

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

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

The Point

July 2006

A publication
of the Intercounty Fellowship
of Alcoholics Anonymous

1821 Sacramento Street
San Francisco CA 94109-3528
(415) 674-1821

From Marin call (415) 499-0400
Fax (415) 674-1801
www.aasf.org
aa@aasf.org

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.

Endless Summer

by Katy P.

Endless Summer was my first A.A. meeting. I was still drinking and I went to watch a friend get his three-year chip. I don't remember much except that everyone laughed a lot. When I finally did get sober a number of years later I made a point to go back to Endless Summer. The meeting felt like a breath of fresh air; it was extremely popular at the time and I often had to sit on the floor but I always felt that as a newcomer I had a role in the meeting. In early sobriety when I didn't know many people and meetings were scary, Endless Summer was the one meeting I looked forward to.

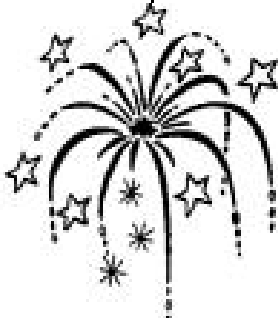

The meeting has changed a lot since then. It has moved twice and is now at 43 Dore Alley in the SOMA area of San Francisco. The meeting has become a lot less popular with only a few people coming each week. Last year a group inventory was done and the meeting was streamlined to deal with our smaller crowd. One thing that hasn't changed about Endless Summer is that we still see a lot of newcomers. They say they really enjoy the meeting and the fresh format. The meeting and its participants strive to create a fun event for Friday night. According to one of the founding members "The mission of Endless Summer is to provide a fun place to stay sober on Friday nights, and a place to talk about relationships in recovery."

The meeting often begins with someone welcoming everyone to Endless Summer "because sobriety doesn't have to be the endless bummer." The meeting's focus on relationships in sobriety has meant a lot to me. As an alcoholic every aspect of my life can be discussed within the context of sobriety but how I relate to other people is especially important. I came into sobriety in a relationship so I really appreciated, and still do, any experience, strength, and hope that can be given about how to navigate a relationship in sobriety. We all have to relate to other people and our alcoholism can't help but affect those relationships so why shouldn't we share what we've learned and what we've been through if not for guidance then at least for compassion and understanding.

It's been said that people leave the program over finance or romance. The people who started Endless Summer took that saying to heart and decided they wanted to talk about romance. But romantic relationships aren't the only relationships discussed at Endless Summer. It is an interview format meeting where speakers are asked questions after their share. Speakers are also questioned about their

(Continued on page 6)

July 2006....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 <u>FIRST MON</u> Spirit of SF Committee, Central Office, 7:30 pm	4 Independence Day Central Office Closed	5 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm, Meeting 7 pm, 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF (Meets in Sausalito in Feb, May, Aug & Nov., Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Ave.)	6	7	
9	10 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 7 pm	11 <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 Bus. Meeting: 7:15 pm	12 <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 6:45 pm	13 <u>SECOND THU</u> Website Committee Central Office, 6 pm	14	15
16 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee, Central Office, 2 pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	17 <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	18 <u>THIRD TUE</u> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo, 7:30 pm	19 <u>THIRD WED</u> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm	20	21	22 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 10 am Business Meeting: 12:30 pm
23 <u>FOURTH SUN</u> Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush, SF 5:30 pm	24	25 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Special Needs Committee, 2:00 pm; Special Events Committee Central Office, 7:30 pm Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 7:30 pm	26 <u>FOURTH WED</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office, 5:30 pm	27 <u>FOURTH THU</u> Marin PI Committee, Alano Club 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael – 7:30 pm <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Committee Meeting: 8:00	28 	29
30	31					

From the Editor...

This month's issue of *The Point* is a summer blockbuster, and it isn't about explosions or car chases. We've got stories for you about the nitty-gritty of sobering up. Our cover features *Endless Summer*, an unconventional A.A. meeting that goes its own way but has helped a lot of newcomers stay sober. One A.A.'s take on the Big Book chapter, "*Into Action*" is full of the stuff it takes to work the program and keep it real. The adventure continues with "*On Sponsorship: Letting Go while Holding On*," a story about how to sponsor people without getting sucked into their alcoholic maelstrom. Another article explores the A.A. acronym *S.L.I.P.* and the dangers of slipping – either letting sobriety lose its priority or still living in pain. We also have an amusing account of the recent *Post-Conference Assembly* that reads like a spy novel, with a group rendezvous in the still hours of morning. Be sure to read about *Living Sober*, San Francisco's very special conference, like no other in the country. This issue is a summer blockbuster for sure. Enjoy!

The Point Committee 

Joke of the Month

Drinking buddies of an alcoholic who died are at his funeral.

As two of his friends pass by the open casket, one remarks to the other, "Sam looks pretty good in death"

"He ought to," rejoined the other, "he hasn't had a drink in three days!"

Do you have an alcoholic or sobering joke to share with us?
Send it to thepoint@aasf.org!

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., Rick K., and Victor V.

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



July 2006 Inside This Issue

Endless Summer	1
July 2006 Calendar	2
From the Editor	3
Joke of the Month	3
Meeting Changes	4
Trusted Servant Registrations	4
Memorials & Anniversaries	4
Group Speakers	5
Flyers	5
On Sponsorship: Letting Go While Hanging On	6
Dear Alky	7
The Bulletin Board	7
Committee Contacts	8
Service Bulletin: Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community	8
Big Book Study Series: Chapter Six—Into Action	9
Faithful Fivers	10
Living Sober Conference	10
Literature Review: <i>AA Around the World</i>	11
Group Contributions	12-13
2006 Post-Conference Assembly	14
Inner Freedom = Freedom from Fear	15
IFB Meeting Summary	16-17
A.A. Acronym: S.L.I.P.	18
Editorial Policy	18
Financial Statement	19
Subscription Form	19



MEETING CHANGES

New Meetings:

Sun	8:00 am	Bernal Heights	BERNAL NEW DAY, 515 Cortland Ave. (BK, SS)
Mon	6:00 pm	San Rafael	CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln at Maple (ME, BB, BK)
Mon	7:30 pm	Noe Valley	EXTREME MAKEOVER: WOMEN'S STEP STUDY, 665 Elizabeth/ Diamond St., School (SS, WO, WH)
Sat	8:00 am	Bernal Heights	BERNAL NEW DAY, 515 Cortland Ave. (BB)

Meeting Changes:

Tue	8:30 pm	Diamond Hts.	DIAMOND HEIGHTS 395 Addison St/ Diamond Heights Blvd., Church (was 395 Diamond Heights Blvd.)
2nd Wed	8:00 pm	San Rafael	MARIN BRIDGING THE GAP 1411 Lincoln Ave., Lincoln Hill Community Church, back lot, upstairs (was 6:45pm)
Thu	7:00 pm	San Rafael	FOUR HORSEMEN 684 Pt. San Pedro Rd. (add CL, SD, ST, was 10 Bayview Dr.)
Fri	12:00 pm	Civic Center	THE PEPPER GROUP 505 Polk St. (add BK, SD, WH)
Fri	8:30 pm	Civic Center	ENDLESS SUMMER 43 Dore St./ Howard St. (was 2900 24th St.)
Sat	12:15 pm	Hayes Valley	THE GREAT FACT S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (was 12:00pm)

No Longer Meeting:

Mon	7:00 pm	SOMA	A WOMAN'S PLACE 1049 Howard St./ Russ St.
Tue	8:00 pm	Crocker Amazon	STREETWISE STEP STUDY 981 Geneva Ave./ Paris St.
Fri	1:30 pm	San Rafael	1:30 RELEASE TENSION Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln/ Maple

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 has disbanded, please call the Central Office immediately, 415-674-1821.**

Thanks for your help in keeping the schedule accurate!

Recently Registered Trusted Servants May 2006

Below are the meetings whose Trusted Servants registered with Central Office during May 2006—twenty-eight in San Francisco and five in Marin. Thank you for registering!

San Francisco

Artists & Writers Fri. 6:30pm; A Step Beyond Thu. 6pm; Bernal New Day Sun. 8am; Big Book Study Sun. 11:30am; Birthday Meeting Sat. 8pm; Daily Reflections Sat. 8am; Dark Secrets Fri. 10pm; Extreme Makeover: Women's Step Study Mon 7:30pm; Firefighters & Friends Tue. 10am; Friday All Groups Fri. 8:30pm; High Noon Thursday Thurs. 12:15pm; Home Group Sat. 8:30pm; K.I.S.S. Mon. 6pm; Living in the Now Mon. 12pm; Queers, Crackpots, and Fallen Women Mon. 5:30pm; Rap Discussion Tue. 12:10pm; Romper Room Sat. 10am; Room to Grow Fri. 8pm; Sisters Circle Sun. 6pm; Speak Easy Wed. 6pm; Strait Jacket Thu. 9am; Sunset Group Wed. 7:30pm; Thanks God Wed. 5pm; The 86'ed Wed. 7am; Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tue 7am; Valencia Smokefree Fri. 6pm; Wednesday Women's Big Book Wed. 6:15pm; Wits End Step Study Tue. 8pm

Marin

Beginners Wed. 7pm.; Fireside Fri. 6:45pm; Just Can't Wait 'til 8 Mon. 6:30pm; Los Ranchitos Wed. 8:30pm; What's It All About Fri. 12pm

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Dina R.,
Lita G.,
Vern S.,
and
Donald W.

ANNIVERSARIES 🎵

John M. 26 years
Friday Night Special:
Esther R. 31 years
Tuesday's Daily Reflections:
Jean C. 23 years

Coming Up!

FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

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

DATE	HOST GROUP	SPEAKER	FROM
07/07	10AM Marina Dock	Abel M.	SF
07/14	Monday Beginners	Glen R.	Too Early
07/21	First Place	Paula S.	San Anselmo
07/28	Ass in a Bag	Ted R.	Cocoanuts

*Intercounty Fellowship
of Alcoholics Anonymous*

12th-Step Workshop

Wednesday, August 9th 2006
at 6:30 p.m.

1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco, CA

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

To help educate and inform the Fellowship, members of Alcoholics Anonymous will share their Twelfth Step work experience. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please join us for the workshop.

Both San Francisco and Marin Counties are seeking men and women willing to share their experience, strength and hope through 12-step work.

Call Central Office at 674-1821 if you have any questions! Or e-mail us: aa@aasf.org

COMING SOON.....

MARIN COUNTY UNITY DAY

SEPTEMBER 16TH 2006

2 PM - 10 PM

CORTE MADERA REC CENTER—498 TAMALPAIS DR., CORTE
MADERA, CA 94925

FOR INFO OR TO BE OF SERVICE, CONTACT KIKI F. AT (415) 342-1651

—Service Opportunity— SPEAKERS WANTED!!

Carry the AA message to schools, professional organizations, the medical community, drunk driving classes, and community groups & events.

PI/CPC

(Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community)

SPEAKER WORKSHOP

(Requirement: two years of continuous sobriety in AA)

Thursday, July 20th, 2006
7:00 p.m.

Central Office: 1821 Sacramento St.
(Between Van Ness & Franklin)

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

The Spirit of San Francisco presents
AA Speaker Meeting
with Bobby J.

Aloha Event

Sunday - August 13

Speaker Meeting 3:00 - 4:00PM

Buffet Dinner 4:30 - 5:30PM

Fun Event 6:00 - 8:00PM

CITY FOREST LODGE

254 Laguna Honda Blvd
(at Plaza St.) San Francisco

\$10 buffet

Information (415) 752-9930

On Sponsorship: Letting Go While Hanging On

by Ted R.

One of the guys I am working with reported to me that he heard this at a meeting—"Let go, or get dragged." My approach to sponsorship has not remained consistent throughout the twenty-one years I have been sober; it has evolved since my sponsor told me, in the early months of my sobriety, "If you are having a bad day, find someone that is having a worse day. If you have one day sober, you can help the new man who only has hours sober. Give your number to every newcomer man that introduces himself, and get their number." Through trial and error, I have developed a way of relating to the new man that keeps me on the firing line, hopefully growing in effectiveness. Each person develops their own style of sponsoring, depending on personality, time available and direction from their sponsor.

When I was new, still seeking my sponsor's approval, which was difficult to get, I said to him, "I have twelve men I am working with". Expecting a pat on the back and a "good job". Instead my sponsor said, "That is not enough. You want to sponsor so many men that you lose track of the numbers. Stop counting. Soon you will not know who you are sponsoring and who you are not sponsoring. There will be so many you can't keep track."

I was surprised. He went on to say that I was the type of man that tried to control everyone, "You are very sick, and probably have a list of who is on what step." I did have that "list". "How else could I manage them?" "Exactly. Don't manage them. You sponsor them when they are in front of you or on the phone talking with you. Otherwise

they are on their own. You do not own them. You do not fire them. You are just helping them with the steps when they have the willingness to do the steps."

I was confused; I had witnessed relationships where a longtime member is a constant companion with a newcomer. Taking him to meetings, dinner, even movies. I questioned my sponsor about these types of sponsors. "That is not sponsorship; that is friendship. It is not what we are talking about. Your job is to be of maximum usefulness. To be on the firing line. Helping as many men as possible get into the steps as a way of life. Never say no to an A.A. request. If you spend all your time with one man, what about the many others that will not have the chance to recover because no one is showing them the steps?" His standard seemed impossible to live up to.

Shortly after this conversation I had said "yes" to a few new men, and some of the ones I had been working with disappeared. I did not know who or how many men I was working with. It was a wonderful feeling of carrying the message and not the mess. My sponsor said, "Stand up for something, or fall for anything." I do not have to work my program harder, or go to more meetings, because the new man is having a difficult time. I keep to a schedule and strive to set an example of commitment to A.A.. Keeping the focus on me. I started defining my "job" as a sponsor. There are guidelines in the Big Book.

I am not saying that in twenty-one years it has been easy,

(Continued on page 11)


Endless Summer (Continued from page 1)

relationships with family, friends, a Higher Power, their sponsor and sponsees. After the interview the speaker answers questions from the audience. It is a unique opportunity to cover any topics that weren't covered during the interview. Then chips are handed out for sobriety birthdays and we sing Happy Birthday. There is also a discussion at the end of the meeting.

One of my favorite parts about Endless Summer is the matchmaking. During matchmaking we ask for newcomers and then ask if anyone needs a sponsor. If anyone indicates that they want a sponsor then we ask if anyone in the audience would like to sponsor that person. I have never seen anyone who asked for a sponsor not get one. I didn't attend Endless Summer when it first began so I

don't really understand the reputation it has garnered but I have been going ever since I got sober and it has helped me stay sober.

In the past year or more attendance has dropped drastically. There are still newcomers but we often have trouble finding people to hold commitments. But the meeting continues with a new speaker every week and new sobriety birthdays to celebrate with chips and hugs.

Endless Summer, like sobriety, is always changing and yet always staying the same. It's an A.A. meeting where people gather to share experience, strength, and hope, stay sober for an hour, and be of service. Endless Summer is at 8:30pm Friday nights at 43 Dore Alley. If you are looking for a service commitment at the group level, this is the place for you! Please come and share your experience, strength and hope. 

Dear Alky

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

Dear Alky;

It seems everywhere I turn people are talking about death or actually dying: my family, friends, and now a co-worker tells me his girlfriend is actively suicidal again – she’s a ‘cutter,’ in his words. I feel worn down by all my work in recovery and now I’m starting to think about it. In all honesty, I don’t see how things will ever get any better than they are right now, and I’ll have to work another fifteen years (way past retirement age). My usual meetings seem strangely irrelevant, not hitting home. My body craves a long, dark rest. The weight of the world is on my shoulders and I need a break. Should I seek outside help? Shouldn’t people have a right to check out when they’re ready?

Swimming Upstream

Dear Swimming;

AA has no opinion on any individual’s use of psychiatry



Make some changes, and maybe lots of changes, if you’re stuck in a rut.

or prescription therapy, but many members do make successful use of such professional approaches, and often come back and tell us about it in their shares. In your case, as a practical matter, you should keep a suicide hotline number with you at all times.

But frankly, it sounds to me like you’ve already got the key to unlock your dilemma: make some changes, and maybe lots of changes, if you’re stuck in a rut. I’d start with a new, single service commitment and a new meeting that you can really focus on. It’s time for another inventory with your sponsor, time to solidify your daily meditation. Then, neither your fears, nor your ‘committee,’ nor the world’s talk of murder and mayhem can get to you. A newcomer just might.

Take it from a former member of various right-to-die groups: you’re not there yet. You haven’t recognized your calling. You will once a sponsee brings a glimmer of light into your gloom. Then one day down the road it’ll be time for a philosophical or medical choice to bid good-bye.

Alky

If you have a question for Alky, please write to us at thepoint@aasf.org. We welcome our readers’ participation!

Bulletin Board

Pointers;



Thanks so much for this great opportunity to speak out on A.A. Your Bulletin Board idea hit me just the right way and I am anxious to express my opinion on a topic that has concerned me since I first started attending meetings in San Francisco over ten years ago.

We often talk about the difference between spirituality and religion in A.A., a distinction that I think is important and valid. Yet sometimes, in meetings, I have heard (and voiced myself) criticisms directed usually at one or the other of the major branches of Christianity. I have heard people refer to themselves as “recovering Catholics” or “recovering Mormons” or similar descriptions, and then go on to berate

the religion of their birth. I have heard others demean Eastern traditions in the same way, ridiculing or putting down poorly understood concepts, such as karma or the guru-disciple relationship.

Now, of course, everyone has a right to say whatever they want in a meeting and yet, I think, we should be very careful about such criticisms because you never know when a newcomer is present, and the newcomer might be a devout adherent of the religion I am criticizing. Therefore, I could be doing a huge disservice to a suffering alcoholic by criticizing any religion (or lack of one) in the open forum of an A.A. meeting.

I hope this opinion offends no one. It is just that, my opinion. Thanks for listening.

An A.A. Agnostic

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. calmontl@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. lynnorel@aol.com

12th STEP COMMITTEE

Victor V. 415.726.0518

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Bruce K. bruceken@aol.com

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

Steve N. snolan12000@yahoo.com

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Tim M. gryffindor-house@earthlink.net

THE POINT

Victor V. 415.726.0518

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

Judi C./Scott B. sfteservice@aasf.org

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Jill H. 415.647.3553

Service Bulletin

Planting Seeds with PI/CPC *by Jill H.*

"You've got to try this out," Paul would quietly say. "You'll love it."

I don't remember how long this went on.

But every few months, when the A.A. Public Information workshop was coming up, there would be Paul. "You've got to go to PI," he'd chant, a wink in his eye. "You'll love it."

"I will," I would sigh, whining. "Really, I will."

I owe a great debt of gratitude to many wonderful people for the quality of my sobriety. Paul is one of these people.

Four years ago, as I innocently attended a meeting to be followed by a Unity Day Public Information workshop – you guessed it – there was Paul. "Jill," he whispered in my ear, "the workshop is right after this meeting. You'll really love PI."

Resigned at last to my fate, I went.

So began my adventure in Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC). And what an amazing adventure it has become!

I have many incredible stories from this service work that fill my heart with love and my soul with a sense of purpose. Here are just a few:

Sharing the degradation that alcohol brought me to before a room full of men in a DUI class, and seeing two big guys stare up at the ceiling to prevent the tears from running down their faces. Identification – the very foundation of this program!

Taking questions from a 10th grade class when one young man was so terrified that he *had* to ask: "Is it normal to wake up somewhere and you don't know where you are and you can't remember how you got there?"

Speaking to 4th year students at the School of Homeopathy as they took copious notes and peppered us with wonderful questions, when suddenly I had a simple realization: these students were going to be treating alcoholics and even loved ones of alcoholics for years to come. And because John and I (we always speak in twos) took an hour out of our day, these budding professionals could now speak to their patients about Alcoholics Anonymous with ease and confidence.

No drink or drug ever filled me with such an amazing sense of purpose!

Each time I speak at a DUI class or other PI event, I let them know I'm not there to determine or to judge whether they have a drinking problem – I'm there only to let them know about Alcoholics Anonymous. "Maybe you believe you have a problem, or perhaps some day, years from now, you may feel you have a problem," I like to say. "Or perhaps a friend or a co-worker or a loved one has a problem and wants help. I want them to know about A.A.. That's all!" And then I watch the class relax; I've learned to inform, not perform.

Unlike many other service commitments, I don't have to commit to any one day each week or month to speak for PI/CPC. I just review the monthly listing of DUI classes or school events that requested A.A. speakers and look for one that fits my schedule. In recent months we have been invited to the conference of the American Association of Physicians Assistants, Project Homeless Connect, the USF Nursing Students Association HealthFair, and to City College of San Francisco, San Francisco State University, Lincoln High School, and others.

There is no way Paul could have prepared me for the incredible experiences I've had these past four years.

So now, like Paul, I invite you to try this PI/CPC thing out.

You'll love it. 

Big Book Study: Chapter Six “INTO ACTION”

By Russell O.

Nowhere in the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, does it say that this is a program of thinking. It's a program of action. In fact, my thinking is what kept me drinking—and not sane. Even in my resistance to A.A., I know that my most superb thinking will not give me the relief that A.A. action will. This chapter is the most worn part of my book.

By the time I got to this chapter the first time around, I had told my sponsor that I was powerless over alcohol, I had come to believe in a power greater than myself, I was willing to turn my will and my life over to God and I had written down a lot of resentments. I did all this because I really wanted to get to Step Nine (because if I could just fix that one big thing, everything else would be fine, right?) Wrong. I was told that before Nine, there is One through Eight. So be it, I was willing to go to any lengths. So I jumped into action.

Seven steps are discussed in this chapter, so if you're a newcomer, slow down, *take it easy*, more will be revealed. As Step Two says, Came to believe, that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. It doesn't say I have to believe right away. It was taking action, doing the rest of the steps and being part of A.A. that has brought me closer to God and to believing in a power greater than me. After I made the decision in Step Three to turn my will and my life over to my Higher Power, the biggest leap of faith that I have had to take in A.A. has been after the Fourth Step inventory—Step Five.

The leveling of our pride is what the Fifth Step tries to do and it emphasizes honesty. My experience has been just that. If I am not totally honest, I won't get complete results. It's taken doing the best I can and then doing it again.

With Steps Six and Seven I became willing to have my “character defects” removed. I like to call “character defects” survival skills that no longer play a role in my life today. That survival skill that served me as a drunk



*Even in my
resistance to A.A.,
I know that my
most superb think-
ing will not give me
the relief that A.A.
action will.*

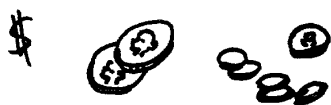
just won't serve me as a sober member of society. I am so accustomed to using these skills that I need help from God to change. “Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us.” That means more action.

In Step Eight I made my list of people that I had harmed, reminded myself that I was willing to go to any lengths for victory over alcohol, and then prayed for the willingness to take right action in dealing with my Ninth Step amends. Some of my amends were just cleaning up some traffic tickets and paying some bar tabs. It is the relationships with other people that have been the most challenging for me. The best guidance I have used from the Big Book is on page 83. When going to make our amends, “We should be sensible, tactful, considerate and

humble without being servile and scraping. As God's people we stand on our feet; we don't crawl before anyone.” Step Nine for me has been an ongoing process of relating to people in a different way, from a different place. Not creating the damage in the first place. That brings me to Steps Ten and Eleven.

Steps Ten and Eleven are the steps that are the lifetime work ahead of me. I read pages 84 through 88 almost daily. Honestly, sometimes it sticks and other times it doesn't. Either way, it's a grounding point for me. Just making the effort and realizing that “Oh yeah, that's why I feel that way, or that's what I can do to help myself,” is a key factor. Being conscious of my actions and then using prayer and meditation are the daily actions that keep me moving forward in my development in sobriety. The most important thing for me is to not “drift into morbid reflection”. To do that not only diminishes my usefulness to others, but to me.

This has been my very concise reflection on the meatiest part of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. Today, I have problems in areas of my life where I never used to even have areas. For the newcomer reading this, I hope you can take even one little snippet of something from my experience and put it to good use, and remember, keep coming back. ↑



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.	Michael W.
Bruce D.	Nancie G.
Caroline A.	Pat P.
Carolyn S.	Patti W.
Casey L.	Paul W.
David B.	Peg L.
David H.	Pene P.
David P.	Peter F.
Elizabeth S.	Randall S.
Esther R.	Rebekah D.
Frances L.	Rich G.
Giles H.	Robert K.
Greg W.	Sheila H.
Herman B.	Stephen N.
Jane K.	Steve A.
Janet B.	Steve R.
Jim H.	Steven S.
Karen K.	Tim M.
Lauren H.	Tony J.
Lisa M.	Dennis & Lucy O.



Living Sober Conference

by Anonymous

It is that time of year again when the annual Western Roundup/Living Sober Conference comes to San Francisco. It's a big A.A. conference for the LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender) communities and is eagerly anticipated every year. Everyone is welcome. There are many opportunities for service to get this huge event off the ground and keep it going year after year.

I was on the Information committee a few years ago and learned first-hand how working with many other alcoholics of all types can be both rewarding and challenging. An event like this brings together all sorts of men and women, many of whom have very strong opinions and personalities. One of the first things I learned doing service for the conference was to "pause when agitated" and practice "restraint of pen and tongue". Many people care very deeply about how Living Sober is handled and only want the best conference for the many attendees.

My position on the Information Committee entailed getting the word out on fundraising events and registration options for the conference. It was great to be part of the process that raises the large amount of funds needed to put this conference together as well as ensures that people actually learn about and register for it. It was the year when we got the Living Sober web site up and that helped a great deal as well.

When the conference actually arrives there are a lot of other service opportunities. Folks are needed to run the on-site registration and information tables, act as security and runners, and chair the many special topic meetings that are a large part of the weekend. Not to mention that folks are also needed to sell commemoratives, put on a musical, and even procure speakers for the main A.A. meetings. It's a lot of work, but can be very rewarding and can bring one's sobriety to the next level. At least that's what it's been like for me.

Even though the overall attendance at Living Sober has fallen off somewhat in recent years due to the many other regional conferences, there are still many people who look forward and come to this conference. In my experience, not only is it tough to get sober, it is also tough to stay sober as a gay person in a world that looks down on me and still casts judgment in many ways. The Living Sober Conference can help with many more troubles and issues in addition to staying away from that first drink and I need all of that. ↑

Living Sober 2006 will be held at the
Bill Graham Auditorium
June 30 through July 2.

For more information call 415 978 2478, visit
www.livingsober.org, or just go!

Literature Review

A.A. Around the World: Adventures in Recovery

by Anonymous



I am a big fan of “A.A. on the Road,” a feature in *The Point*, which includes a local A.A. member’s experience of attending A.A. meetings

while vacationing or living outside of the Bay Area. Some of my favorite vacation experiences have been the chance to go to A.A. meetings “on the road” and I enjoy hearing others share that same experience. While having a home group has been essential to my recovery, it’s also been great for me to get out of my “comfort zone” of Bay Area Alcoholics Anonymous and to see that the solution is available in different languages and cultures.

I mention this as an introduction to the valuable publication from A.A. Grapevine: *A.A. Around the World: Adventures in Recovery* which features a wide variety of A.A. experience, strength and hope shared by A.A. members from around the world. While this book provides an impression of A.A. meetings and fellowship all over the world, it also includes history of the origins of A.A. in many different locations. The book is divided into five sections: Making Meetings, What We Were Like, Growth, Loners, and Interviews. Most of the selections are two or three pages in length and would be perfect for discussion at an A.A. meeting that uses Grapevine materials or other A.A. literature as its focus. The Interviews section contains the longest selections and is the most historical part of the book. There are interviews with A.A. members, usually involved in General Service, from the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Columbia, Poland and Kenya, and each describes the development of Alcoholics Anonymous in their country.

Included, also, is a description of the progress of A.A. in Brazil, which got along for many years with virtually no literature in their native language of Portuguese. Even

once A.A. literature in Portuguese existed, many A.A. members in Brazil were reluctant to use it because the literature hadn’t been crucial to their getting sober. Here again I was struck at the differences in how the program of recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous works in various places. In Brazil, it sounds like it is literally, “one alcoholic sharing with another” that has kept many A.A. members sober. While I recognize the crucial importance of that, it’s hard to imagine not having A.A. literature to rely upon, the A.A. literature that I sometimes take for granted. Reading these stories written by A.A. members from around the world, I enjoyed learning about the different circumstances, languages and cultures where the program of Alcoholics Anonymous exists, but finally concluded that our program of recovery can work very well despite those differences.

Towards the end of this book, the A.A. member interviewed from the Czech Republic reminds us of the results our Seventh Tradition contributions can have in carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to those all over the world, “. . . that when people put a dollar in the basket, they don’t understand what the New York office is doing in terms of helping groups internationally.” (pg. 137) Just like I can become attached to my home group and think that’s all there is to Alcoholics Anonymous, I can also forget the connection we have to these overseas groups through our contributions to General Service in New York. Contributions from our groups enable A.A. World Services to carry the message through translations of materials and assisting groups around the world. From the evidence in this book, *A.A. Around the World: Adventures in Recovery*, that is contribution money that is extremely well spent. ↑

On Sponsorship (Continued from page 6)

personalities being what they are. My sponsor said, “Principles before personalities, is referring to your personality not theirs.”

My personality has interfered and thrown off course many relationships. The men that have passed through my life have helped me stay sober—the good examples and the bad examples—the loafers, slippers and sneakers—the whole shoe department. I thank God for all the men that have struggled to stay sober with me these twenty one-years. ↑

- • • • •
- For more information on sponsorship, check •
- out the pamphlet *Questions and Answers* •
- *on Sponsorship*. It is available at the Central •
- Office bookstore and includes information for •
- those seeking a sponsor, those wanting to be •
- a sponsor, for groups planning a sponsoring •
- activity, service sponsorship, and more! •
- • • • •

AA Group Contributions - April 2006

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	April 2006	YTD	Name	April 2006	YTD
Fellowship					
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	30.00	98.00	Streetfighters Sa 9am		46.80
Contribution Box	104.28	220.07	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		100.00
Deer Park Discovery Group		40.00	Sunday Friendship Sun 7pm		120.00
Gay Newcomers Group		13.57	Survivors M 12pm		138.00
IFB	84.96	309.96	T.G.I.F. F 6pm	59.28	143.94
Men's Forum Tu		1,000.00	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm	68.89	368.89
SEC Anonymous Prom	117.00	117.00	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm	130.00	370.54
The Chosen Ones		40.00	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm	70.52	70.52
Unidentified Group	177.00	1,440.81	Thurs. Night Speaker, MV	381.50	796.50
Total Fellowship	\$ 513.24	\$ 3,279.41	Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 8pm		550.00
Marin Group Contributions			Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		503.98
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am	74.07	74.07	We, Us and Ours M 650pm	189.50	189.50
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm	50.00	50.00	Wednesday Noon W 12pm	383.00	383.00
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am	160.00	160.00	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am	138.30	194.17
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		573.00	<u>Women on Monday M 7pm</u>		150.27
Beginners Tu 7pm		156.00	Total Marin Group Contributions	\$ 3,819.01	\$ 10,805.50
Beginners W 7pm		110.00	SF Group Contributions		
Bounce Back M 6pm		120.00	515pm Smokeless F	90.00	90.00
Caledonia Sun 8pm	121.08	530.56	6am Marina Dock Sa		60.00
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		112.50	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		94.18
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		39.00	830am Smokeless Th		64.43
Experience, Strength & Hope(Marin) Sa 6pm	75.00	75.00	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		115.00
Fairfax Friday Night F 830pm		100.00	AA Step Study Su 6pm		286.75
Girls Night Out W 815pm		10.65	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		28.35
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm	152.00	152.00	Afro American F 8pm	89.17	89.17
Gratitude M 2pm		20.00	All Together Now Th 8pm	93.27	321.47
Happy Hour (Marin) Th 6pm	75.00	75.00	Amazing Grace M 7pm	50.00	50.00
Hillside Candlelight F 830pm		100.00	Any Lengths Sat 930am	117.00	297.60
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		95.60	As Bill CCs It Sun 8am	80.55	80.55
Island Group Th 8pm		161.50	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm	337.24	337.24
Keepin' It Real Th 6pm	60.00	120.00	Beginner Big Book Step Th 630pm		25.00
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm	434.50	434.50	Be Still AA Su 11am		120.84
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		22.72	Beach Meeting\Meditation Sa 930am		40.05
Monday Blues M 630pm	272.50	272.50	Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		86.05
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		856.81	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm		269.71
More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		30.00	Big Book Basics F 8pm	346.05	346.05
Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm		100.00	Big Book Study Su 1130am		68.38
Noon Tu 12pm		193.50	Boys Night Out Tu 730pm		21.00
North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm		150.00	Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		141.60
On Awakening 7D 530am		210.00	Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) W 8pm		111.38
Primary Purpose W 830pm	300.00	300.00	Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm	20.00	88.00
Refugee Th 12pm		30.00	Cocoanuts Su 9am		79.00
Reveille 7D 7pm		100.00	Cow Hollow Men's Group		124.50
Rise N Shine Sun 10am		67.50	Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		11.11
Saturday Serenity Sa 8pm		65.50	Design for Living Sat 8am		235.09
Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm	49.56	147.17	Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		528.00
Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag Su 830a		250.00	Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		234.62
Sober & Serene F 7pm	250.00	250.00	Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	198.82	198.82
Steps to Freedom M 730pm	324.31	324.31	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	256.52	476.82
Steps To The Solution W 715pm		40.00	Each Day a New Beginning W 7am	284.26	583.08
			Early Joyous & Free Th 7am	60.00	60.00

Name	April 2006	YTD	Name	April 2006	YTD
Easy Does It Tu 6pm	90.00	160.00	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		351.29
Early Start F 6pm		576.16	Saturday Matinee 2pm	60.00	60.00
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	82.40	855.18	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		184.73
Endless Summer F 830pm		26.00	Seacliff Th 830pm	151.70	151.70
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		827.70	Serenity House	200.00	500.00
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		210.22	Serenity Seekers M 730pm	550.00	945.00
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		180.00	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		237.13
Fireside Chat Th 8pm	213.28	213.28	SFPOA Th 7pm		210.00
Fireside Chat Tu 8pm		81.28	Sisters Circle Su 6pm	93.00	328.91
Friday All Groups F 830pm	546.68	1,806.68	Sober & Centered F 7pm		120.95
Friendly Circle Su 830pm		254.34	Sober Across the Board M-Sa 830am	10.00	40.00
Four Forty Niners F 8pm		67.20	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		112.59
Goodlands Su 2pm		88.98	Step Talk Su 830am	376.93	671.18
High Noon Friday 1215pm		351.94	Stepping Out Sat 6pm		32.77
High Noon Monday 1215pm	281.11	518.48	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	76.80	76.80
High Noon Thursday 1215pm	183.00	225.60	Straight Jackets Th 9am		52.47
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	79.59	285.42	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 1030am		365.79
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	142.20	228.41	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc Su 730pm	716.29	1,041.62
Hilldwellers M 8pm		74.40	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 545pm		58.80
Home Group Sat 830pm	292.80	292.80	Sunset 11'ers F	50.00	50.00
Hot Java F 12am		90.00	Sunset 11'ers Su		102.85
How It Works Sat 2pm		55.39	Sunset 11'ers Tu	87.00	87.00
Huntington Square W 630pm	116.56	528.07	Sunset 11'ers W		20.00
Ingleside Beginners Su 5pm		22.85	Sunset 9'ers F	87.99	170.50
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		60.00	Sunset 9'ers M		119.11
Just Alkies F 7pm	42.00	42.00	Sunset 9'ers Sa		131.65
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am	906.45	906.45	Sunset 9'ers Th	64.58	64.58
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		93.32	Sunset 9'ers Tu	47.00	213.68
Last Call Su 10pm		115.00	Sunset 9'ers W	60.00	196.09
Light Steppers Su 7pm		120.00	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		278.00
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		245.96	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		80.00
Luke's Group W 8pm		60.00	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm		187.00
Lush Lounge Sa 2pm		208.80	Ten Years After Su 6pm		410.56
Marina Discussion F 830pm		517.67	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am	112.80	112.80
Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		50.40	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	110.02	246.72
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	58.48	193.07	They Stopped In Time M 8pm		130.98
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am		125.00	Too Early Sat 8am		312.05
Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm	49.86	69.17	Transrecovery F 630pm		9.40
Mission Fellowship		259.73	Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm		90.00
Mission Terrace W 8pm		142.40	Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am		27.36
Monday Beginners M 8pm		300.00	Walk of Shame W 8pm		120.00
New Highs W 130pm		70.80	Waterfront Sun 8pm		366.52
New Hope Big Book M 630pm		22.69	We Care Tu 12pm		183.92
New Life W 7pm		128.25	Wednesday Women's Big Book W 615pm		60.00
Newcomers Tu 8pm	36.14	36.14	West Portal W 915pm		103.21
Newcomers Group Tu 7pm		214.50	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	34.92	34.92
One Liners Th 830pm		667.86	Women Living Sober Sa 1030am		79.89
Parkside Th 830pm		85.50	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	149.11	223.20
Park Presidio M 830pm	175.20	175.20	Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm		82.75
Pax West M 12pm		441.68	Women's Promises F 7pm		78.85
Pax West Th 12pm		143.89	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		57.77
Pax West Th 12pm		40.15	YAHOO Step Sa 11am		35.00
Rebound W 830pm		85.00	Total SF Group Contributions	\$ 8,356.77	\$ 29,691.94
Rule 62 W 10pm		279.00	TOTAL	\$ 12,689.02	\$ 43,776.85

2006 Post Conference Assembly: Panel 55

by Steve N.

The day started unlike most of my Saturdays. I was ordering a drip coffee with an added shot of espresso at 6:15 in the morning, because I wasn't quite sure when we were to meet for the carpool to San Jose and I did not want to miss my ride. I would normally be in bed. Fellow G.S.R.'s from the district trickled in until we had about a dozen people ready to travel.

Each group can send a General Service representative to their district meeting, which once a year has agenda topics that will be discussed at the conference. The district is part of an area, ours being the Central Northern Coastal Area and our area is represented by a delegate. We give our group consciences on these agenda topics to the delegate who is our link to the conference and the General Service Office in New York. At the pre-conference assembly the general service representative has a chance to share his or her group's conscience on these topics in front of 200-300 other representatives from our area and the delegate. Then the delegate goes to the conference. For this conference we requested a pamphlet be created by the General Service Office describing what Intergroup and Central offices do throughout North America and Canada. The delegate carried that conscience to the conference, along with many others. He then returned from his trip to New York and would give us a report.

Francisco A., our delegate, informed me that our pamphlet proposal was discussed but a decision was made by the literature review committee to take no action on the proposal. I asked him what that meant and he described how interest and enthusiasm at an area level may get a proposal to the conference, but it is the conscience of the literature review committee acting for A.A. as a whole that decides whether that proposal continues forward to discussion. He reminded me to not give up, that some good proposals take years to make it to the development process.

The orientation was conducted by Nancy H., a past delegate. Nancy reminded everyone that some of the material may seem like a repeat of previous business from past panels. The content of the business goes deep, not wide. She also reminded us to enjoy the process and let time be our teacher.

After the officers' reports and approval of the pre-conference minutes, we got to discuss and vote on one item of old business: That CNCA form a special needs standing committee. The strongest argument was from Tim W. He asked us all to consider Tradition Nine when deciding to create a new committee: Each A.A. group

needs the least possible organization. The vote to create a new committee did not receive a two-thirds majority.

We continued with new business: That a pamphlet be created specifically for the alcoholic who suffers from grave emotional and mental disorders such as Serious Depressive Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, and Schizophrenia. The discussion was emotional and at times tense. The strongest arguments for not going forward with the pamphlet were the existing literature that covered various aspects of medications, mental illness and Tradition Ten: Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues.

The second item of new business was the proposal to reduce the number of area assemblies from four per year to three. Some thought that we should increase the number of assemblies, while others thought we should add another day onto each of the existing assemblies. Whatever the decision, General Service should be attractive to new A.A.'s, their groups and their representatives.

Our final order of business: Come up with a procedure to automatically discontinue pamphlets with low distribution levels over five years, so storage and production costs can be reduced. At this point I headed outside for fresh air and then started cruising the kitchen for lunch. But before lunch we had to elect a new Area Officer. Our current Registrar, Pam B., had to step down because of health reasons. We elect officers using the third legacy voting procedure. If you have never experienced it, you have to. I have felt and seen a GOD of our understanding work through the collective conscience of 200 people to elect an officer. This time it was from eight well qualified and motivated individuals. After four rounds of ballots, two names went into a hat and Tim W. was picked to be the new registrar.

Lunch was steamed chicken and vegetables. Each serving was wrapped in tin foil with the spices added and allowed to steam for two hours before being served. The food melted in my mouth.

The agenda for the afternoon included Francisco A.'s report from the conference in New York City, a question and answer session and panel presentations on the theme topics of this panel: Sponsorship, Service, and Self-Support. Time permitting the assembly tries to provide a final outlet for the representatives who haven't heard enough of themselves already, called: What's on your mind.

Francisco A. is part of the Report and Charter committee

(Continued on page 15)

Inner Freedom = Freedom from Fear

by Li L

“Use Freedom from Fear Spray to alleviate fear and bring inner freedom. It can be used around the body, in the environment, on pets, plants and for energy fields of all kinds to bring an experience of greater inner freedom and peace. It is nice to use with groups and in ceremony. It is in a base of distilled water with a light Lavender scent added.” Only \$24.95

While doing a little research on the subject for this piece, I ran across the above ad for a sure-fire antidote to what ails you, thinking, “If life were only that easy!” I was reminded of my drinking career and thought I might even have used my bottled remedy on a few pets and plants. I certainly sprayed it around the environment—usually in ways that would disgust the squeamish!

Of course, we are all old hands at using a bottled remedy to alleviate the fear that paralyzed us like frightened deer in the headlights of a vehicle bearing down on us. Only this vehicle was life. And we were deathly afraid. Afraid to live and afraid to die. We were at the jumping off point, that place that almost all alcoholics eventually come to, where we are faced with oblivion or surrender, surrender to a power greater than ourselves.

My experience has been that if I choose surrender I find freedom – inner freedom that is also freedom from fear! This is the great gift that the spiritual path expressed in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous can bestow. *If I am willing to change. If I am willing to grow. If I am willing to let go of old ideas.*

Freedom in our fellowship (as I understand it) is always an inside job, always a matter of taking action and always a matter of conforming my wild and chaotic mind to spiritual principles as expressed in the Twelve Steps. I dare say freedom, real inner freedom, is possible even when incarcerated or otherwise constrained by life’s circumstances.

“Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.” It’s amazing how many newcomers read the second part of this promise as “Economic insecurity will leave us.” I know I did. It wasn’t until later that I realized it is the fear that is paralyzing, not the imagined financial bogeyman in the dark.

Inner freedom is freedom from fear and the A.A. path leads us to this freedom, one step at a time. ↑

Post-Conference Assembly *(Continued from page 14)*

when he goes to the conference but he gave a well-rounded synopsis of the business. His committee met for close to sixty hours in five days, not including outside meetings, tours and conference business. One of the topics he discussed that stood out for me was the concern over the lack of growth in A.A. Although revenues were up four percent in 2005, those monies came from fewer groups. He talked about the continued struggles of remote districts to communicate with each other and G.S.O.

My day in San Jose reminded me of my responsibility to the alcoholic who still suffers. If that suffering alcoholic makes it to the group I represent, I want the right literature to be available. I want the spirit of love and tolerance to embrace them. I want our message to be so strong and attractive that the newcomer will seek out still other meetings, get a Big Book, find a spiritual advisor, work the twelve steps and join us in recovery from alcoholism. ↑

The Point is looking for a layout editor.

The Point Layout Editor must be able to attend committee meetings on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. They should be organized, detail-oriented, and possess strong computer (MS Publisher and MS Word). Training in graphic design and/or experience with layout or production for a publication or newsletter is strongly preferred, but not specifically required.

Call Maury at Central Office, or come to a committee meeting, for more information!

IFB Meeting Summary — June 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	P	Francesca K.	West Portal	P	Orion P.	Marina Dock 6am	A**
Andy T.	Waterfront	P	Dylan C.	They Stopped in Time	P	Nicholas L.	Some Are Sicker Than...	P
Anthony J.	Founders Group	P	Gaspar L.	Keep It Simple	P	Nicholas S.	Sutter St. Beginners	P
Brian H.	Living Sober with HIV	P	Greg S.	Beginner's Warmup	A*	Omar C.	Tuesday Chip	A*
Bruce K.	Sunset Speaker Step	P	Heather K.	Serenity Seekers	R	Pascal G.	Monday Night Stag	P
Brian K.	Eureka Valley Topic Disc.	P	Joe G.	Beginners	P	Patty M.	Huntington Square	P
Carol E.	Happy Hour	P	Joe H.	Gratitude Group	A*	Penelope P.	Amazing Grace	P
Chris H.	Friendly Circle	A**	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P	Rebekah D.	Fell Street Step	P
Chris T.	Keep Coming Back	P	Julia W.	Sesame Step	A**	Richard R.	We Care	P
Clifford B.	Spawn of Straight Jacket	P	Karin K.	24 Hour Plan	P	Ryan W.	Tiburon BB	R
Creighton B.	Downtown Mill Valley	A**	Larry B.	Castro Discussion	P	Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sat.	X
Curtis S.	Sunday Gay Men's Stag	A**	Lauren H.	Ten Years After	P	Stephanie R.	Live & Let Live	P
Dan C.	Sunday Night Castro SD	A**	Liz C.	Mill Valley Speaker	A*	Stephen R.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Dan Z.	Each Day a New Beginning	P	Luis M.	High Noon Tuesday	P	Steve .	Terra Linda Group	P
Danna P.	Treasurer	P	Lynnore G.	Walk Of Shame	P	Steve S.	Homegroup	P
Daniel B.	Too Early	A**	Matt T.	Fairfax Friday Night	P	Tedra M.	Come N Get It	A*
David B.	Federal Speaker	R	Maury P.	Central Office Manager	P	Terry B.	High Noon Thursday	X
David L.	Work in Progress	R	Michael L.	Attitude Adjustment Hour	P	Tim M.	Join the Tribe	P
David P.	Goodlands	P	Michael S.	Sunset 9'ers Sat.	R	Tom R.	Mill Valley 7AM	P
Derek D.	Reality Farm	P	Michelle W.	Cow Hollow Young People	P	Vickey D.	Sisters Circle	A**
Don B.	Friday Fell Street	P	Monika H.	SFPOA	P	Victor V.	Stepping Up	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			
Rick K.	Join the Tribe	Mark	Blue Book Special	Casey L.	Marin Teleservice		
Shawn	High Noon Thursday (Alt.)	Casey	Sunday Corte Madera	Mitsi H.	H&I		
Anil	Tiburon Monday Mens Stag	Beatrice	Mid Morning Support (Alt)	Karen S.	SF General Service		
Chuck	10 Years After	Elizabeth S.	Firefighters and Friends	Trevor F.	Marin General Service		

Following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the June 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: Steve R. gave the report. This is the next-to-last meeting of this term. Tonight we will have abbreviated reports due to the earlier Annual Business Meeting. A bylaws amendment will be voted on. IFB members will be polled for availability to serve on the Central Office Committee. The IFB will elect officers and at-large COC members next month.

Central Office Manager's Report: No report.

Central Office Committee Report: David P. gave the report. The committee discussed the process for completing the 2005 financials, reclaiming a fee from our tax accountant and began an analysis of the salaries of Central Office staff.

Treasurer's Monthly Report: Danna P. gave the report. The net income for April was \$4,994, which is \$8,038 greater than the budgeted net

loss of (\$3,044). Unrestricted cash as of April 30, 2006 totaled \$48,852 and is sufficient to pay the budgeted expenses for three months. Unrestricted cash decreased by (\$451) since March 31st. Cash provided from operations in April totaled approximately \$5,500. The Supplemental Compensation Fund was funded \$6,571 in April per the bylaws; however, actual amount funded was \$900 short and will be corrected in May. Inventory decreased by \$6,417 from March. Pre-paid Expenses increased by \$4,246 due to a purchase of books from AA World Services. Payroll Liabilities decreased by \$821 due to the payment of 1st Quarter taxes to the EDD.

7th Tradition and reading of the 12 Traditions: Money collected to reimburse purchase of coffee and refreshments for this meeting.

2. Bylaws Reading

Steve R. read Article V, Section 10 of the Bylaws and added the proposed sentence at the end that read, "Former reps returning for a new term after an absence of more than two years are required to attend orientation." After this third reading of the Bylaws change, a vote to accept the proposed changes:

For – 40, Against – 0, Abstain – 4; Bylaws change passes.

3. Central Office Committee Nominations

The Roles and Responsibilities of the Central Office Committee members were read. The members of the IFB were polled for availability. The following members made themselves available to serve and will be interviewed by the Nominating Committee, who will then bring their recommendations back to the IFB for a vote: Andy T., Carol E., Dan Z., Derek D., Dylan C., Luis M., Matt T., Patty M., Steve N., Tom R., and Beatrice.

4. IFB Committee Reports

No reports were given.

5. Non-IFB Liaison Reports

General Service, Marin: Trevor gave the report. Marin Unity Day will be Saturday, September 16th at the Corte Madera Recreation Center. The report from the General Service conference included the following: Grapevine profit of \$44,000, AAWS website had 3 million visitors, 1100 new groups registered this year, 1800 visitors came to

GSO, AAWS sold 2.1 million units of literature, 77 full time employees and 66 part time employees at GSO, GSO received 5.25 million in contributions, 43.2% of the registered groups made contributions. They need stories for the Spanish Big Book. The Central Office Pamphlet was voted to take no action.

Marin Teleservice: Casey L. gave the report. Phones in Marin are being answered. Most of the shifts are filled. A new Teleservice letter has been approved. There is a new URL – marintelesevice.org – which points to the Marin Teleservice website at www.marintelesevice.com.

H&I: Mitzi H. gave the report. Volunteers are needed. The Literature position is still open.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, July 5, 2006 at the First Unitarian Universalist Church at 1187 Franklin in San Francisco at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren H., IFB Secretary

Minutes from the 2006 Annual Meeting of the IFB, held at 7pm on June 7th, are on our website, www.aasf.org, under “Resources for IFB Members”. Check ‘em out! Here is an excerpt from them:

IFB Standing Committee Reports

12th Step Committee: Nick gave the report. Since June 2005, the 12th Step Committee has held four workshops in San Francisco and one in Marin. Fifteen new volunteers signed up for the 12th Step Call List. The 12th Step Call List was updated and an email link was created to for online 12th Step help. The committee meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm at Central Office.

Archives Committee: Lynnore gave the report. Last year the committee sorted through and pared down large amounts of material slated for the archive and created a spreadsheet consisting of detailed descriptions of each item including its location. The material is also in the process of being classified for easier access. Bruce K. is the new Chair of the committee. The committee meets the 3rd Sunday of the month at 2:00pm at Central Office.

Literature Review Committee: Steve N. gave the report. The committee provided an article each month to *The Point* reviewing a piece of literature. They kept locally produced literature up to date and developed a questionnaire for other committees to use in creating their own pamphlets. They developed new pamphlets and flyers as needed and are considering developing a history of CO and the IFB. They supported the proposal for a CO pamphlet published by AAWS. They reviewed and wrote abstracts of tapes donated to the AA tape library. The committee meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm at Central Office.

The Point Editorial Committee: Victor V. gave the report. The committee is maintaining a list of regular contributors and communicates with them via email. Drafted a committee manual. Revised their deadlines and production schedule. Established a policy for unsolicited contributions. Formalized policy of sending complimentary copy of *The Point* to contributors. Started a monthly Service Bulletin. Started a bulletin board for comments. Established an Editorial in each issue. Discussed revising the pamphlet “What’s the Point?” Considering redesigning cover. The committee meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:30pm at Central Office.

Special Events Committee: Fran gave the report. The committee put on several very successful events this year. The committee thanks all those who helped and attended the events. The Founders Day Barbecue is on Saturday, June 10th from 11:00am-5:00pm in Stern Grove. The

Committee meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm at Central Office.

Special Needs Committee: Pene gave the report. The committee established contact with other Special Needs committees in northern California and GSO. They are almost finished with the first round of wheelchair designated meeting assessments in San Francisco. The wheelchair assessment will continue in Marin. The results of the assessment will be published on the website, in the schedule, and in *The Point*. The committee needs volunteers. The Committee meets on the 4th Tuesday at 2pm at Central Office.

Trusted Servants Workshop Committee: Monika gave the report. The committee held its first meeting on October 9, 2005. There has been one workshop focusing on Group Secretary. Another workshop, focusing on Treasurer, will be held on June 17, 2006 from 11:30am to 1pm. There will be a workshop at Marin Unity Day. A questionnaire for the workshops has been developed. The committee meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 5:30pm at Central Office.

Website Committee: Dan gave the report. The committee’s main focus this past year was refining the functionality and database infrastructure required to deliver the website and printed schedules for San Francisco. The database was revamped and its information updated. New capabilities and features were developed in the process. Every meeting location and detail were reviewed and updated. New features, such as meeting search, mapping, and meeting details were implemented. The committee meets the 2nd Wednesday at 6pm at Central Office.

IFB Standing Committee Reports

SF Teleservice: Scott gave the report. 5% of the shifts do not have a regularly scheduled volunteer. 65 volunteers are on the substitute roster. A two-year service rotation was adopted for the Chair and coordinator commitments. Rick P. resigned as Chair. Judi C. is new Chair. The volunteer to volunteer call-forwarding system is working well. A wallet card with instructions was produced. The annual Teleservice Volunteer Appreciation event in February was successful. The committee suggests that \$300 be set aside in the IFB budget for this event next year. The committee meets the 3rd Monday at 6:30pm at Central Office.

(Continued on page 19)

A.A. Acronym— S.L.I.P.

By Victor V.

Still Living In Pain? Pain is unpleasant— something I used to numb with alcohol. As a newcomer in A.A. I tried not to pick up a drink. Invariably I did for five years even while attending meetings. At meetings I heard the secretary ask, “Are there any newcomers who would like to introduce themselves by their first name only? This is not to embarrass you, but simply so that we can get to know you.” I was always embarrassed and ashamed. Sometimes I would raise my hand and other times I would not. I felt like a failure, but I kept going to meetings. Pg. 11 of “As Bill Sees It” says, “About this slip business I would not be too discouraged. I think you are suffering from needless guilt. God has laid out tougher paths for some of us and I guess you are treading one of them. God is not asking us to be successful. He is only asking you to try. That, you surely are doing and have been doing. So, I would not stay away from A.A. through any feeling of discouragement or shame. It’s just the place you should be.” People would tell me “Keep coming back it works.” I had to accept that Slow Learning Is Possible. I kept going to meetings, got a sponsor, and worked the steps. After the Fifth Step I had a slip. I didn’t know why. Maybe I hadn’t completed my house cleaning? I had failed to disclose some of my shortcomings to my sponsor. The past was still haunting me. I had not learned enough of “humility, fearlessness, and honesty”. (pg. 213 “As Bill Sees It”). As a result I was Still Living In Pain. The second time I did my Fourth and Fifth Steps I told my sponsor my entire life story. It’s been over three years and I have not had a slip. Of course I have also worked the remainder of the steps. Humility, fearlessness, and honesty are necessary in making my amends and doing a daily moral inventory.

Life is not easy, but it is much easier when I don’t drink. I have to face the music by using the tools A.A. has given me. Every day I have to do a Tenth Step, sometimes many

times a day. I sometimes fall short of my ideals. I always strive not to practice my character defects but sometimes they are practiced. Will I slip because of a lack of self-forgiveness? I have to be willing to learn from my mistakes, trying not to repeat the behavior by allowing God to lead me to better things. If I do this I will be forgiven. If I am not sorry and continue to harm others I may be tempted to drink and my chances of picking up a drink are greatly increased. The relief from pain was one of the major reasons I was able to put down the bottle. I must never allow the pain to build back up and fester. It must be dealt with immediately and A.A. has taught me how to effectively deal with it. Pain and fear will never be completely overcome. I will have to face them for the rest of my life. The question is “Do I want to overcome pain and fear in a positive way which leads to a lifetime of spiritual recovery and growth?” or “Do I want to hang on to pain and fear, letting them fester, and ultimately leading to picking up a drink?” I will continue going to meetings, getting commitments, calling my sponsor, working the steps, and working with newcomers because I want to continue to grow spiritually and try to overcome my character defects. The beautiful part about all of this is by doing what I described above I am not only helping myself but I am also helping others.

If we slip we must remember that the experience can be a positive one as long as we continue going to meetings and remember where the slip took us. A slip reinforces what we hear at meetings “Don’t take that first drink!” It reinforces the progressive nature of our disease. It teaches us the necessity of humility in our spiritual program. The only successful form of recovery that I know of is in Alcoholics Anonymous. Keep coming back, it works if you work, it so work it because it is worth it! ↑

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 each submission for purposes of clarity, style, and length, we encourage all writers to express their own experience in their own unique way. Please note that submission of an article does not constitute promise of publication. Nothing published should be construed as a statement of A.A. policy, nor does publication constitute endorsement by A.A. as a whole, the Intercounty Fellowship Board, the Central Office, or *The Point* Editorial committee. No payment can be made for submissions, nor can material be returned. At times, articles may be reprinted without the author’s permission, but the author’s byline will always be included in these cases. Email submissions to: thepoint@aaaf.org. This policy is subject to revision. ↑

Financial Statement

April 2006 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	Apr 06	Jan - Apr 06		Apr 06	Jan - Apr 06
Ordinary Income/Expense			Bad Checks	0.00	0.00
Income			Total Expense	14,057.70	62,420.04
Contributions from Groups			Net Ordinary Income	5,229.83	5,628.84
Group Contributions	12,689.02	43,776.85	Other Income/Expense		
Total Contributions from Groups	12,689.02	43,776.85	Other Income		
Contributions from Individuals			Interest Income	386.65	1,051.55
Individual - Unrestricted	25.00	2,836.90	Total Other Income	386.65	1,051.55
Faithful Fiver	477.00	2,230.00	Other Expense		
Honorary Contributions	87.00	555.15	Depreciation Expense	354.36	1,417.44
Total Contributions from Individuals	589.00	5,622.05	Amortization Expense	238.78	955.12
Gratitude Month			Total Other Expense	593.14	2,372.56
Gratitude Month - Groups	344.80	2,871.20	Net Other Income	-206.49	-1,321.01
Total Gratitude Month	344.80	2,871.20	Net Income	5,023.34	4,307.83
Sales - Bookstore	9,970.74	37,524.98			
Special Event Income	2,730.14	2,730.14			
Newsletter Subscript.	44.24	231.34			
Total Income	26,367.94	92,756.56			
Cost of Goods Sold					
Cost of Books Sold	6,915.11	24,103.75			
Credit Card Processing Fees	165.30	603.93			
Total COGS	7,080.41	24,707.68			
Gross Profit	19,287.53	68,048.88			
Expense					
Employee Expenses					
Wages & Salaries	7,811.22	30,465.69			
Employer Tax Expenses	620.07	3,268.25			
Health Benefits	845.00	3,209.00			
Workers Comp Ins.	0.00	714.61			
Total Employee Expenses	9,276.29	37,657.55			
Professional Fees					
Computer Consulting	343.75	343.75			
Total Professional Fees	343.75	343.75			
Bank Charges	0.00	0.00			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	200.00	400.00			
Postage - Other	0.00	111.00			
Total Postage	200.00	511.00			
Rent - Office	3,833.75	15,335.00			
Rent - Other	0.00	75.00			
Filing/Fees	0.00	260.00			
Insurance	0.00	1,826.00			
Internet Expense	151.54	365.51			
Office Supplies	191.89	1,054.44			
Shipping	-17.43	-0.70			
Equipment Lease	0.00	1,739.60			
Repair & Maintenance	263.72	903.44			
Security System	33.50	199.00			
Special Events	-1,000.00	100.00			
Telephone	454.56	949.34			
Phone Book Listings	153.00	306.00			
Utilities	173.13	795.11			

Excerpt from Annual Meeting Minutes (Continued from page 17)

SF PI/CPC: Jill H. gave the report. PI/CPC activities for this year include 51 DUI classes, 48 school presentations, many local outreach organizations, two national conferences, and four speaker workshops. The committee will be doing more outreach to DUI schools. They are sending out informational letters to all SF schools. They will attend the national Conference for Lawyer Assistance Programs in October. They need more speakers. The Committee meets on the 2nd Monday at 7pm at Central Office. ↑

Subscribe Now!!!

Would you like to subscribe?

Receive *The Point* at home!

\$12.00 for one year — 12 issues!!!

(Please circle one)

NEW RENEW GIFT

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO :
INTERCOUNTY FELLOWSHIP OF
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

MAIL THIS FORM & PAYMENT TO:

Central Office
1821 Sacramento St.
San Francisco, CA 94109-3528

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

July 2006

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

NAME		
NEW ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP
OLD ADDRESS		

You can also E-mail or Phone Us With Your New Contact Information

ISSUE 07.06

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

1821 Sacramento Street
San Francisco CA 94109-3528



NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. Postage PAID
San Francisco CA
Permit No. 3480