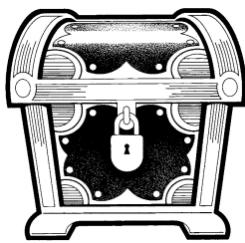
Our broken dad began to reclaim his life. He got a job, and then a better job. Our parents rebuilt their marriage and our home became a place of order and predictability. I learned a life lesson I would need later on: that people really can change and that Alcoholics Anonymous had made it possible for my dad.

Then it was my turn. Eventually, I, like you, couldn’t imagine a day without alcohol. My life wasn’t even trashed yet, but I knew I was an alcoholic. I also knew there was a place for me in A.A. when I was ready. One night, through the blur of white wine, I found the phone book in my lap and I looked up the number for A.A.

My parents used to tell us that home was a place where they always had to let you in. I’m grateful every day of my life that I came home to A.A. And thanks to my dad, I knew the way. 

# Treasures of the Twelve & Twelve: Tradition Six

by Leslie F.



*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, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.*

Tradition Six helps to safeguard the A.A. name by keeping it out of controversy.

I heard in an A.A. Big Book seminar that in 1937, the founders got together and decided three things:

1. They would build a chain of hospitals across the U.S. to help alcoholics
2. They would hire paid missionaries to carry the A.A. message
3. They would write a book

They decided to write the book first to make money to build the hospitals and hire the missionaries.

In the *Twelve & Twelve* Bill describes the things they dreamed of doing in the beginning. "People needed to be told what alcoholism was, so we'd educate the public, even rewrite school and medical textbooks." And, "We seriously thought of rewriting the laws of the land, and having it declared that alcoholics are sick people." Most people now have a good idea of what alcoholism is and the definition of alcoholism has been changed in medical textbooks to reflect the disease theory. It's widely accepted in the medical community that alcoholism is a disease and that people who are alcoholic are not weak-willed, but are "bodily and mentally different from our fellows."

The *Twelve & Twelve* goes on to say, "No more would they [Alcoholics] be jailed; judges would parole them in our custody." In most meetings today, there are "slips" to sign. Some meetings have been so overwhelmed with signing slips that they have a "no slip-signing policy." I've attended meetings where the group conscious voted that they would not sign slips because they preferred people be there who want to be there and not because they've been court mandated. It's interesting how A.A. continues to evolve within the guidelines of the Traditions.

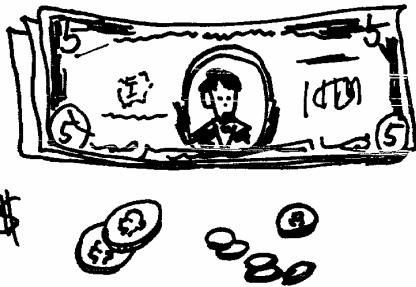
There's also the question of how Tradition Six fits into A.A. Clubs. The *Twelve & Twelve* states that we would

be "mired in politics" if an A.A. group was put into business. Too many A.A. busybodies would be trouble! "Even inside A.A. we found it imperative to remove the A.A. name from clubs and Twelfth Step houses." There is a document available from the GSO entitled *A.A. Guidelines: Clubs* which outlines information to help A.A. clubs maintain Tradition Six. "Even though a club is not A.A., many will think of the club as A.A. — particularly the non-A.A.s in your community. While it is suggested that the name of the club not include A.A., the club members stick carefully to A.A.'s Twelve Traditions and accept funds only from club members."

Finally, in the *Twelve & Twelve*, another illustration of how Tradition Six came about is told to us: "Years ago, this principle of 'no endorsement' was put to a vital test." A company who manufactured alcohol wanted to educate the public to drink responsibly. Who better to endorse them, but A.A. They found an A.A. member who seemed to fit the bill as their spokesperson. This man went to A.A. headquarters to find out if there was any reason he shouldn't take the job.

It seemed like a good idea at first; to educate the public about the dangers of overindulging in alcohol. After careful consideration, they realized that if A.A. began to endorse education in the name of one company, people would be coming out of the woodwork to get A.A. to endorse other points of view as well, "The ink wouldn't be dry on the first ad before an awful shriek would go up from the dry camp...Half the people in the country would think we'd signed up with the drys, the other half would think we'd joined the wets." It was clear that it would be a big mess if A.A. endorsed any educational project.

The pamphlet, *A.A. Tradition How it Developed*, sums up Tradition Six this way: "Briefly summarizing, I'm rather sure our policy with respect to 'outside' projects will turn out to be this: A.A. does not sponsor projects in other fields. But, if these projects are constructive and uncontroversial in character, A.A. members are free to engage in them without criticism if they act as individuals only, and are careful of the A.A. name."



## Faithful Fivers! Thanks for Your Support

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 to alcoholics who still suffer in the San Francisco and 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:

<b>AMI JOY Y.</b>	<b>LAURIE L.</b>
<b>BARBARA M.</b>	<b>LISA C.</b>
<b>BRUCE D.</b>	<b>MARGARITE S.</b>
<b>DAVID B.</b>	<b>MELINDA H.</b>
<b>DAVID B.</b>	<b>MICHAEL R.</b>
<b>DENNIS &amp; LUCY</b>	<b>MONIKA H.</b>
<b>FRANCES L.</b>	<b>NANCIE G.</b>
<b>GILES H.</b>	<b>PEGGY M.</b>
<b>HARRY M.</b>	<b>PETER F.</b>
<b>JANET B.</b>	<b>PHILIP G.</b>
<b>JERRY N.</b>	<b>RALPH P.</b>
<b>JIM H.</b>	<b>RICH G.</b>
<b>JOHN M.</b>	<b>RICHARD C.</b>
<b>KATE B.</b>	<b>SCOTT N.</b>
<b>KELLIE A.</b>	<b>STEVE A.</b>
<b>KRIS F.</b>	<b>WICKIE S.</b>



## A.A. On the Road: The Lower 48

by Lauren H.



I have done a lot of traveling in sobriety. I got sober at 22 and spent the first three years in New York City. I didn't travel much then but being there was an adventure. There were meetings to suit every type of person. I stuck to the East and West Village with the young people, punks and queers. It was my scene.

And it was quite a scene! We hung out in packs and went to a few meetings a night, always the same ones, but then we would go out to the nightclubs and stay out all night. We stayed sober in and out of meetings.

At three years sober, I put my few things in boxes and got on a bus bound for San Francisco. The meetings here seemed different from those in New York. Here they read all kinds of readings in the beginning of the meetings. In the New York meetings I went to, they only read the preamble and that was it. Other than that, the difference was really minimal. It was just a matter of getting familiar with the people and meeting places. It was really important that I establish a few regular meetings and start meeting people, which I did. Soon I felt right at home.

When I had eight years, I went on a Ulysses-type adventure. I was out to "find myself." I got rid of all my things and got a van. I left San Francisco and started down the coast. I went to meetings all along the way, from Santa Cruz with the little meeting house near the beach, to Big Sur with the meetings under the redwoods. Everywhere I went, meetings kept me connected to, not only my program, but people and society. Being on the road was very isolating. It was exciting too, don't get me wrong, but without the social vehicle of meetings, I was a little lost. So every time I hit a new town, I would call up the local hotline and find a meeting.

That lasted about three months and more than 6000 miles. I made it across the U.S. and back and went to meetings along my route. Each meeting reflected the particular area and culture. In the small-town meetings everyone knew each other and cross-talk was accepted. They would welcome me as a new person, and I would be asked to speak. The meetings in the larger towns were great places to establish social contacts. I would usually be invited out to coffee after the meeting. A few times I was extended an invitation to stay at someone's house.

The fellowship of A.A. has unconditionally welcomed me anywhere I have gone and in any condition I have arrived. Not only can I stay sober wherever I go, but I can find unconditional support and friendship. ■

## Morbid Reminder

(continued from page 6)

two end up attaching to each other in a codependent relationship and swirl toward their respective bottoms.

This film was good for me to see again after getting sober. The downward spiral of active alcoholism were portrayed very realistically, albeit with some Hollywood drama. It made me see what I could become very easily if I pick up that first drink and gave a taste of where I could end up. I need a healthy dose of a movie alcoholic sometimes to bring the closeness of that first drink into new perspective. ■

## Literature Review



### A.A. Comes of Age

by Adam A.

A.A. co-founder Bill W. is responsible for most of the content in *A.A. Comes of Age*. There probably isn't a better candidate to tell the story of A.A. than the man who was there from the beginning and in doing so Bill doesn't shy away from talking about his own missteps along the way. He recounts the time when the A.A. groups were struggling to come up with a title for the *Big Book*. His own suggestion for the title was "The B.W. Movement." We can all identify with the ego-driven alcoholic tendencies that resulted in such an idea. One of the charms of this book is that although the events and people it talks of are decades past, the humanness of it all is so similar to that of the A.A. we know today.

The book covers a lot of ground, not all of it is earth shattering. In parts it can seem like a laundry list of names of people and the places they were from. It's evident that Bill wanted to give credit to those who made valuable contributions to A.A., but it can get little tedious. Forge through these brief passages, and you'll find rich rewards – numerous pages that describe funny, inspiring and moving events.

In early July of 1955, St. Louis held a convention celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous. Five thousand A.A.s and their friends gathered. *A.A. Comes of Age* begins with a chapter by Bill who recalls the convention. He had anticipated that a proposal that A.A. members would vote on at the convention would be a momentous event in A.A. history and change the structure of the fellowship. In the three days prior to the vote Bill gave three talks spaced over three days, to be followed by speeches given by early A.A. members and friends of A.A., including doctors and clergy men who contributed to the growth of A.A.

These talks are edited and appear as the majority of the chapters in the book. Bill's three talks are entitled *Recovery, Unity and Service*, referring to the Three Legacies of A.A. and make up the greatest portion of the book. It is within these chapters that Bill reveals the main history of A.A., including his contact with the organizations and people who inspired the framework of A.A.. There is an in-depth account of Bill's own spiritual experience and his failed attempts to sponsor alcoholics. He recounts the fateful day in 1935 when he placed a telephone call from the lobby of the Mayflower hotel in Akron, Ohio and was put in touch with the fellow problem drinker who became affectionately known as Dr. Bob and with whom he would found the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Revealed in the book are the events of twenty years of the exciting and tumultuous growth of A.A. following Bill W. and Dr. Bob's historic meeting, including the details surrounding the creation of the *Big Book* the Twelve Steps and Traditions and other elements that make up A.A. as we know it today. Reading *A.A. Comes of Age* and getting a sense of the history of A.A. fosters a feeling of gratitude for those who came before us and placed such tools for living in our reach so that we could live happy, joyous and free. It serves as a reminder that we are now the guardians of those labored over traditions and the carriers of the A.A. message. 

## Literature Price Increases Coming in July

In July the price for all books except the *Big Book* (all formats) will be going up at Central Office. A.A. World Services is raising their prices, so the Central Office prices will go up to offset the increase. The table below shows the new book prices for the top 12 sellers. Call Central Office at 415-674-1821 for other books.

In July the annual subscription price for *The Point* will go up to \$12 per year. This is part two of a two-year plan to offset the increasing production prices.

When GSO can't meet expenses from voluntary contributions, it must rely on price increases to meet budget. Remember that putting \$2 in the basket at your meetings makes a big difference for GSO and all of the A.A. service entities! 

### 2005 Top 12 Sellers: Price Increase as of July 1

Item	Old Price	New Price
12&12 Hard Cover	6.50	7.70
12&12 Soft Cover	6.00	7.20
12&12 Pocket Edition	4.20	5.40
AA Comes of Age	7.80	9.00
As Bill Sees It - Hard Cover	7.20	8.40
As Bill Sees It - Soft Cover	6.75	7.90
Came to Believe	3.30	4.50
Daily Reflections	7.50	8.70
Dr. Bob & the Good Oldtimers	9.00	10.20
Experience, Strength & Hope	9.60	10.80
Living Sober	3.30	4.50
Pass It On	9.60	10.80

Call **415-674-1821** for other book prices.

# AA Group Contributions - March 2005

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	March 05	YTD	Name	March 05	YTD
<b>Fellowship Contributions</b>			Women on Monday M 7pm		79.79
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	26.00	85.40	Women's Step Study Group M 12pm		240.00
Contribution Box	45.36	120.93	<b>Total Marin Group Contributions</b>	\$2,330.98	\$10,183.19
Gay Newcomers Group	9.08	9.08			
IFB	96.16	256.38	<b>SF Group Contributions</b>		
Marin Teleservice		500.00	6am Marina Dock	72.00	72.00
Sunday Step Study	30.00	30.00	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	16.40	16.40
The Chosen Ones	20.00	20.00	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	20.71	53.99
Unidentified Group	69.75	881.27	A New Start F 830pm		111.06
<b>Total Fellowship Contributions</b>	\$296.35	\$1,903.06	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		67.00
<b>Honors</b>			AA Step Study Su 6pm		198.30
Endless Summer F 830pm	36.61	74.99	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	18.06	101.80
<b>Total Honors</b>	\$36.61	\$74.99	All Together Now Th 8pm		180.00
<b>Marin Group Contributions</b>			Alumni W 830pm	60.00	60.00
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am		200.00	Amazing Grace M 7pm	100.00	100.00
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm		66.13	Artists & Writers F 630pm		331.20
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		1412.00	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		141.95
Candlelight Group Sun 8pm		69.94	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		140.09
Day At A Time 7D 630am		198.51	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		40.80
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	275.00	275.00	Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		124.53
Fairfax Friday Night F 830pm		68.96	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm		188.37
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		120.00	Big Book Basics F 8pm	102.58	277.87
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	363.00	363.00	Big Book Study Su 11am		64.00
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		183.69	Blue Book Special Su 11am		97.42
Island Group Th 8pm		228.50	Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm		220.00
Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm		32.75	Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm		137.42
Living in the Solution F 6pm		306.00	CLAADAAGH Sat 815pm	40.00	40.00
Mill Valley 7D 7am		750.00	Cocoanuts Su 9am	53.21	53.21
Monday Blues M 630pm	500.00	500.00	Come N Get It F 630pm	54.00	54.00
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm	419.70	562.05	Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		180.00
Monday Night Women's M 8pm	164.09	164.09	Diamond Heights Tu 830pm	100.00	100.00
Newcomers Step M 730pm	270.85	270.85	Drive Thru W 1215pm		224.84
Noon Tu 12pm		219.50	Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		455.60
Pathfinders Tu 12pm		105.00	Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		488.06
San Geronimo Valley Book Study F 8pm		43.45	Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		304.00
Saturday Serenity Sa 8pm		100.00	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		254.58
Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		106.69	Early Start F 6pm	683.04	683.04
Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm		451.04	Easy Does It Tu 6pm		139.36
Sunday Express Sun 6pm		111.80	Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	180.00	498.80
Terra Linda Group Th 830pm	150.00	650.00	Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm	219.57	219.57
The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		96.00	Federal Speaker Su 12pm	201.53	201.53
Tiburon Beginners (Closed)		512.00	Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		23.61
Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		675.00	Fireside Chat Th 8pm	80.97	80.97
Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		225.00	Fireside F 830pm		94.00
TGI Tuesday Tu 6pm	51.60	51.60	First Place		39.60
The Fearless Searchers F 8pm	61.74	61.74	Four Forty Niners F 8pm		28.55
Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 8pm		500.00	Friday Knights Th 730am	12.93	12.93
Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm		63.11	Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		140.00
Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm	75.00	75.00	Friday Smokeless F 830pm	93.34	93.34
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		45.00	Happy Hour (S.F.) F 630pm		63.70
			Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm	603.00	603.00
			High Noon 5D 1215pm		298.70

Name	March 05	YTD	Name	March 05	YTD
High Noon Friday 1215pm	266.12	266.12	SFPOA Th 7pm		72.00
High Noon Monday 1215pm	159.07	327.71	Sisters In Sobriety M 7pm (SF)		25.00
High Noon Thursday 1215pm	258.64	258.64	Sober & Centered F 7pm		175.03
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm		571.26	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm	345.00	345.00
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm		246.00	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		59.68
High Sobriety M 8pm		327.60	Step Talk Su 830am		52.20
High Steppers W 7pm		301.75	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		85.00
Hilldwellers M 8pm		84.00	Steps to Freedom M 730pm		116.36
Home Group Sat 830pm	178.73	240.16	Stonestown M 8pm	101.17	101.17
How It Works Sat 2pm		62.94	Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm	40.33	40.33
Ingleside Beginners Su 5pm		33.00	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 1030am		908.63
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		244.42	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		60.00
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		503.77	Sundown WV 7pm		174.00
Let It Be Now F 6pm		100.00	Sundown Steps Th 630pm	25.00	25.00
Like A Prayer Su 4pm		128.57	Sunset 11'ers WV		52.65
Living Sober W 8pm		128.82	Sunset 9'ers F	60.00	197.13
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	120.18	120.18	Sunset 9'ers Su		262.78
Luke's Group W 8pm	40.00	40.00	Sunset 9'ers Tu	168.67	168.67
Lush Lounge Sa 2pm	67.80	264.40	Sunset 9'ers WV	27.59	86.28
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am	58.69	199.43	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		411.00
Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm		111.48	Surf Tu 8pm		650.39
Mission Terrace WV 8pm		122.90	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm	411.49	411.49
Monday At A Time M 1pm		30.00	Ten Years After Su 6pm		190.80
Monday Beginners M 8pm	330.00	330.00	The Pepper Group F 12pm		45.00
Monday Monday M 1215pm		216.41	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm		935.00
New Friday Big Book F 12pm		27.15	Transrecovery F 630pm		5.02
New Hope Big Book M 630pm		285.54	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	85.59	158.72
No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm		21.36	Waterfront Sun 8pm	510.00	510.00
No Reservation M 12pm	43.14	43.14	We Care Tu 12pm	120.00	120.00
Pax West M 12pm		136.44	Wednesday Noon Steps W 12pm		104.27
Pinehurst Tu 730pm		128.00	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	17.75	17.75
Rebound WV	25.00	25.00	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		304.00
Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm		50.00	Women's Promises F 7pm		186.00
Rose Garden Big Book Th 1205pm	52.14	52.14	Women Living Sober Sa 1030am		18.53
Rule 62 W 10pm	217.93	301.93	Women Who Drank Too Much Tu 615pm		63.20
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		124.80	Women Who Read	55.27	55.27
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	73.91	141.41	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		23.34
Seacliff Th 830pm		60.50	<b>Total SF Group Contributions</b>	\$6,715.31	\$22,627.56
Serenity House	100.00	600.00			
Sesame Step Tu 730pm	44.76	54.71	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$9,379.25	\$34,788.80

(Continued on p.14)

## Gratitude Month 2004—Groups

Group	March '05
<b>SF</b>	
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm	37.91
Stonestown M 8pm	102.40
Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm	80.20
Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am	29.00
<b>Total SF Gratitude Month</b>	\$249.51
<b>Total Gratitude Month 2004 for March</b>	\$249.51



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Source: <http://www.serenityfound.org/humor/humormain.html>

## CONTRIBUTIONS

to Central Office were made through  
May 15, 2005 honoring the following members:

### ONGOING MEMORIALS

Bill M. (Philadelphia 4 years)  
Bud C.  
Fran H.

### ANNIVERSARIES

Surf Group: Nina S. 43 years  
Stonestown: John C. 35 years  
West Portal: Cynny 20 years  
High Noon: Lew R. 1 year  
  
Jim H. 17 years  
Kellie A. 8 years  
Ken M. 33 years

## Individual Contributions March 2005

### HONORS

	50.00
	83.95
	25.00
	10.00
	25.00
	24.00
	13.00
	3.65
<b>Total HONORS</b>	<b>\$234.60</b>

### INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

	100.00
	44.00
	100.00
	25.00
	130.00
	50.00
	4.99
	3.37
<b>Total IND. CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$457.36</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$691.96</b>

## Moments of Clarity: *Three members share their experience*

### My Last Drink

By Kristen H.

To recall what *moment of clarity* truly means, I have to go back to my last drink. I'd hit my bottom a couple of weeks earlier with a suicide attempt and a 5150 psychiatric hospital stay. I'd admitted my alcoholism to myself and my counselor a couple of days earlier on the morning after a short-lived but pretty hard bender that left me—as they always did—in a state of utter panic and self-loathing. In those two dry days, I'd managed to convince myself that if I drank only champagne I would somehow be transformed into an utterly self-possessed, marvelously entertaining, mysterious and sexy *normal drinker*.

Thankfully, I ran out of champagne before it was possible to get totally obliterated, for I was able to hear a voice telling me that was to be my last drink. The voice was clear, and I somehow felt simultaneously lifted and beat down. I have since come to understand that this was my higher power communicating with me.

The moments of clarity I've experienced since that evening have not been as profound, but they've been numerous. I understand these instances as answers to my prayers. The more footwork I do, and the more I pray, the more often these answers come. God's answer isn't always what I want (actually, it's quite often far from it), but I find that when I listen, everything truly does work out to not only my benefit, but to the benefit of others. ■

### Blasting Through Denial

by Anonymous

It was my good fortune seventeen years ago to put my third step to a sudden and formidable test. A dear friend of thirteen years had finally agreed to make love with me. I'd been sober a little more than a year and our relationship seemed appropriate for casual intimacy. "Sure, Steve," she had said. "Just get a test." Great fun, I thought. I made the date with her for the evening my results were due.

Today I can still hear my physician's slow footsteps in the hallway and his split-second hesitation on the doorknob as he composed his thoughts. I knew I was HIV positive before he entered the room.

A soothing, gentle calm came over me then and has stayed with me on this matter all these years. I knew this was the power of the third step: it literally wasn't my life anymore. For the first time I felt free of anxiety when standing at a major crossroad, I felt confident, even serene. I soon made an informed, level-headed, spiritual decision and declined to medicate my condition. I thus avoided the treat-at-any-cost syndrome with its drug-resistant progression that trapped so many thousands in the early days of the epidemic.

(Continued on page 15)

## Blasting Through Denial

(continued from page 14)

This path isn't for everybody but my wild viral strain suits me just fine. My condition proved to be stable and I've lived to tell the tale.

My dear friend of now thirty years standing sure did me a favor in helping me blast through denial around my health and on other levels, like learning the value of friendship over sex. All in all, I'd have to agree with the saying, *life is what happens when we're busy making other plans.* 

## When I Was Wrong

by Anonymous

The young intern looked up at me wide-eyed. She wanted to know what I thought of her chances if she applied for a job with our company. I wanted to be honest. I didn't want her to be disappointed. I had her best interests at heart. So I destroyed her dream.

*"You know, we get applications from all over the country – from students at Harvard, Yale, Stanford, the cream of the crop. The competition is fierce. I don't know if you have a chance."*

I avoided looking at her as I said this and when I finished I glanced at her. She looked up from her computer. I saw tears streaming down her face.

*"I'm so sorry, you're terrific, it's just that there are so many other qualified people applying for the same jobs . . ."*

I trailed off lamely, turned and left her office.

Only later did I remember what my parents had said thirty years ago when I told them I was applying to an Ivy League college. I was working at the school as a secretary and learned that after a hundred years of being for men only, it was accepting women. When I told my parents of my hopes, Mom and Dad told me not to apply. They didn't want me to be disappointed. I seethed and swore that nothing would keep me out.

When the Admissions Office returned my application and check and told me not to waste my money, I called to say I was coming that fall, whether they admitted me or not. That got me an interview. I knew the college would give me the kind of education I wanted. I was determined to succeed. They admitted me and even gave me scholarships.

Thirty years later I had done the same thing to my intern that my parents had done to me. Without even thinking I had parroted their well-meaning old ideas about what someone could and couldn't do. I felt terrible.

A few months later, a chance came to encourage my intern. I didn't apologize, it didn't seem appropriate, but from then on I seized every opportunity to tell her how great she was and that nothing and nobody could prevent her from achieving her goals. She applied to our company and got the job she wanted. And I got a lesson in Step Ten. 

## Recovery ♦ Unity ♦ Service

### Teleservice is the easier, softer way



There are many opportunities to give back to fellow alcoholics in A.A. I heard others in the program who have more time than me talk about teleservice and how it helps them by helping others.

I liked the sound of this, so I attended an open training of the Teleservice Committee at Central Office (held the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.) and found out that I could participate on this committee easily. I could answer the phones for Central Office during their off hours from my home. All it took was about an hour of collecting and reading reference materials while providing this service and then signing up for an open shift or two.

All that is asked of me is to commit to one, 4-hour shift per month and stick close to a phone. Shifts are evenings, overnight, early mornings and other times when the Central Office is closed.

I can also come in to Central Office and help during office hours. I am currently working two early morning shifts per month. It works for me because I can get some work done at my home-based business while helping callers on issues from meeting locations to 12-Step calls.

It's always nice to get a heartfelt "thank you" from a fellow alcoholic looking for a meeting for that morning. And it may keep them away from that first drink.

All it takes is someone with an empathetic ear (we've all been there) and a desire to help. I am glad that I did the next right thing, listen to my Higher Power, and volunteer for Teleservice.

For information about volunteering with Teleservice, please call Central Office at 415-674-1821. 

# 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  
Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Ave., Sausalito, CA  
Wednesday, May 4, 2005**

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
Amber W.	Sisters Circle	A*	Greg S.	Beginner's Warmup	P
Anthony J.	Sesame Step	P	Greg S.	Keep Coming Back	P
Bill V.	Attitude Adjustment, Fairfax	A**	Heidi S.	Cow Hollow Young People's	A*
Brian C.	Mission Terrace	P	Jacqui G.	High Noon Thursday	A**
Dan Z.	Sunday Morn. Gay Men's Stag	P	Jim T.	First Place	P
Daniel B.	Too Early	A*	Joe G.	Beginners	A*
Danny F.	Each Day A New Beginning	A*	John B.	Rule 62	P
David B.	Beginner's Warmup	P	Johnny G.	High Noon Tuesday	A*
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P
David P.	Goodlands	A*	Kristine F.	Castro Discussion	A*
Don B.	Friday Fell Street	P	Larry L.	The 24 Hour Plan	A*
Charles M.	Founders Group	A*	Lillian R.	Women's Promises	P
Danna P.	Treasurer	P	Lou H.	Mill Valley 7AM	P
Dave F.	Reality Farm	A**	Lynnoore G.	Walk Of Shame	A*
Doug D.	As Bill Sees It Sat 11am	P	Martha C.	449'ers	A**
Edward F.	Happy Hour	A**	Marvin R.	Bernal Big Book	P
Francesca K.	West Portal	A*	Matt S.	Waterfront Group	A*
Gary D.	Work In Progress	A**	Maury P.	Office Manager/ On Leave	P
Gaspar L.	Keep It Simple	A**	Meredith R.	High Noon Friday	A*
Georgia L.	Friendly Circle Beginners	A*	Michael R.	Huntington Square	P
Grant D.	Ten Years After	A*	Michael S.	Sunset 9'ers Sat.	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		IFB Liaisons		
Brian H.	Living Sober with HIV Wed. 6:00 pm	Gilbert L.	Early Start Fri. 6:00 pm	Matt T.
Bruce K.	Sunset Speaker Step Sun. 7:30 pm	Justin S.	Alumni Wed. 8:30 pm	Trevor F.
Carol E.	High Noon Wednesday . 12:15 pm	Matt T.	Fairfax Friday Night Fri. 8:30 pm	Alternates
Eric S.	One Liners Thu. 8:30 pm	Nicholas S.	Sutter St. Beginners Sat. 6:00 pm	Dennis C.
David H.	Tuesday Downtown Tue. 8:00 pm			Jay L.
				Ten Years After

## May 2005 IFB Summary

Following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the May 2005 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:** Steve R. gave the report. The Annual Meeting of the IFB will be June 1, 2005. Committee Chairs are required to submit an Annual Report for their committees. In July, the IFB will be electing new officers for the 2005-2006 term, as well as at-large COC members. Volunteers are needed for committees. For more information about any of the committees, contact Joe G. or the Central Office.

**Treasurer's Report:** Danna P. gave the report. We had a net loss in March of (\$10,453), which was \$1,748 less than the budgeted net loss. Discretionary cash as of March 31, 2005 totaled \$28,895 and is almost

sufficient to pay expenses for the next two months. Discretionary cash decreased from last month due to funding \$7,200 into the Supplemental Compensation account. Our liability for Deferred Compensation increased by this amount. Inventory decreased by (\$1,557) due to the timing of our book orders.

**Central Office Manager's Report:** Peter M., a Central Office Special Worker, gave the report. Maury P., Central Office Manager, gave birth to a daughter on April 8. Congratulations! In Maury's absence Peter M. and Lauren H. are staffing the office. There is currently an open telephone shift at the Central Office from 10 a.m. to 12 noon every other Monday. Substitute telephone volunteers are needed to cover for scheduled volunteers who are going on vacation. Meetings before 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 7<sup>th</sup> and Irving have been forced to relocate or cancel due to construction. Meeting changes can be found on our website at [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org) or by calling the Central Office. The price of all books, with the exception of the Big Book, will increase effective July 1, 2005. The Central Office will be closed on Monday,

(Continued on page 17)

## IFB Summary (Continued from page 16)

May 30 for Memorial Day.

**Central Office Committee Report:** Steve S. gave the report. The COC met on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The Central Office is running smoothly during Maury P.'s leave of absence. The COC discussed a membership policy for *The Point* committee and determined that it is outside the COC's purview to interfere with another committee's affairs. *The Point* Committee is taking action to resolve the situation.

**B. Bylaws Reading:** The Bylaws require that changes to the Bylaws be read and considered at three consecutive IFB meetings before being voted on. Proposed changes to the IFB Bylaws were read and discussed for a second time. Proposed changes will be read and discussed for a third time at the next IFB meeting. Each bylaw change will be voted on separately.

### C. IFB Committee Reports

**Outreach Committee:** Lou H. gave the report. IFB members were encouraged to sign up to attend three AA meetings that do not have IFB representatives and make a pitch for the groups to elect an IFB representative. The committee has developed a packet of materials to be distributed at these meetings. The committee meets the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

**Literature Review Committee:** Steve N. gave the report. The committee continues its ongoing projects of writing literature reviews for *The Point*, keeping locally produced literature up to date, reviewing AA tapes and developing new pamphlets and flyers. The committee needs more members. The committee meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

**The Point Editorial Committee:** Steve R. gave the report. There are sufficient articles through July. There is a need for "on the road" articles from people who travel. A layout person is needed. The production team has turned over. The committee will do a group inventory on May 10, following the production meeting, in order to resolve a membership issue. The committee meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 5:00 p.m. at the Central Office.

**Orientation Committee:** Steve S. conducted the orientation meeting this month. The orientation of new IFB members takes place at 6:00 pm, one hour prior to the monthly IFB meeting.

**Website Committee:** Dan Z. gave the report. *The Point* can now be downloaded. Dan requested feedback from IFB members about the new website. Comments can be sent to website@aasf.org.

**12<sup>th</sup> 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:** Dave B. gave the report. The committee has lost two members and needs to replace them. The Founders' Day celebration is scheduled for June 18 at the Women's Building. At 6:00 p.m. there will be AA archives and fellowship, at 6:30 there will be a spaghetti feed and potluck, at 8:00 p.m. an AA meeting and a dance beginning at 9:00 p.m. The cost is \$8 per person and \$15 per couple. The AA meeting is free. June is Dave's last meeting as Special Events Chair. The committee meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

**Special Needs Committee:** Pene P. gave the report. The committee needs more members. The committee continues to survey meetings for wheelchair accessibility. The committee meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

**Archives Committee:** No report. The committee meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Central Office.

### D. IFB Standing Committee Reports

**SF Teleservice:** No report. The committee meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

### E. Non-IFB Liaison Reports

**General Service, SF:** Brian C. reported that General Service will make its decision about whether to make a financial contribution to Founders' Day at its meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup>. The committee discussed a condensed version of The Concepts.

**General Service, Marin:** Trevor F. reported that General Service had reconciled its budget and has a \$500 deficit. There will be a post conference assembly on May 14<sup>th</sup> in Petaluma.

**Teleservice, Marin:** Matt T. reported that the committee is developing a 12<sup>th</sup> Step worker list. They will have a booth at Unity Day in September. 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. SF The committee meets the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. 1187 Franklin/ Geary in San Francisco. The Marin committee meets the second Wednesday of the month at 6:45 p.m. at 1411 Lincoln in San Rafael.

**H & I:** No report. The S.F. Committee meets the last Thursday of the month at 1751 Sacramento St., San Francisco. 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:** Dave B. gave the report. The event is scheduled for Labor Day weekend at the Ramada Hotel in San Francisco. People can register and pay online. Registrations before August 6 will receive a \$5 discount. AA meetings are free, however, people must register to attend. A scholarship fund has been set up. There will not be scheduling conflicts between AA and Al Anon speakers. The committee meets the first Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, June 1, 2005 at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at Geary, San Francisco at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Don B., IFB Secretary



***The Point* is online!**  
**Visit the new Central Office website today:**  
**[www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org)**



ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY RUGGIO

## Got Something to Share?

*The Point* needs articles every month. We encourage A.A. members in the San Francisco and Marin Fellowship to share experience, strength and hope in *The Point*. We ask that you make your story specific and anecdotal.

### *Dear Alky*

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

### *Literature Review*

Have a favorite A.A. book or pamphlet? Up to 600 words.

**Service, Recovery, Unity**—How about a favorite A.A. commitment or an experience that taught you something about unity or recovery? Up to 550 words.

### *AA on the Road*

Gone to A.A. meetings while traveling for business or pleasure? Moved from SF or Marin and want to tell us about the meetings in your new home? 500-600 words.

### *Inside Stories*

Have an anecdote you would like to share? A moment of clarity? A spiritual awakening? 500-700 words.

### *Cover Story*

Cover stories can be about any theme related to sobriety. Up to 850 words.

Email your submission as a Microsoft Word attachment to: [thepoint@aASF.org](mailto:thepoint@aASF.org) 

## Slogan of the Month

### *Keep Coming Back*

by Anonymous

As a newcomer to A.A., I had such a warped sense of reality (and such a grandiose ego) that when you told me I was the most important person at meetings, my chest puffed out a little. When applause rang out after I announced myself as new, my head swelled. So when you said, "Keep coming back," I figured maybe I was doing you a favor by showing up!

But underneath that paper-thin bravado lurked insecurity and fear. I was terrified of living without booze and drugs and was scared of all you shiny, happy people. I later learned that at the age I'd gotten sober (31), I was mentally and emotionally the age I'd been when I started getting loaded (14). I felt like I was a high school freshman – and all of you had gone to middle school together.

From that angle, I heard keep coming back as inclusive encouragement. Apparently, you wanted me around, which hadn't been true of many people when I'd bottomed out. I'd often suffered a bone-crushing self-loathing that had isolated me in mental misery.

As I began to get well in A.A. (or what I thought of as well – my sponsor would have differed) I began to have a little trouble coming back. Oh, I liked meetings all right: you folks were nice, the coffee and cookies were good, and the stories were entertaining. But Law and Order is on tonight, and I'm not going to drink if I stay home, right? So some nights I wouldn't go. Later, my sponsor would remind me in no uncertain terms that I wasn't following his directions – and that might lead to drinking.

One week I decided to do what he said: hit a meeting daily. The first few days, my mind spewed the usual drivel, "Aw, you'll go tomorrow. See a movie tonight."

I went to the meeting anyway, and that's when I began to see the cunning nature of the alcoholic obsession. It'll tell me anything to isolate me in misery – and, eventually, to get me drinking. As it turned out, the more I went to meetings, the more I liked them. Since the converse is true, I still go to a meeting almost every day.

In the years I've been sober, keep coming back has taken on deeper meaning. Once I found a higher power – I like to call it God, because it's easy to remember – I saw how sometimes I'd rely on it and other times I'd once more try to run the world my way. I had to keep coming back to God, surrendering to God's grace lest I get loaded again.

So, listen, if you're new, you are doing me – all of us – a favor by showing up. The way this program works is folks who've been helped through the Twelve Steps turn around and help others. That's how we stay sober. So if there were no new people, I'd be in real trouble. And that's why I can say, with unqualified enthusiasm, "Keep coming back!" 

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*Psst... The Point is online: [www.aASF.org](http://www.aASF.org)*

# Financial Statement

March 2005 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	<u>Mar 05</u>	<u>Jan - Mar 05</u>		
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>				
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Group Contributions</b>				
Honors	36.61	74.99		
<b>Group Contributions - Other</b>	<u>9,342.64</u>	<u>34,713.81</u>		
<b>Total Group Contributions</b>	<u>9,379.25</u>	<u>34,788.80</u>		
<b>Individual Contributions</b>				
Faithful Fiver	203.00	497.00		
Honorary Contributions	234.60	866.50		
Individual - Unrestricted	<u>457.36</u>	<u>1,554.36</u>		
<b>Total Individual Contributions</b>	<u>894.96</u>	<u>2,917.86</u>		
<b>Gratitude Month</b>				
<b>Gratitude Month - Groups</b>	<u>249.51</u>	<u>2,981.44</u>		
<b>Total Gratitude Month</b>	<u>249.51</u>	<u>2,981.44</u>		
<b>Newsletter Subscript.</b>	74.70	224.10		
<b>Special Event Income</b>	0.00	33.00		
<b>Sales - Bookstore</b>	<u>9,125.06</u>	<u>25,154.31</u>		
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>19,723.48</u>	<u>66,099.51</u>		
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>				
<b>Cost of Books Sold</b>	<u>6,069.66</u>	<u>16,096.93</u>		
<b>Total COGS</b>	<u>6,069.66</u>	<u>16,096.93</u>		
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<u>13,653.82</u>	<u>50,002.58</u>		
<b>Expense</b>				
<b>PI/CPC</b>	41.50	41.50		
<b>IFB Literature</b>	7.30	7.30		
<b>Bad Checks</b>	98.30	98.30		
<b>Employee Expenses</b>				
<b>Wages &amp; Salaries</b>	7,553.59	22,111.09		
<b>Employer Tax Expenses</b>	682.70	2,788.68		
<b>Health Benefits</b>	742.00	2,226.00		
<b>Retirement/Annuity Expense</b>	<u>7,200.00</u>	<u>7,200.00</u>		
<b>Workers Comp Ins.</b>	<u>836.47</u>	<u>836.47</u>		
<b>Total Employee Expenses</b>	<u>17,014.76</u>	<u>35,162.24</u>		
<b>ASL Expense</b>				
<b>ASL Other</b>	<u>260.00</u>	<u>390.00</u>		
<b>Total ASL Expense</b>	<u>260.00</u>	<u>390.00</u>		
<b>Bank Charges</b>				
<b>Cr Card Fees</b>	101.11	299.71		
<b>Bank Charges - Other</b>	<u>37.20</u>	<u>104.50</u>		
<b>Total Bank Charges</b>	<u>138.31</u>	<u>404.21</u>		
<b>Equipment Lease</b>	569.62	1,708.86		
<b>Filing/Fees</b>	0.00	20.00		
<b>Insurance</b>	0.00	2,312.68		
<b>Internet Expense</b>	0.00	59.85		
<b>Office Supplies</b>	458.83	904.77		
<b>Postage</b>				
<b>Bulk Mail</b>	200.00	200.00		
<b>Postage - Other</b>	<u>179.35</u>	<u>331.35</u>		
<b>Total Postage</b>	<u>379.35</u>	<u>531.35</u>		
<b>Shipping</b>	-50.77	-34.30		
<b>Rent - Office</b>	3,708.75	11,126.25		
<b>Rent - Other</b>	150.00	225.00		
<b>Repair &amp; Maintenance</b>			178.00	534.00
<b>Security System</b>			33.50	165.50
<b>Telephone</b>			755.33	1,522.91
<b>Utilities</b>			<u>46.27</u>	<u>468.17</u>
<b>Total Expense</b>			<u>23,789.05</u>	<u>55,648.59</u>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>			<u>-10,135.23</u>	<u>-5,646.01</u>
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>				
<b>Other Income</b>				
<b>Interest Income</b>			<u>74.62</u>	<u>211.11</u>
<b>Total Other Income</b>			<u>74.62</u>	<u>211.11</u>
<b>Other Expense</b>				
<b>Depreciation Expense</b>			<u>408.17</u>	<u>1,224.51</u>
<b>Total Other Expense</b>			<u>408.17</u>	<u>1,224.51</u>
<b>Net Other Income</b>			<u>-333.55</u>	<u>-1,013.40</u>
<b>Net Income</b>			<u>-\$10,468.78</u>	<u>-\$6,659.41</u>

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In July 2005 the annual subscription price for *The Point* will be increasing to \$12/year. Individual copies will be sold in our bookstore for \$1.00. This is part two of a two-year plan to offset the increasing prices of paper and bulk mail costs. You can also take advantage of the current price now by extending your current subscription.



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# June 2005

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