

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

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

# The Point

**March 2006**

A publication  
of the Intercounty Fellowship  
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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## *The Point*

is published monthly to inform  
A.A. members about business and  
meeting affairs in the Intercounty  
Fellowship of Alcoholics  
Anonymous (San Francisco and  
Marin Counties). *The Point's* pages  
are open to participation by all  
A.A. members. Nothing published  
herein should be construed as a  
statement of A.A., nor does  
publication constitute endorsement  
by A.A. as a whole, the Intercounty  
Fellowship Board, the Central  
Office, or *The Point* Editorial  
Committee. Letters and articles to  
help carry the A.A. message are  
welcomed, subject to editorial  
review by *The Point* Committee.

## Being a Deaf Person in Recovery

*by Timothy S.*

I decided to write this letter to better express myself, and also to help others better understand me.

I have found that even within the supposedly supportive environment of a 12-step meeting, the obstacle of deafness is enormous. Many people are unfamiliar and uncomfortable with deafness. So, I thought a perfect opportunity existed for me to write about my experiences as a deaf person in recovery. I am not speaking on behalf of deaf people or of people in recovery. I am speaking only about me.

My intention is not to complain about my difficulties or seek sympathy. My point is to emphasize that the deaf world can be lonely in ways that hearing people never even think about. I belong in A.A. I am asking for fairness and consideration for those of us who don't hear, especially when we are seeking recovery.

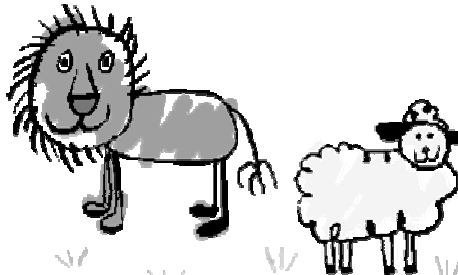

I'd like to clarify some things that hearing people seem confused about. Deaf folks have varying degrees of hearing and speech. Some can hear a little bit, while others are very deaf. Some can read lips while many others can't. Some are able to speak fairly clearly, and other can't. We're all different. Further, there is a lot of confusion about cochlear implants. Cochlear implants do not turn deaf people into hearing people. I have a cochlear implant but I still cannot understand speech. I am still deaf. People don't realize that much of my isolation stems from that misconception.

I am aware that people might feel awkward approaching me because they are afraid they won't be able to communicate with me. If people want to communicate with me, I can manage it. I've been doing it all my life. I almost always have pen and paper with me and can express just about anything that way. Many people have taken the extra time to communicate with me. I am grateful for these people.

I have gone to all kinds of 12 step meetings all over the country. I am perfectly happy if someone volunteers to take notes. I typically try to arrive early and ask the secretary to ask for a volunteer note taker. On several occasions, the secretary felt burdened by my request and merely told me that I should go to

*(Continued on page 6)*

# March 2006....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm Meeting 7 pm 1187 Franklin St., First Unitarian Church, SF	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <u>FIRST MON</u> Archives Committee, Central Office, TBA  Spirit of SF Committee, Central Office, TBA	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm  Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 6:45 pm	<b>9</b> <u>SECOND THU</u> Website Committee Central Office, 6 pm	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 7 pm	<b>14</b> <u>SECOND TUE</u> SF Bridging The Gap 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF, 6:30 pm  SF General Service 1187 Franklin St., SF Orientation: 7 pm Meeting: 8 pm  Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael Orientation: 6:15 pm	<b>15</b> <u>THIRD WED</u> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm	<b>16</b>		<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm  Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael GSR Sharing: 7 pm District Meeting: 8 pm	<b>21</b> <u>THIRD TUE</u> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo, 7:30 pm	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> <u>FOURTH THU</u> Marin PI Committee 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael – Alano Club 7:00 pm	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 10 am Business Meeting: 12:30 pm
<b>26</b> <u>FOURTH SUN</u> Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush, SF 5:30 pm	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Special Needs Committee, 6:30 pm Special Events Committee Central Office, 7:30 pm  Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30 pm	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Committee Meeting: 8:00 pm	<b>31</b>	

## From the Editor...

Most of us are aware of the obstacles faced by A.A.'s in wheelchairs. But what if you have small children and no money for a babysitter? What if you are deaf and can't read lips so the readings and shares are all in mime? What if the meetings in your neighborhood are full of people who are all the same age as your children?

Inside are stories about carrying the message to the alcoholic with children, the deaf alcoholic, and the older alcoholic, plus a moving story from a mobility impaired A.A. who has a lot to say—and it isn't about ramps and curb cuts. In the cover story a deaf alcoholic presents his case for making all deaf and hard of hearing members fully part of this fellowship. Inside, a mother tells of the personal and societal challenges and rewards of staying sober while raising a child.

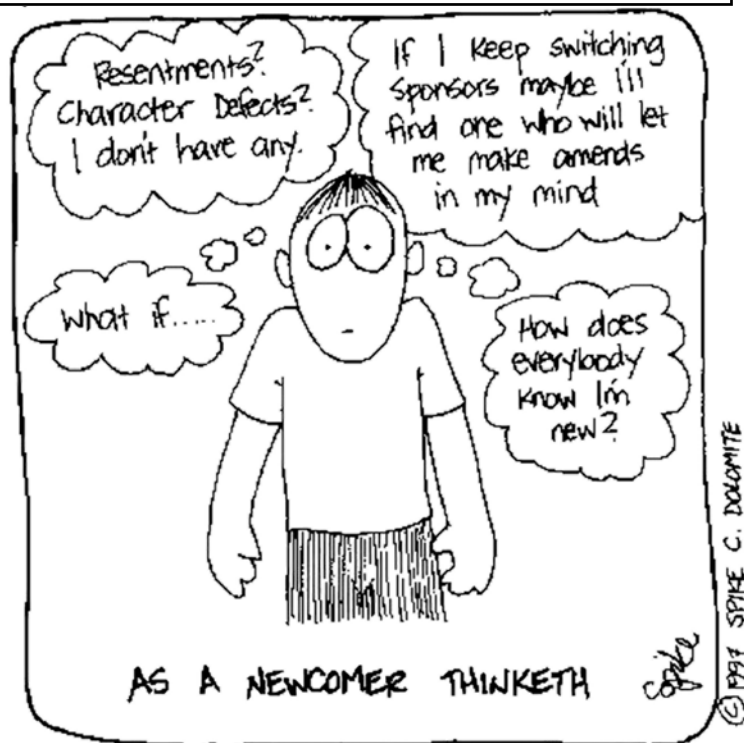
Our Big Book article this month is on "There is a Solution," the chapter in the Big Book offering hope to the hopeless. The service committee article is, of course, about the Special Needs Committee. This committee investigates how A.A. in San Francisco can better serve the alcoholics who need special help to connect with the program—Think about the service opportunity here—this committee can always use a few more good A.A.'s. In the Literature Review our reviewer examines the pamphlet on the Older Alcoholic. Pretty soon we are all going to get there, if we are lucky—How do you become an old-timer? Don't drink and don't die!

Check out the A.A. acronym of the month, the joke and Dear Alky.

In fellowship,

The Point Committee

## Joke of the Month



## Don't miss the 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.

### *The Point* Committee:

Greg W., Kathleen C., Li L., Lynne H.,  
Maury P., Mike L., Morgan L., Victor V.  
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](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org) or call 415.674.1821.



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## MEETING CHANGES

### New Meetings:

Mon	9:00 am	Dolores Park	(THE SPAWN OF) STRAITJACKET, 601 Dolores/ 19th St. (BB, Bg)
Mon	1:10 pm	Financial	EMBARCADERO GROUP, 210 Spear/ Howard-Starbuck's Side Room, (Bk, Di, Wh)
Mon	6:00 pm	Hayes Valley	AFTER WORK, S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (BB, Wo)
Mon	7:00 pm	Hayes Valley	SPIRITUAL WORKSHOP, S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (Mc, Cl, Di)
Wed	4:30 pm	Haight Ashbury	THE PARENT TRAP 2, 1757 Waller St./ Shrader St. (CC, SD)
Thu	6:00 pm	Hayes Valley	END OF ISOLATION S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (SS, SD)
Thu	7:00 pm	Pt. Reyes Stn.	THURSDAY NIGHT BOOK CLUB, 100 6th St./ A St. (Bk, Di, Wh)
Fri	8:00 pm	Hayes Valley	FRIDAY NIGHT SPECIAL, S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (SD)
Fri	10:00 pm	Hayes Valley	DARK SECRETS, S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (YP, Bg, Ch)

### Meeting Changes:

Wed	8:00 pm	Castro	CASTRO DISCUSSION (SHOW OF SHOWS) Rec. Center, 100 Collingwood St./ 18th St., (was 725 Diamond/ 24th St.)
Thu	7:30 pm	Western Addition	SOUGHT TO IMPROVE, 1201 Fillmore St./ Turk St., (was Mon. 8pm; 152 Church)
Fri	8:00 pm	San Rafael	MARIN SOBER GROUP, Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln St/ Maple (was 1111 4th St)

### No Longer Meeting:

Wed	8:30 pm	San Rafael	MISSION FIRESIDE, 424 Mission Ave.
Thu	7:30 pm	Outer Sunset	SUNSET SOBRIETY, 3240 Lawton St.

## Recently Registered Trusted Servants January 2006

Below are the meetings whose Trusted Servants registered with Central Office during January 2006— nineteen in San Francisco and nine in Marin. Thank you for registering!

### San Francisco

AA Step Study Sun. 6pm; After Work Mon 6pm; A New Start Fri. 8:30pm; Big Book Group Mon. 7am; Early, Joyous & Free Thu. 7am; Friendly Circle Beginners Sun. 7:15pm; Friendship Group Wed. 8pm; Friday All Groups Fri. 8:30pm; High Noon Thursday Thu. 12:15pm; How It Works Now Sat. 3pm; Marina Discussion Fri. 8:30pm; Meeting Place Noon Fri. 12 pm; Midnight Meditation Sat. 12 Midnight; Monday Beginners Mon. 8pm; Saturday Matinee Sat. 2pm; Speak Easy Wed. 6pm; Speaker Discussion Thu. 5:30pm; Ten Years After Sun. 6pm; Wednesday Night Candlelight Wed. 10pm

### Marin

Downtown Mill Valley Fri. 8:30pm; Fireside Fri 8pm; Happy, Joyous & Free Tue. 12 Noon Happy, Joyous & Free Wed. 12 Noon; Mill Valley 7AM Wed. 7am; Monday Night Women's Mon. 8pm; San Geronimo Valley Mon. 8pm; Steps to Freedom Mon. 7:30pm; Women on Monday Mon. 7pm

## CONTRIBUTIONS

to Central Office were made through  
February 15, 2006 honoring the  
following members:

### ONGOING MEMORIALS

Dina R., Bill M.  
(Philadelphia)  
John D. M.,  
Leita G.  
Vern S.,  
and  
Donald W.

### ANNIVERSARIES🎵

**Bernal Big Book:** Marvin R.—10 years  
Tom M.—24 years  
Fred R.—45 years  
Jane McF.—45 years

## Coming Up!

### BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

DATE	SPEAKER	FROM
03/05	Jeanie D.	Daly City
03/12	Dorothy V.	SF
03/19	Bruce M.	SF
03/26	Jim O.	Daly City

### FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

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

DATE	HOST GROUP	SPEAKER	FROM
03/03	Dark Secrets	Matt S.	Sausalito
03/10	Pure & Simple	Jan W.	SF Fellowship
03/17	Friday at Five	Seamus	Friendly Circle Beg
03/24	Agnostics & Freethinkers	Paul F.	Friendly Circle Beg
03/31	Sat. Easy Does It	Veronica M.	Marin Fellowship

## 13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MARIN COUNTY TELESERVICE SPAHGETTI FEED

SATURDAY, MARCH 25  
5:30PM DINNER  
SPEAKER MEETING  
TO FOLLOW

ST. ISABELLA 'S PARISH  
HALL, TERRA LINDA



1 TRINITY WAY  
HWY 101 TO MANUEL T. FREITAS PKWY  
TO TRINITY WAY

FOOD, FELLOWSHIP, SERVICE  
BYO DESSERT  
\$7 SUGGESTED DONATION

## "SPRING FORWARD"

with The Spirit of San Francisco

### AA Meeting & Social

Sunday - April 2

Speaker Meeting 3 - 4PM

Taco Feed Dinner 4:30 - 6PM

Comedy Competition 6:30 - 9PM

### CITY FOREST LODGE

254 Laguna Honda Blvd

(at Plaza St.)

San Francisco

\$15 dinner & show

Sign up to Compete (415) 752-9930

Have you wondered what it takes to be *Group Secretary*? Find out at the:

# TRUSTED SERVANTS WORKSHOP

Where: AA Central Office 1821 Sacramento St.

When: Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>—from 11:30 AM to 1 PM

It's free! And pizza will be provided!

Have fun while learning about this trusted servant position important to every group!

For details call Patty M. at 415-923-9883 or Monika H. at 415-618-0426

# Should I Fill a Need?

by Victor V.

I have been attending A.A. meetings for seven years, but have been sober for only three. I thought that I could do it my way. I heard suggestions at meetings from people who were sober, but did not listen. As a result I continued to drink. Why did A.A. work for some people but not for me? When I became open minded and listen to what people said, willing to be honest, and willing to follow suggestions, A.A. started working. I started to go to meetings everyday, got a sponsor, got a service commitment, and started working the steps. As I stayed on this spiritual path my attitude began to change little by little. It did not happen overnight, but was a gradual process. Before I knew it my life had changed and I started realizing some of the Ninth Step promises.

I have had one or more service commitments at meetings for the past three years. These commitments have helped me to think of others rather than myself. I have gotten to know many alcoholics as a result of these service commitments. I feel more a part of A.A. because of doing service.

At one of my meetings I was asked if I would be interested in being an Intercounty Fellowship Board representative. After being on the board for over one year and attending meetings once a month, I learned a lot about how Central Office works, how many different committees there are that take care of A.A.'s special needs, and how many committed people work behind the scenes to help make A.A. the great fellowship that it is.

I recently joined the Twelfth Step Committee and added my name to the Twelfth Step call list. I feel that I need to make myself available at anytime to speak to any alcoholic in need of help. I also speak Russian which evidently there is a need for because there are a lot of Russian alcoholics in San Francisco and sometimes one of them will call Central Office looking for help. I have been able to be of a service to a couple of Russian-speaking alcoholics as a result.

The Twelfth Step Committee along with the Website Committee has recently started the footwork necessary to create a Twelfth Step Website. People in need of help or direction can contact an A.A. member by e-mail on this site and receive the same type of help which is offered by Tele-Service. This service may make it easier for some people to contact A.A. members without having to pick up the phone. There is a need for A.A. members to sign up for this service. You must have one year of sobriety, and be willing to communicate with alcoholics by e-mail.

I have recently joined *The Point* Committee, too. I know nothing about *The Point*, but I am willing to learn and help in any way that I can. I have also been asked if I would be interested in providing a service for Russian-speaking alcoholics by starting a Russian meeting. I have been offered help by a fellow member who has started meetings here and abroad. The question is "Should I or shouldn't I? One week ago I purchased a Russian A.A. Big Book... ↑

## Deaf in Recovery (Continued from page 1)

meetings with interpreters. People don't realize that interpreted meetings are very scarce and sometimes those interpreters are not skilled. I was shocked that people tried to refer me away from meetings because they thought they knew what I needed. Is it really so bothersome to ask for a volunteer to take notes? AA states:

"I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."

It's a great principle, but it's not always put into practice. Aren't we here to help each other?

Sometimes people lack common sense because they are unfamiliar with issues relating to deafness or using interpreters. For example, in some meetings or workshops, a chairperson has asked the interpreter

to sit off to the side—far away from the person speaking. In some situations, that might be acceptable, but deaf people gain understanding from simultaneously watching the interpreter and the person speaking.

I've also had people request that both the interpreter and all the deaf people move to the back of the room. I think that is discriminatory. People have told me that they think sign language interpreters are distracting. Well, I'd be much more distracting if I was drunk! I have to work harder to "hear" the message of recovery, when I ask for help with interpreting what is said, your help is saving my life; I am not trying to annoy you.

Being deaf means living in a world of isolation. I want to say again how grateful I am for the people who have made an effort to get to know me and help me share in our recovery process. I wrote this letter to vent my thoughts but also to help raise awareness. I hope that together we can make the road to recovery easier for deaf people. ↑

# Dear Alky

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM ONE A.A. TO ANOTHER!

**Dear Alky:**

**I've been sober for less than a year and am facing what used to be a big drinking holiday for me - St. Patrick's Day. Many of my friends will be going to an Irish bar. I know they'll assume I'll go too. I really enjoy their company, but I also know how tempting it will be for me to "join in the fun". How should I handle this?**

**Unluck of the Irish**

Dear Irish:

Most A.A.'s find their first sober year rife with real-world challenges; after all, we're learning new ways to live. Fortunately, those who have gone before us have ample experience to share. You might first pray for guidance from your Higher Power. Next, share about this situation at meetings. Take guidance from others at the meetings, as well as from your sponsor and your close A.A. friends. Finally, read pps. 100-103 of the Big Book. They say we can go anywhere alcohol is served provided we are spiritually fit and our motives are good. But, it adds, "if you are shaky, you had better work with another alcoholic instead!" If you go to the bar, take two or three (very) sober alxies with you and try to bring good cheer. If you're not feeling up to it, beg off. Your friends will understand. Instead, spend the time helping a newcomer. You'll be doing essential service – and staying sober yourself.

Good luck!



**Dear Alky,**

**I am a recovering alcoholic and so is my boyfriend. We both realized that maybe we should go to Alanon meetings. However, my A.A. sponsor won't let me get started in Alanon until after I do my Ninth Step. Is this for real? She says I am just using Alanon as a distraction to avoid doing my step work in A.A. Can I work two programs at the same time? Do I have to work all 12 steps in A.A. before I can start in another program?**

**Double Winner**



*Taking a poll of others –  
including your  
humble correspondent –  
when a sponsor's sugges-  
tions don't suit you  
dances on the edge of  
alcoholic insanity*

Dear Double:

Alky has noted numerous times that he does not wish to get between a sober alcoholic and his or her sponsor. Our choice in A.A. is to follow our sponsor's guidance or to find a new sponsor. Taking a poll of others – including your humble correspondent – when a sponsor's suggestions don't suit you dances on the edge of alcoholic insanity. There are advantages and disadvantages to working two or more programs, but most important is the willingness to accept and follow a sponsor's direction – whatever the program in which he or she is sponsoring you.



**Dear Alky,**

**My sponsor just got involved with another recovery program. He says it has a scientific basis, rather than a spiritual one. Alcoholism isn't a disease, they say; it is a bad habit and by positive thinking we can overcome it. They say we can make a commitment to permanent abstinence without any help from a Higher Power. My sponsor doesn't tell me I can't pray or believe in God, but he says that I have to take responsibility for my own sobriety and that God can't do it for me. What do you think about this?**

**Wondering**

Dear Wondering:

Humans quit drinking in a multitude of ways; A.A. is not for everyone. No biggie. As far as Alky can see, your sponsor guided you in Alcoholics Anonymous. He is no longer in A.A., and therefore is no longer your A.A. sponsor. Unless you wish to join him in the other program, it seems time for you to find a new A.A. sponsor, work the steps and serve others. In other words, do the things that likely have been working for you so far. As to whether other programs work: like A.A. itself, Alky has no opinion on outside issues, nor any desire for controversy.

Thanks for writing!

If you have a question for Alky, please write to us at [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org). We welcome our reader's participation!

## 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

Steve R. calmont1@aol.com

#### VICE CHAIR

Steve S. s@p90.net

#### TREASURER

Danna P. dannajp@earthlink.net

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Lauren laurenhache@earthlink.net

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

Lynnore G. lynnore1@aol.com

#### 12th STEP COMMITTEE

Chair Needed

#### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Lynnore G. lynnore1@aol.com

#### LITERATURE COMMITTEE

Steve N. snolan12000@yahoo.com

#### ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Tim M. gryffindor-house@earthlink.net

#### OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Chair Needed

#### THE POINT

Chair Needed

#### SPECIAL EVENTS

Fran K. 415.424.0626

#### SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE

Pene P. 415.200-6261

#### TRUSTED SERVANTS WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

Monika H. monihar2002@yahoo.com

#### WEBSITE COMMITTEE

Chair Needed

#### SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Rick P./Scott B. sfteservice@aasf.org

#### SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Laura N. 415.931-2567

## Service Bulletin

# Special Needs Committee

by Pene P.

The Special Needs/ Accessibility Committee explores, develops, and offers resources to make the A.A. message and participation in our program available to everyone who reaches out for it.

As a committee of the Intercounty Fellowship Board we are directly responsible to the A.A. fellowship and work toward improving our common welfare. This committee is composed of IFB Representatives and individual A.A. members who recognize that fellowship-wide service is personally rewarding and necessary to the maintenance of A.A. unity. At this time, we need more members and information from the Fellowship-at-large.

We are seeking the energy and expertise of those members who have surmounted physical, auditory, visual and other personal difficulties to share their experience, strength and hope with us in order for our efforts to be truly effective in reaching all alcoholics who still suffer. We want to provide an ASL interpreter for meetings deaf A.A. members would attend, enable groups to use state-of-the art PA systems for those of us who are hard-of-hearing, and provide accurate information regarding wheelchair access. There are many special needs to be addressed within our Fellowship. The Special Needs Survey included in this issue of *The Point* is a tool to help us define our scope of service and is useful to the Teleservice, Twelfth Step and Special Needs committees.


A.A. members in SF and Marin can pick up the Special Needs Survey at the Central Office, or download it from our website ([www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org)). Returning it to Central Office informs us what special needs exist and helps us understand how we can solve accessibility issues. Your offer to do service, allows us to work together to improve our common welfare.

Living life on life's terms is challenging for each of us. Gratefully, we have opportunities to recover using the steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Twelfth Step — service, whether at meetings, workshops, within committees, or at special events — brings relief to alcoholics who are suffering.

By gathering our collective talents, skills and resources the Special Needs/ Accessibility Committee, hopes to remove barriers to full participation in A.A., while nurturing the kind of unity that makes the Ninth Step Promises real for all of us who work together for them. Join us!

To become involved:

- ⇒ Fill out and return the Special Needs Survey today!
- ⇒ Participate in one or more of our projects!
- ⇒ Come to a committee meeting to share your experience, strength and hope - you could help save another alcoholic's life! We meet the fourth Tuesday of every month at Central Office. In March we will meet on March 28th.

The Special Needs/ Accessibility Committee can be reached at [specialneedscommittee@aasf.org](mailto:specialneedscommittee@aasf.org), by calling the Central Office. As the current Chair, I can be reached at [PVP1999@webtv.net](mailto:PVP1999@webtv.net) and 415- 200-6261. 

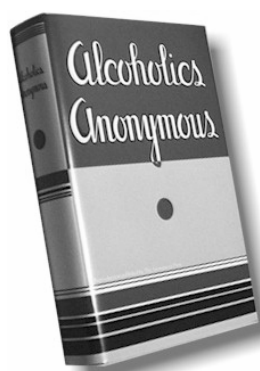


# Big Book Study: Chapter Two—There is a Solution

By June 1938 Bill Wilson had finished writing “Bill’s Story” and “There is a Solution,” the first two chapters of Alcoholics Anonymous, which was not yet the official title of the Big Book. Suggestions for titles included: “One Hundred Men,” “A Way Out,” “Haven,” and “Here Comes the Dawn.” Alcoholics Anonymous had come into general use as the name for the fellowship, as early as 1937. The writing of the Big Book inspired rifts and schisms in early A.A. One member allegedly drank out of resentment that Bill W. and Dr. Bob were going to make a fortune off the book. The Akron contingent of A.A. considered themselves more staunch supporters of the book and the Twelve Steps than the New Yorkers, who engaged in hot debate on the manuscript. There was much controversy and more than a little nagging to get the stories written, according to an early member.

The second chapter, “There is a Solution,” offers hope, in the example of “thousands of men and women who were once just as hopeless as Bill.” The early members were like passengers of a great liner rescued after a shipwreck, whose joy and relief at recovery and feeling of camaraderie lasted long after they resumed their normal lives. The authors recount time and time again how the alcoholic is utterly hopeless, beyond the help of family, doctors, psychiatrists or the clergy. Though he is often intelligent, hardworking and social, yet again and again he builds up a bright future for himself and his family, only to pull the structure down on his head by a “senseless series of sprees.” The solution for alcoholism lies not in psychiatry, nor religion, but in a spiritual awakening.

Once the alcoholic is sober he can only stay that way by admitting his powerlessness and going to any lengths to maintain his conscious contact with the Higher Power that keeps him sober. At the same time the alcoholic must make amends to those he has hurt, continue to apply the principles of the Steps in his life, and carry the

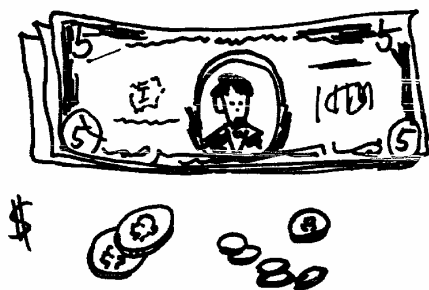


*This is not a moderate program. It requires a radical decision.*

message to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is not a moderate program. It requires a radical decision – live a spiritual life or die an alcoholic death. As the legendary psychiatrist Dr. Carl Jung told the man who Twelfth Stepped the man who Twelfth Stepped Bill Wilson: Only a “vital spiritual experience” can transform the hopeless drunk into the sober alcoholic. This spiritual experience may or may not lead to membership in a religious body. As the distinguished American psychologist, William James, observed, in his book “The Varieties of Religious Experience,” there are many paths to God. Men and women of all races, colors and creeds and of no creed at all can find sobriety and life itself in Alcoholics Anonymous.

For me, the most radical concept in “There is a Solution” is in the last paragraph – “Yes, I am one of them too; I must have this thing.” When I came into A.A., I did not want to be one of you; I did not want what you had. I had rejected the faith of my childhood and chosen alcohol as my spiritual solution. Wasn’t an altered mental state a short cut to contact with a consciousness greater than mine? Wasn’t getting high a connection with a Higher Power?

Time and again I too built a great future for myself only to pull it down on my head, betraying and disappointing those who believed in me. A high school classmate who worked at a bank arranged for me to receive a student loan for college. Shortly thereafter I dropped out and defaulted on the loan. My husband mortgaged his home to put me through professional school. I barely graduated and then failed the exam essential to practicing the profession. I endangered my children, whom I loved more than life itself, yet only the ego blow from flunking the exam and the example of my sister, six months sober, awakened me enough to stagger into a meeting. Over the years, I have come to realize that my spiritual solution lies in joining my fellow sober drunks in meetings, service, sponsorship, praying my brains out and studying the book. The solution for me is a spiritual connection with my Higher Power in the fellowship of A.A. ■

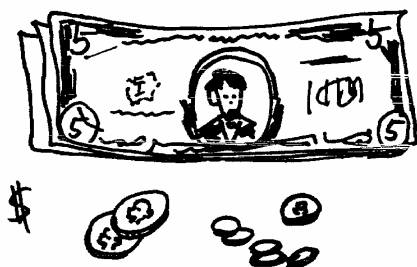


## Faithful Fivers!

### *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:

Ami Joy Y.	Matt E.
Barbara M.	Michael R.
Brian H.	Nancie G.
Bruce D.	Pat P.
Caroline A.	Paul W.
Carolyn S.	Peg L.
David B.	Pene P.
David H.	Peter F.
David P.	Randall S.
Douglas C.	Rebekah D.
Elizabeth S.	Rich G.
Giles H.	Stephen N.
Greg W.	Steve A.
Herman B.	Steven S.
Jane K.	Tim M.
Janet B.	Tom M.
Jim H.	Tony J.
Lauren H.	Dennis & Lucy O.
Lisa M.	



## Simon Says

by Cynthia H.


Ever since my sobriety started in 1991, life has often been a kind of grand adventure. I really do believe, as it says in the big book, that the quality of my sobriety is contingent upon a daily reprieve solely based upon my spiritual condition. The ability to get to meetings consistently has always been of utmost importance to my recovery. It wasn't until I actually had a child six and a half years ago, that I truly appreciated the freedom I once had to get to meetings whenever I needed them. My situation had changed and suddenly, I was at a great disadvantage in recovery.

The transition to motherhood in sobriety wasn't a problem during my son Ryan's infancy. I would walk from my home on Nob Hill to the Marina Dock, carrying him in a front pack or a sling. After the clapping stopped I would enter and he would sleep through the entire meeting. There was also one childcare meeting a week I attended regularly. However, when Ryan was crawling and learning to walk, I hit a wall. One meeting a week was not going to cut it. My sponsor suggested I get to the 6 a.m. meetings at the Marina Dock while Ryan was still in slumber. This worked very well for several months, long enough for me to do a secretary commitment.

When Ryan was almost two, my marriage to Ryan's father, who is also in recovery, failed. I re-entered the work force, went to work full time and found home childcare. This was when I needed meetings the most. I would get Ryan home by seven and feed both of us dinner and fall asleep, sometimes in my work clothes. This schedule limited my meetings to Friday nights and Saturdays when Ryan would visit his father. This phase in my life with Ryan lasted a few years.

One evening after work, when I really felt the need to go to a meeting, I tried to take Ryan with me to a meeting for which I had once been the GSR. A member complained to the group profusely about my son walking around during the meeting. As a result there was a business meeting about possibly making the meeting a childcare meeting. But mostly men showed up at the business meeting to drive home the fact that children were not to be in the meeting unless they were completely silent and therefore undistruptive. I was also accused of being an irresponsible mother because my child was walking around during the meeting. Needless to say, I did not bring my son back to the meeting. Instead I hired a babysitter on Sunday nights and continued to attend the meeting regularly. I had learned a valuable lesson: I didn't have the right to go against the group conscience.

Following a layoff at my job, I would time one meeting according to Ryan's naptime. This particular meeting attempted to be a childcare meeting but the childcare was either sporadic or non-existent. Which was also the case for another meeting on Friday at 6 p.m. Eventually I went back to school and started a new career.

I recently started a child friendly meeting called "Romper Room" on Saturday mornings at 10:00 a.m. at the Alano Club. We have had some new members with toddlers attend every week since the meeting started. It is possible to create child friendly meetings every day of the week at this location—a truly exciting prospect for parents in recovery, especially newly sober parents who need meetings more than anyone. Many mothers simply stop coming to meetings and drop out of A.A. due to the lack of support for their special childcare needs. If you have any interest in joining us, come on down! 

Literature Review

# A.A. For the Older Alcoholic

by Morgan L.



*"Since his wife died six months ago, John, age 83, has begun to drink more and more. Lately, he even forgets to shower and change his clothes. He seems angry all of the time and cries a lot."*

Alcoholism is an equal opportunity disease. It affects all persons regardless of race, religion, socio-economic class, gender and age.

Although statistics on elderly alcoholism vary widely, studies state that between 1.1 and 2.3 million senior citizens use alcohol to deal with grief and loneliness. The gray line dividing heavy drinking and the disease of alcoholism is hard to define. Nevertheless, society has begun to recognize that the incidence of alcoholism among older persons is on the rise. What has been called the "hidden population" is now being discovered and measured.

A.A. goes to great lengths to reach out to all people. Pamphlets addressing different demographics are located on the web and on literature tables at meetings. While the list of pamphlets is by no means complete, it supports the pervasive nature of the disease.

The pamphlet, *A.A. For the Older Alcoholic – Never Too Late*, addresses those suffering from the disease of alcoholism who are moving past the prime of life but live in the midst of the disease.

In large print, the pamphlet contains stories written by recovering members of A.A. who joined the fellowship around the age of sixty. They represent a wide range of experiences and make clear that alcoholism comes in many different forms and disguises.

Some of the people whose stories appear in the pamphlet

describe how the drink before dinner, which used to be a companionable pastime, became a relief looked forward to all day. The single drink gradually turned into two, three or more drinks a day. Ultimately the lives of many senior citizens became engulfed in drinking.

Other stories describe a major crisis or devastating loss marking the onset of a drinking problem. Many crises accompany the process of growing older and almost all of them entail loss of some sort. Children grow up and leave home. Friends are fewer and farther apart. Many are obliged to retire from work. Storytellers describe how the bottle filled the emotional gap left by the ravages of death and loss.

Others describe their long history of barely contained alcoholism. Finally after years of pain and suffering, these individuals reached a bottom where their bodies, minds, and souls collapsed under the weight of the disease.

These stories all describe moments of clarity – also known as gifts of desperation, where the storytellers made a decision to address their alcoholism and ask for help. Asking for help is the first step in trudging the road to happy destiny and realizing the promises. Far from feeling that their lives are over, the men and women who have come to A.A. in their later years often express the opposite sentiment – that it is time to start living. K.B., who drank for over 50 years, and is now sober nearly eight, reports, "For me, life began two months before my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday."

The stories in the pamphlet make clear that while the prime of one's life can be measured in years, a better gauge perhaps, for an alcoholic, is the number of years sober. ↑

## Gratitude for *The Point*—A letter recently received

I recently had eye surgery and am under doctor's orders to remain homebound and take it easy. The procedure, called a Vitrectomy, is a fairly serious and delicate operation. In fact, for ten days, I had to keep my head face-down in order to help my eye recover.

I was able to read on a limited basis. Since I couldn't get out, I had to read what I had on hand in my apartment. Lo and behold, I came upon some old copies of *The Point* I had never gotten around to reading.

Turns out they were the perfect size. Not just that, they were just what I needed to read. Unable to get to meetings, it became in fact my meeting in print. The October

issue had great pieces about different ways we experience God, meditation and prayer. Believe me, being face down all day and all night gave me plenty of time to think about just those things. It was helpful to let new thoughts into my head.

So, a deep thank you to all who work tirelessly on this little newsletter. Thank you for mailing out hard copies. I have been unable to use the computer for the past few weeks.

Thank you for your service. It really made a difference.

Steve C. ↑

# AA Group Contributions - December 2005

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	Dec. 2005	YTD	Name	Dec. 2005	YTD
<b>Fellowship Contributions</b>			Marin Newcomers M 830pm		469.78
AA Workshop		90.60	Marin Sober Group F 8pm		111.11
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	32.00	352.60	Mill Valley 7D 7am		2860.84
Contribution Box		524.30	Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		16.80
Deer Park Discovery Group		80.00	Monday Blues M 630pm		713.00
Gay Newcomers Group		20.76	Monday Night Meeting M 8pm Bolinas	50.00	50.00
IFB	133.20	1096.02	Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		1802.57
Marin General Service Unity Day 2005		121.13	Monday Night Women's M 8pm		429.39
Marin Teleservice	879.00	1579.00	Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm		200.00
Special Events Committee		69.16	Newcomers Step M 730pm		550.58
Spirit of San Francisco	287.83	287.83	Noon Tu 12pm		219.50
Sunday Step Study		195.70	Noon Hope F 12pm		193.50
The Chosen Ones		20.00	Novato Spirit Discussion F 12pm	62.04	62.04
Traditions Workshop		89.36	On Awakening 7D 530am		350.00
Unidentified Group	447.80	3131.35	Pathfinders Tu 12pm		440.30
Western Roundup (Living Sober)		1788.37	Refugee Th 12pm		300.00
<b>Total Fellowship Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 1,779.83</b>	<b>\$ 9,446.18</b>	Reveille 7D 7pm	100.00	200.00
<b>Honors</b>			Rise N Shine Sun 10am		93.75
Endless Summer F 830pm		74.99	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm	173.37	247.92
<b>Total Honors</b>		<b>\$ 74.99</b>	San Geronimo Valley Book Study F 8pm		43.45
<b>Marin Group Contributions</b>			San Marin Step Study Sa 830pm		42.00
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		174.50	Saturday Serenity Sa 8pm		325.00
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am		200.00	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)		180.00
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm		259.21	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		573.59
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	1,200.00	4066.50	Sober & Serene F 7pm		462.00
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		216.00	Steps to Freedom M 730pm		173.90
Beginners W 7pm		250.00	Steps To The Solution W 715pm	41.00	110.00
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		1859.37	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	150.00	791.04
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		1116.50	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		311.80
Bounce Back M 6pm		90.00	Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm		400.00
Candlelight Group Sun 8pm		69.94	Survivors M 12pm		201.20
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		155.00	T. G. I'm Sober M 6pm		213.26
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		104.00	TGI Tuesday Tu 6pm	43.35	156.27
Crossroads Sun 12pm		765.00	T.G.I.F. F 6pm		369.63
Day At A Time 7D 630am		648.51	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		1589.69
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	342.12	908.65	Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag Th 8pm	900.00	900.00
Experience, Strength & Hope(Marin) Sa 6pm		109.80	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		326.00
Fairfax Friday Night F 830pm		323.71	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm	99.38	237.39
Fireside F 8pm Bolinas	117.00	117.00	There is a Solution Tu 6pm		70.00
Freedom Finders F 830pm		515.01	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		350.00
Friday Night Gay Men's Stag F 830pm	60.00	60.00	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm		1499.00
Girls Night Out W 815pm	61.64	61.64	Tiburon Big Book Group W 730pm		250.00
Gratitude Tu 8pm		543.36	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		1141.05
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		120.00	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		337.50
Happy Hour (Marin) Th 6pm		109.80	Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 8pm		1250.00
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		363.00	Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm	261.56	324.67
Hope Step Group Tu 730pm		150.00	Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm		75.00
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		314.98	Wednesday Sundowners W 6pm		98.66
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am		160.00	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		185.50
Island Group Th 8pm		410.00	Women on Monday M 7pm		126.54
Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm		191.75	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		80.50
Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		60.00	Women's Lunch Bunch F 12pm		100.00
Living in the Solution F 6pm	129.00	435.00	Women's Step Study Group M 12pm		240.00
			Working Dogs W 1205pm		388.00
			<b>Total Marin Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 3,790.46</b>	<b>\$ 38,161.95</b>

Name	Dec. 2005	YTD	Name	Dec. 2005	YTD
<b>SF Group Contributions</b>			Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		1178.24
10pm Smokeless M 10pm		36.14	Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		477.77
515pm Smokeless W		149.40	Early Joyous & Free Th 7am	60.00	80.00
6am Marina Dock Sa		148.00	Early Start F 6pm		1447.68
7am Grab Bag M 7am		51.81	Easy Does It Tu 6pm		139.36
7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	3.00	227.38	Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm		1187.60
7AM As Bill Sees It Fri	61.40	161.40	Eureka Step Tu 6pm		202.47
830am Smokeless Tu		84.00	Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		445.60
A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	41.54	244.73	Experience, Strength & Hope W 715pm		44.20
A New Start F 830pm		325.11	Federal Speaker Su 12pm		487.93
A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		81.00	Fell Street F 830pm		71.73
AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		257.94	Fell Street Step Su 8pm		198.51
AA Step Study Su 6pm		457.66	Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		35.00
Acceptance Group M 530pm		118.11	Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		299.01
Afro American F 8pm	69.62	225.20	Fireside Chat Th 8pm		80.97
Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	52.23	468.84	Fireside Chat Tu 8pm		114.04
All Together Now Th 8pm	43.94	786.77	Fireside F 830pm		94.00
Alta Plaza (disbanded)		67.48	First Place		39.60
Alumni W 830pm		180.00	First Step Speaker/ Discussion Th 730pm		94.29
Amazing Grace M 7pm	72.00	172.00	Founders' Group Sa 5pm		84.40
Any Lengths Sat 930am		481.25	Four Forty Niners F 8pm		288.25
Artists & Writers F 630pm		1107.20	Friday All Groups F 830pm		938.00
Artists & Writers DRUNKS ON DISPLAY		794.00	Friday at Five F 5pm		100.00
As Bill CCs It Sun 8am	196.80	196.80	Friday Knights Th 730am		112.93
As Bill Sees It Sat 11am	128.61	421.61	Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		280.00
As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		531.36	Friday Smokeless F 830pm	40.08	331.93
As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		386.69	Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm		705.56
Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		40.80	Golden Gate Seniors Tu 130pm	126.00	126.00
Back to Basics Su	342.00	342.00	Gold Mine Group M 8pm		467.17
Beginner Big Book Step Th 6:30pm	36.00	126.00	Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm		276.00
Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		201.33	Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm		158.89
Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	106.96	434.64	Happy Hour (S.F.) F 630pm		63.70
Big Book Basics F 8pm		533.37	Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm	135.60	1092.60
Big Book Study Su 1130am		498.72	High Noon 5D 1215pm		612.89
Birthday Party Sharing Our Sob. Sat 7pm		133.54	High Noon Friday 1215pm	454.20	1453.22
Blue Book Special Su 11am		157.42	High Noon Monday 1215pm		985.70
Boys Night Out Tu 730pm		133.80	High Noon Saturday 1215pm	250.24	250.24
Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm		220.00	High Noon Thursday 1215pm	71.35	998.54
BYOL W 1230pm		60.00	High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	61.92	1096.38
Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) W 8pm		365.59	High Noon Wednesday 1215pm		932.80
Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm		279.91	High Sobriety M 8pm		625.60
Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm	4.75	14.75	High Steppers W 7pm		666.99
CLAADAAGH Sat 815pm		101.35	Hilldwellers M 8pm	78.00	678.32
CLAADAAGH Step Study Tu 8pm		60.25	Home Group Sat 830pm		400.16
Cocoanuts Su 9am		548.45	How It Works Sat 2pm		213.51
Come N Get It F 630pm	76.03	130.03	Hot Java F 12am		53.47
Common Welfare Th 8pm	60.00	80.40	Huntington Square W 630pm	174.99	894.99
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm		287.48	Ingleside Beginners Su 5pm		54.45
Cow Hollow Young People's Tu 730pm		30.00	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm	90.00	762.42
Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		441.82	Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm	45.00	154.46
Design for Living Sat 8am		126.00	Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		60.00
Diamond Heights Tu 830pm		300.00	Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		3062.48
Drive Thru W 1215pm		224.84	Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		503.77
Each Day a New Beginning 5D 7am	331.80	331.80	Last Call Su 10pm		11.00
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		1553.86	Let It Be Now F 6pm		100.00
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		478.68	Light Steppers Su 7pm		120.00
Each Day a New Beginning Su 8am		1432.74	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		227.28
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	449.09	1080.14	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm		121.94

(Continued on p. 14)

(Continued from p. 13)

Name	Dec. 2005	YTD	Name	Dec. 2005	YTD
Live and Let Live Su 8pm		119.40	Steps to Freedom M 730pm		116.36
Living Sober W 8pm		512.05	Stonestown M 8pm		188.88
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	140.14	473.56	Straight Jackets Th 9am	20.52	28.52
Luke's Group W 8pm	72.00	220.00	Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm		244.33
Lush Lounge Sa 2pm		421.51	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 1030am	378.74	1462.06
Marina Discussion F 830pm		975.38	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	71.42	471.84
Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		66.98	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		240.00
Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		91.15	Sundown W 7pm		352.80
Men's Gentle Touch M 7pm		180.00	Sundown Steps Th 630pm		116.20
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	624.60	1433.40	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 545pm		60.00
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am		259.54	Sunset 11'ers Su		244.93
Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm	138.67	649.23	Sunset 11'ers Tu		196.32
Mission Terrace W 8pm		304.05	Sunset 11'ers W	60.00	172.65
Monday At A Time M 1pm		55.72	Sunset 9'ers M		236.17
Monday Beginners M 8pm		495.60	Sunset 9'ers F	104.15	326.85
Monday Monday M 1215pm		330.97	Sunset 9'ers Sa		770.86
New Friday Big Book F 12pm		27.15	Sunset 9'ers Su		286.78
New Highs W 130pm		94.80	Sunset 9'ers Th	94.15	504.18
New Hope Big Book M 630pm		538.46	Sunset 9'ers Tu		447.78
New Life W 7pm		362.40	Sunset 9'ers W		209.70
Newcomers Tu 8pm	46.00	298.00	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		411.00
No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm		118.72	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		400.20
No Reservation M 12pm		279.52	Surf Tu 8pm	216.00	1329.86
Official Sea Lion Sighting Sa 930am		29.00	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm	26.90	911.68
One Liners Th 830pm		569.03	Ten Years After Su 6pm		1788.52
Parkside Th 830pm		117.89	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am		25.00
Park Presidio M 830pm		155.80	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	322.20	401.46
Pathfinders Tu 12pm		50.00	The Parent Trap M 1230pm		119.85
Pax West M 12pm	168.24	929.16	The Pepper Group F 12pm		45.00
Pinehurst Tu 730pm		128.00	They Don't Know Who We Are Sat 7pm	85.00	85.00
Reality Farm Th 830pm	63.00	63.00	Thought For The Day F 730am		140.00
Rebound W		55.00	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm		935.00
Red Road Healing Circle Th 6pm		121.48	Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm	148.93	711.34
Richmond Step Study M 730pm		84.00	Too Early Sat 8am	35.05	1193.88
Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm		50.00	Transrecovery F 630pm	6.43	19.33
Rose Garden Big Book Th 1205pm		85.40	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		1040.00
Rule 62 W 10pm		481.93	Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am		108.91
Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm		169.20	Tuesday Sunset Nooners Tu 1230pm		50.00
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		674.57	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	258.10	1110.13
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		612.43	Walk of Shame W 8pm	86.20	263.59
Seacliff Th 830pm	210.20	302.73	Washington Square M 7pm		334.80
Second Chance Th 215pm	150.85	277.85	Waterfront Sun 8pm		1204.75
Serenity House		1200.00	We Care Tu 12pm		440.99
Serenity Seekers M 730pm		686.37	Wednesday Noon Steps W 12pm		104.27
Sesame Step Tu 730pm	287.02	755.05	Wednesday Women's Big Book W 615pm		144.00
Seventh Wonder Group Sa 1230pm		86.18	West Portal W 830pm		153.80
SFPOA Th 7pm		672.11	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm		82.27
Sisters Circle Su 6pm	72.00	268.31	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	421.18	725.18
Sisters In Sobriety M 7pm (SF)		260.00	Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm	234.00	405.33
Sober & Centered F 7pm		175.03	Women's Promises F 7pm	73.15	524.63
Sober Across the Board M 830am	20.00	137.87	Women Living Sober Sa 1030am		18.53
Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		562.80	Women Who Drank Too Much Tu 615pm		160.47
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		129.56	Women Who Read		55.27
St. Francis Men's F 830pm	72.30	72.30	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		121.74
Step Talk Su 830am		588.71	<b>Total SF Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 8,521.06</b>	<b>\$ 87,405.05</b>
Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	81.60	387.21			
Stepping Out Sat 6pm	69.17	220.87	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 14,091.35</b>	<b>\$ 135,088.17</b>

# Gratitude Month Contributions 2005

Group	Dec. 2005	Group	Dec. 2005	Group	Dec. 2005
<b>Fellowship Gratitude Month</b>		7am Open Discussion	7.00	Work In Progress Sat 7pm	40.94
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	21.00	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	101.12	Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm	79.44
Unidentified Group	87.00	Huntington Square W 630pm	211.67	Big Book Basics F 8pm	50.58
<b>Total Fellowship Gratitude Month</b>	<b>\$ 108.00</b>	New Highs W 130pm	59.14	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm	42.54
<b>Marin Gratitude Month</b>		Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm	140.00	10am Step Study M 10am	34.00
Island Group Th 8pm	83.00	Room to Grow F 8pm	65.00	Coven M 7pm	37.00
On Awakening 7D 530am	335.00	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm	80.00	Hilldwellers M 8pm	87.00
San Geronimo Valley M 8pm	30.00	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	46.50	Beginner Big Book Step Th 630pm	9.10
Terra Linda Group Th 830pm	109.00	Sunset 11'ers M	22.40	Sunset 11'ers W	34.37
Terra Linda Group Th 830pm	134.59	Gay Beginners Questions & Answers F 7pm	54.00	Washington Square M 7pm	82.00
Beginner's Help Th 8pm	90.00	West Portal W 915pm	56.91	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	46.00
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm	164.00	All Together Now Th 8pm	39.47	As Bill CCs It Sun 8am	27.00
Sunday Express Sun 6pm	43.05	Rodeo Drive Birthday Cake Style F 10pm	29.21	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	80.87
Refugee Th 12pm	100.00	Men's Gentle Touch M 7pm	51.50	7AM As Bill Sees It Fri	52.25
Friday Night Book F 830pm	30.93	As Bill Sees It Sat 11am	37.75	7am Grab Bag M 7am	35.00
Fairfax Friday Night F 830pm	50.47	Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm	183.28	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	120.41
<b>Total Marin Gratitude Month</b>	<b>\$1,170.04</b>	Newcomers Group Tu 7pm	45.00	Home Group Sat 830pm	111.00
<b>SF Gratitude Month</b>		Sunset 11'ers Su	21.75	Alumni W 830pm	33.25
Acceptance Group M 530pm	11.25	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	95.00	Ten Years After Su 6pm	181.03
Sunset 9'ers Tu	123.24	Blue Book Special Su 11am	34.13	High Noon Saturday 1215pm	67.30
Each Day A New Beginning 5D 7am	129.55	Sunset 9'ers F	108.00	Keep It Simple Sat 830pm	46.32
Sunset 9'ers Th	118.25	High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	110.00	Women's Promises F 7pm	26.50
High Noon Thursday 1215pm	96.25	Waterfront Sun 8pm	158.00	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	72.30
Stepping Out Sat 6pm	21.00	Sober & Centered F 7pm	116.18	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm	77.71
Diamond Heights Tu 830pm	40.00	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	158.00	Amazing Grace M 7pm	28.00
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	159.89	Cow Hollow Young People's Tu 730pm	154.89	Design for Living Sat 8am	100.33
Sisters Circle Su 6pm	28.55	Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm	60.00	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	20.00
Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am	40.75	Saturday Matinee 2pm	25.00	Common Welfare Th 8pm	24.20
		First Place	25.00	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 1030am	162.31
		Too Early Sat 8am	273.68	<b>Total SF Gratitude Month</b>	<b>\$5,190.81</b>
		Walk of Shame W 8pm	43.75	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,468.85</b>

## Individual Contributions December 2005

### CONTRIBUTION BOX

Contribution Box 11/05	35.65
<b>Total Contribution Box</b>	<b>\$35.65</b>

### HONORS

Honorary Contributions	48.00
Honorary Contributions	16.00
Honorary Contributions	25.00
Honorary Contributions	2.00
<b>Total HONORS</b>	<b>\$91.00</b>

### INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Individual - Unrestricted	500.00	Individual - Unrestricted	100.00
Individual - Unrestricted	44.00	Individual - Unrestricted	100.00
Individual - Unrestricted	50.00	Individual - Unrestricted	250.00
Individual - Unrestricted	100.00	Individual - Unrestricted	1,000.00
Individual - Unrestricted	25.00	Individual - Unrestricted	2,000.00
Individual - Unrestricted	1,000.00	<b>Total INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$5,209.00</b>
Individual - Unrestricted	40.00	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,335.65</b>

# IFB Meeting Summary — January 2006

The IFB is the Board of Directors for our local AA Central Office (San Francisco and Marin Counties)

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	
Alejandro D.	Fireside Chat	A*	Gaspar L.	Keep It Simple	P	Omar C.	Tuesday Chip	A*
Amber W.	Sisters Circle	A**	Gerard W.	Any Lengths	R	Orion P.	Marina Dock 6am	A*
Andy T.	Waterfront	P	Greg S.	Beginner's Warmup	P	Pascal G.	Monday Night Stag	A*
Anthony J.	Founders Group	P	Jason K.	Cocoanuts	R	Patty M.	Huntington Square	P
Brian H.	Living Sober with HIV	A	Joe G.	Beginners	A**	Penelope P.	Amazing Grace	P
Bruce K.	Sunset Speaker Step	P	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P	Randy F.	We Care	R
Carol E.	Happy Hour	A	Julia W.	Sesame Step	A*	Rebekah D.	Fell Street Step	P
Chris H.	Friendly Circle	A	Justin S.	Alumni	X	Ryan W.	Tiburon BB	A*
Chris P.	Early Start	A	Karin K.	24 Hour Plan	P	Sam C.	Boys Night Out	P
Chris T.	Keep Coming Back	P	Larry B.	Castro Discussion	A*	Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sat.	P
Curtis S.	Sunday Gay Men's Stag	A*	Lauren H.	Ten Years After	A*	Sheila R.	Sundown	R
Dan Z.	Each Day a New Beginning	A*	Luis M.	High Noon Tuesday	A*	Stephanie R.	Live & Let Live	A*
Danna P.	Treasurer	P	Lynnore G.	Walk Of Shame	P	Stephen R.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Daniel B.	Too Early	P	Marvin R.	Bernal Big Book	A**	Steve N.	Terra Linda Group	P
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Matt T.	Fairfax Friday Night	A*	Steve S.	Homegroup	A*
David H.	Tuesday Downtown	R	Maury P.	Central Office Manager	P	Tedra M.	Come N Get It	P
David L.	Work in Progress	P	Michael L.	Attitude Adjustment Hour	P	Terry B.	High Noon Thursday	A*
David P.	Goodlands	P	Michael S.	Sunset 9'ers Sat.	P	Tim K.	High Noon Saturday	R
Don B.	Friday Fell Street	P	Monika H.	SFPOA	P	Tim M.	Join the Tribe	P
Doug D.	As Bill Sees It Sat 11am	A*	Nicholas L.	Some Are Sicker Than...	P	Tom R.	Mill Valley 7AM	P
Elizabeth L-R.	Monday High Noon	P	Nicholas S.	Sutter St. Beginners	A**	Victor V.	Stepping Up	P
Francesca K.	West Portal	P						

**P = Present; A = Absent; R = Resigned; X = Alternate. 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 Present	
Creighton B.	Downtown Mill Valley	Joe H.	Gratitude Group	Casey L.	Marin Teleservice
Derek D.	Reality Farm	Richard R.	We Care	Trevor F.	Marin General Service
Dylan C.	They Stopped in Time				

Following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the February 2006 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.

## 1. IFB Reports

**Chair's Report:** There is a vacancy on the Central Office Committee. The IFB needs to form a Nominating Committee to interview candidates for the COC.

**Treasurer's Report:** Unrestricted Cash as of December 31, 2005 totaled \$50,963 and is more than sufficient to pay for budgeted expenses for three months. Net income for 2005 of \$27,115 was \$26,931 greater than the budgeted net income of \$183. Total expenses were \$19,132 less than budget. Total income for 2005 of \$274,644 was on budget.

**Central Office Manager's Report:** There are several open phone shifts at the Office. New schedules are out and available at the bookstore. San Francisco General Service unanimously approved the Central Office/Intergroup pamphlet. It is still being discussed by Marin General Service. The proposal is working its way through other districts and will be on the Assembly agenda in April. Two people have become

Faithful Fivers since the last IFB meeting. There are currently 227 meetings listed in Marin County; 86 contributed in 2005. There are 515 in San Francisco; 228 contributed in 2005.

**Central Office Committee Report:** The January COC meeting was cancelled.

7th Tradition and Reading of the 12 Traditions: \$75 was collected

## 2. New Business:

**A. Nominating Committee:** A nominating committee was elected consisting of Nicholas L., Fran K., Andy T., and Bruce K.

**B. The following IFB members declared their availability to serve on the Central Office Committee:** David B., Patty M., Derek D., and Tedra M.

**B. Proposal to move IFB meetings to the Alano Club:** The proposal to move IFB meetings to the Alano club was defeated with 21 opposed, 2 in favor and 10 abstentions.

**C. Coffee at SF IFB meetings:** Coffee at IFB meetings will cost about \$60, or \$1 per person per meeting. Maury will look into whether we can bring our own refreshments to the meetings.



3. Group Rep Reports: None

4. IFB Committee Reports

12th Step Committee: The committee is updating the phone list. The committee needs more members, especially women.

Literature Review Committee: The committee has two new members. A new project is to approach the committees and ask if they would like assistance developing a pamphlet specific to each committee.

The Point Editorial Committee: The committee may have found both a chair and editor! More will be revealed.

Orientation Committee: Four new members attended the orientation meeting this month.

Outreach Committee: There are currently no members on the Outreach Committee.

Website Committee: A new chair is needed. The website has some enhanced features. Dan requested that IFB members check the information for their meetings on the website for accuracy.

Special Events Committee: The next event will be a prom in April.

Special Needs Committee: A questionnaire was included in the meeting materials. Pene requested that IFB members fill them out. Additional questionnaires are available to distribute at AA meetings.

Archives Committee: No report.

Trusted Servants Workshop Committee: The first trusted servants workshop will take place on Saturday, March 11 from 11:30 to 1:30 p.m. It will focus on the role and responsibilities of the group secretary.

5. Special Committee Reports

SF Teleservice: No report.

PI/CPC: The annual meeting and workshops were held last month. Approximately 40 people attended. Elections will be held next month.

5. Non-IFB Liaison Reports

General Service, Marin: There is now an orientation for new GSR's. We are sending two members to Pacific Regional AA Service Assembly in March in southern California. The proposed Central Office pamphlet was discussed at the last meeting. Our budget committee is meeting.

Teleservice, Marin: The new committee met; all officer positions are filled. The annual Spaghetti Feed is in March. Teleservice volunteers provide phone coverage on weekday holidays when the Central Office is closed.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, March 1, 2006 at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at Geary, San Francisco at 7:00 p.m. p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Don B., Acting Secretary

## Fringe Benefits of a Spiritual Recovery

by Kurt C.

The spiritual path to recovery from alcoholism also offers a solution to many of the consequences of chronic physical pain and mobility limitations. Social isolation, self-pity and denial are debilitating symptoms that can be overcome through the use of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. I have experienced relief from those symptoms using the Steps within the supportive and accepting community of Alcoholics Anonymous and have gained acceptance of my disabilities as well as my alcoholism.

In my early twenties I was a healthy, able-bodied man, but then I was involved in a severe motorcycle accident that required more than 2 years of surgery and rehabilitation. During this portion of my life my alcoholism continued to flourish, having begun in earnest when at sixteen I simultaneously had my first drink and my first drunk. After my accident, the surgical interventions that the surgeons had hoped would restore the function of my right leg were less than successful and I was left with a prominent limp. The self-will and denial that was already an established part of my alcoholism crept into the rest of my life when I decided that I could ignore the limitations the accident imposed on my skeleton as well as the advice of my physicians and continue to pursue as active and physically demanding a lifestyle as my will dictated.

In my early thirties it became clear to me that alcohol was interfering in my life, apparently something my friends and

family had already noted. The self-will and stubbornness that kept me drinking and abusing my limbs eventually damaged the joints in my leg and back until the pain and loss of range of motion severely limited and eventually took away completely my ability to walk. As a self described rationalist I denied the possibility of a spiritual solution. I actually began attending A.A. meetings and getting selectively involved in the program for about five years but was unwilling to allow myself to surrender completely to the program described in the book Alcoholics Anonymous.

A lifetime spent denying spirituality as a solution to the challenges of chronic pain, limited mobility and alcoholism led to years of relapse during which all three diseases became progressively worse. I finally reached the point of surrender when I found myself at the front desk of a Salvation Army rehab with my "Tenderloin Samsonite" (two large plastic garbage bags containing everything left in my world). It was in that moment of clarity that a very wise man pointed out to me that accepting my powerlessness over both my alcoholism and my physical limitations was necessary for me to embrace Step One. As I progressed through the Steps, I became capable of accepting pain and limited mobility, and I also began to find that suffering was in fact optional and not something that I had to participate in. If anything this release from suffering has become even more important in my day to day life than the release from the compulsion to drink. ↑

# H.A.L.T.

by A Local Sot

Hungry, Angry, Lonely, and Tired - it sounds like a really bad law firm. This ubiquitous, and in my opinion, most useful of AA acronyms was probably the first one to stick in my mind as a topsy-turvy newcomer and the one that comes to aid most often when I find myself on a dry drunk.

Don't let yourself get too hungry, angry, lonely or tired. This is great advice for anyone, not just alcoholics.

Because of the extreme physiological changes that can occur when these disturbing states arise, restlessness, irritability and discontent become pervasive and sobriety can be compromised, especially in the early stages of recovery. All of these epitomize dis-ease in a very real sense and can incline the alcoholic to seek the usual remedy, booze or another drug.


I remember being amazed when first sober about how much I actually tortured my body during my drinking days. No wonder I was always "medicating". I was always exhausted, always malnourished (even when overweight), always angry at the world and always isolated, at least in mind if not in fact.

When these states occur today, usually because of oversight or a lack of effort (read laziness) on my part, my mind wants to go where it has always gone, escape. In the early stages of recovery the mind is so used to escaping through alcohol and possibly drugs, that there appears to be no alternative: an alternative such as eating a healthy meal; praying for guidance and patience and love and compassion; reaching out to others suffering more than oneself; or taking a good nap, taking it easy, maybe meditating on the wonders of the universe.

These alternatives are real solutions suited to the problem at hand.

If I want to stay sober I must remain vigilant and seek the natural remedy for these disturbing states, not the poison of alcohol or another drug.


In addition to the traditional four HALT bugaboos, I have always added another two for myself and when working with sponsees. These are "elation" and "horny". The AA book "Living Sober" talks about over-elation and how this too can lead to a grandiose and splendid alcoholic relapse. A lack of physical intimacy, too, might lead to depression and a sense of isolation and hopelessness. As the big book says, we must have a healthy respect for sex relations, with not too much salt and not too much pepper. We must find a natural balance.

These two, with the traditional four in HALT, give us another easy to remember acronym, HEALTH! Stay sober! Stay healthy! And best wishes! May your recovery be slow and careful. 

## The Point Editorial Policy

*The Point* publishes articles submitted by members of Alcoholics Anonymous that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within our fellowship. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates its pages, and in determining the content, we 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. 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.

While we edit submissions for purposes of clarity, style, and length, we encourage all writers to express their own experience in their own unique way. 



**In a culture of "Signs & Symbols" it's impossible to imagine how anyone can remember what's what & who's who.....**  
**but**  
**at Alcoholics Anonymous, no matter what sign or symbol you relate to....we are here to help**  
**The Special Needs/Accessibility Committee explores, develops and offers resources to make the AA message and participation in our program available to everyone who reaches out for it.**  
**Please give us the chance to provide that hope of recovery for you!**

**We Care ABOUT YOUR WELL-BEING!**

**The "Special Needs Committee" of**  
**Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous**  
**1821 Sacramento St.**  
**San Francisco, Ca. 415.874.1821**  
**specialneedscommittee@AASF.org**

# Financial Statement

December 2005 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	Dec 05	Jan - Dec 05		Dec 05	Jan - Dec 05
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>					
<b>Income</b>			<b>Shipping</b>	-15.43	62.26
Contributions from Groups			<b>Printing</b>	651.00	651.00
Group Contributions	14,091.35	136,615.18	<b>Equipment Lease</b>	0.00	7,110.96
Honors	0.00	74.99	<b>Repair &amp; Maintenance</b>	178.00	2,352.36
Total Contributions from Groups	14,091.35	136,690.17	<b>Security System</b>	33.50	467.00
Contributions from Individuals			<b>Special Events</b>	0.00	1,710.00
Individual - Unrestricted	5,244.65	11,740.86	<b>Telephone</b>	384.21	4,994.32
Faithful Fiver	593.00	3,106.00	<b>Utilities</b>	209.60	2,063.54
Honorary Contributions	91.00	2,818.50	<b>Travel</b>	0.00	763.24
Total Contributions from Individuals	5,928.65	17,665.36	<b>Training</b>	0.00	20.00
Gratitude Month			<b>Bad Checks</b>	0.00	0.00
Gratitude Month - Groups	6,468.85	12,371.33	<b>Miscellaneous Expense</b>	0.00	-461.33
Gratitude Month - Individual	1,200.00	1,350.00	<b>Total Expense</b>	8,008.21	180,866.12
Total Gratitude Month	7,668.85	13,721.33	<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	22,100.15	28,640.40
Sales - Bookstore	7,860.59	103,653.42	<b>Other Income/Expense</b>		
Special Event Income	0.00	2,404.26	<b>Other Income</b>		
Newsletter Subscript.	33.18	509.66	Other Income	0.00	0.12
Total Income	35,582.62	274,644.20	Interest Income	80.25	867.86
Cost of Goods Sold			<b>Total Other Income</b>	80.25	867.98
Cost of Books Sold	5,474.26	65,137.68	<b>Other Expense</b>		
Total COGS	5,474.26	65,137.68	Depreciation Expense	-2,410.17	1,856.00
Gross Profit	30,108.36	209,506.52	Amortization Expense	-1,260.20	537.24
<b>Expense</b>			<b>Total Other Expense</b>	-3,670.37	2,393.24
Employee Expenses			<b>Net Other Income</b>	3,750.62	-1,525.26
Wages & Salaries	7,600.50	84,371.73	<b>Net Income</b>	\$ 25,850.77	\$ 27,115.14
Employer Tax Expenses	-34.44	7,607.48			
Health Benefits	788.00	9,668.00			
Retirement/Annuity Expense	-7,200.00	0.00			
Workers Comp Ins.	0.00	2,827.43			
Total Employee Expenses	1,154.06	104,474.64			
Professional Fees					
Computer Consulting	406.25	968.75			
Total Professional Fees	406.25	968.75			
Bank Charges					
Credit Card Processing Fees	180.03	1,477.83			
Bank Charges - Other	0.00	108.90			
Total Bank Charges	180.03	1,586.73			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	0.00	950.00			
Postage - Other	119.50	623.85			
Total Postage	119.50	1,573.85			
ASL Expense					
ASL Other	0.00	390.00			
Total ASL Expense	0.00	390.00			
Rent - Office	3,833.75	44,755.00			
Rent - Other	150.00	900.00			
IFB Literature	0.00	52.56			
PI/CPC	-26.84	-107.70			
Filing/Fees	0.00	132.00			
Insurance	0.00	2,383.68			
Internet Expense	0.00	289.15			

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March 2006

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