

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

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

The Point

August 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.

You Don't Have To Run From Them

by A Local Sot


So said one Point Committee member when we were discussing the theme for this month's issue, the Service Structure of A.A. He was referring to the IFB (Intercounty Fellowship Board) and General Service. In our discussions we observed that there seems at times to be an underlying tone of animosity among the fellowship at large toward these bodies.

Many members are disdainful of this level of service and discourage others from participating by voicing criticisms. This results in under representation at the General Service and Intergroup level. For example, every A.A. group in San Francisco and Marin is entitled to send a representative to the IFB. As I write this, there are only 65 members out of a possible 500+!



Now granted, business meetings are not the warm and fuzzy aspect of recovery we find in general meetings but are instead the nuts and bolts of an international organization dedicated to saving lives. They are in fact an opportunity to practice these principles in all our affairs and to make sure that the hand of A.A. is always there for those who need it. (Thanks to our forebears for so very many useful aphorisms!)

For this reason, the work done at this level is as vital as reaching out to a newcomer in a meeting. When we contribute on this level, our actions are amplified and "giving away what's been received" takes on a whole new meaning.

Personally, my experience on the IFB was one of the most satisfying service positions I have held. I feel grateful for the opportunity to be of service in a bigger way and I learned a lot about myself. When I first considered volunteering for the position I talked it over with my Sponsor. I was concerned because one of my major character defects is to be controlling. I expressed my misgivings and was told that was just one more reason why I should do it! So I did, and lo and behold, I still have friends in San Francisco A.A.!


I heartily recommend this level of service for anyone, especially those with a year or more of sobriety. Give it a try and see what happens! You won't have to run from them anymore! 

August 2006....

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

From the Editor...

Our theme this month, the service structure of Alcoholics Anonymous, brings to mind the variety of meaningful experiences that are available in A.A. and the great debt of gratitude we owe those who came before us. We try to explore many, if not most, of the service opportunities that are available in this issue and encourage anyone without first hand experience to try them all. The rewards are immense and the results prodigious – just look around – more than two million A.A. members worldwide!

In another opportunity for service, we invite all of our readers to consider this: Doesn't it seem that the quality of the content of our newsletter far outshines its presentation? In a program of attraction rather than promotion it seems that if we improve the way *The Point* looks, we may increase readership and thereby be able to benefit the fellowship further and perhaps reach more suffering alcoholics. With that in mind, we are asking the fellowship at large for re-design suggestions. Is it too boring, too flashy, too hot, too cold or just right? What do you think? Tapping the vast pool of talent we have in San Francisco and Marin, we're sure to find a design that's both attractive and affordable. Anyone interested in contributing concrete suggestions is encouraged to contact *The Point* committee and let us know your thoughts. You can email us at thepoint@aasf.org or reach us through Central Office. Thanks in advance for your help. 

Joke of the Month

A man died and went to heaven. Upon arrival, a Saint asked, "What denomination are you?" The man replied, "None. I'm not sure I belong here. I've never been to church." The Saint said "Well, we don't make mistakes; you belong here. Let's just walk around and you can see where you'd like to stay."

So they walked down the hall and opened a door. There were all these pews with people kneeling and praying and crossing themselves. "I don't think I want to stay here," said the man and they walked on down the hall.

They opened the next door. Inside were all these pews with people sitting straight up staring ahead. "I don't want to stay here, either" said the man. They continued to walk down the hall.

When they opened the door of the next room they came to out came a big puff of smoke and the man smelled coffee. The man looked inside and there were all these people laughing and hugging. The man said, "I like these people. Who are they?"

"No one knows", the Saint said. "They won't tell us."

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.



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MEETING CHANGES

Meeting Changes:

Sun	9:30am	Castro	SUNDAY MORNING GAY MEN'S STAG Davies Med. Center, 45 Castro/ Duboce, N. Tower, Rm. B-1 (was 150 Eureka St.)
Sun	11:00am	Castro	BE STILL A.A. Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St./ Hartford (was 150 Eureka St.)
Sun	2:00pm	Castro	GOODLANDS Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St./ Hartford (was 150 Eureka St.)
Mon	6:30 pm	Mission	NEW HOPE BIG BOOK 1661 15th St \ Julian Ave. (was S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St., 7:15pm)
Mon	7:00 pm	Noe Valley	MEN'S GENTLE TOUCH 725 Diamond St./ 24th St. (1.5 hrs.)
Mon	8:30 pm	Castro	CASTRO MONDAY BIG BOOK Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St. (was 150 Eureka St.)
Wed	6:00 pm	Castro	LIVING SOBER WITH H.I.V. 1800 Market St., Rm. Q-11 (was 150 Eureka St.)
Wed	7:15pm	Hayes Valley	EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH & HOPE S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (was 150 Eureka St.)
Wed	8:30 pm	Diamond Hts.	ALUMNI 395 Addison St/ Diamond Heights Blvd., Church (was 395 Diamond Heights Blvd., SS)
Thu	6:00 pm	Castro	AS BILL SEES IT Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St. (was 150 Eureka St.)
Thu	8:30 pm	Castro	AS BILL SEES IT Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St. (was 150 Eureka St.)
Fri	6:00 pm	Castro	EARLY START Church, 100 Diamond St., Ellard Hall (was 150 Eureka St.)
Sat	11:00 am	Castro	Y.A.H.O.O. STEP Location varies; check www.aasf.org or call 674-1821 for info (was 150 Eureka St.)
Sat	8:30pm	Hayes Valley	KEEP IT SIMPLE S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (was 150 Eureka St.)

Temporarily Cancelled:

Tue	8:30 pm	Castro	PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION (Looking for new location; was 150 Eureka St.)
Sat	6:30 pm	Castro	BEGINNERS' STEP STUDY (Looking for new location; was 150 Eureka St.)

No Longer Meeting:

Fri	10:00 am	Castro	UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER 152 Church St.
Fri	8:00 pm	Potrero Hill	FOUR FORTY NINERS 953 De Haro St.
Sat	4:00 pm	McLaren Park	CROCKER PARK 600 Italy Ave./ Naples St.

Recently Registered Trusted Servants June 2006

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

San Francisco

3:30 Smokeless Wed. 3:30pm; A is for Alcohol Tue. 6pm; Artists & Writers Fri. 6:30pm; Came to Believe Sun. 8am; Come 'n' Get It! Fri. 6:30pm; Early, Joyous & Free Thu. 7am; Friday Morning 12 Steppers Fri. 7am; Friday Night Special Fri. 8pm; Gay Beginners Living Sober Fri. 7pm; Join the Tribe Tue. 7pm; Monday Beginners Mon 8pm; Monday Fit Spiritual Condition Mon. 1:30pm; Pure & Simple Sun. 6pm; Queers, Crackpots, and Fallen Women Mon. 5:30pm; Second Chance Thu. 2:15pm; Sunset 9'ers Fri. 9am; Sunset 9'ers Thu. 9am; Sunset 9'ers Tue. 9am; The Great Fact Sat 12:15pm; The Pepper Group Fri. 12:00pm; Second Chance Thu. 2:15pm; Thursday Night Women's Thu. 6:30pm; Trans Recovery Fri. 6:30pm; We Are Living Sober Sun. 2pm

Marin

Caledonia Sun. 8pm; Closed Women's Step Study Tue. 3:30pm; Four Horsemen Thu. 7pm; Happy, Joyous & Free Thu. 12pm; Sunday Express Sun. 6pm; Tiburon Haven Sun. 12pm; Women on Monday Mon. 7pm

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

ONGOING MEMORIALS

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

ANNIVERSARIES

Ted S. 14 years
Mary Ann B. 26 years
Join the Tribe:
John O'L. 18 years
Island Group:
Frances L. 44 years

Coming Up!

FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

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

DATE	HOST GROUP	SPEAKER	FROM
08/04	Waterfront Group	Larry D.	Bernal Big Book
08/11	Cow Hollow Men's Stag	George C.	Oakland
08/18	Stepping Stone SS	Marilyn H.	Saturday. Easy Does It
08/25	Sometimes Slowly	Silas P.	Too Early

BIRTHDAY MEETING

1748 Market St.
San Francisco Alano Club
Saturday, 8 pm

DATE	SPEAKER
08/05	Bruce A.
08/12	John G.
08/19	Tony T.
08/26	Cathy C.

*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

The repetition of familiar themes is very comforting to alcoholics—show us a rut and we'll move in and furnish it!

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

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

History of the Service Structure

by Anonymous


We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life.

Bernard B. Smith, 1954 Chairperson of A.A.'s Board of Trustees, p. S19, *The A.A. Service Manual*

There are many ways to do service in Alcoholics Anonymous beyond the level of A.A. meetings and groups, including volunteering with our Central Office, taking A.A. meetings into jails and other institutions through our Hospital & Institutions (H & I) Committee and participating in the process of General Service.

As Alcoholics Anonymous grew from its beginnings in the 1930s, the need for a service structure to coordinate the efforts to carry A.A.'s message to the alcoholic who still suffers grew as well. During the 1940s, as Alcoholics Anonymous become better known to the general public through media exposure and word of mouth, A.A. groups sprang up all over the United States from New

York to here in the Bay Area. Making decisions affecting A.A. as a whole became more difficult, and nearly impossible as A.A. grew. At the same time, one of A.A.'s original founders, Dr. Bob fell gravely ill and the need for a more comprehensive form of organization became clear.

This need produced the General Service Conference of 1951 which has continued to meet every April since in New York City. General Service Areas from across the United States and Canada are each represented by a Delegate who carries that Area's group conscience to the annual General Service Conference. At the conference, the Delegates are assigned to committees representing different areas of service including: Literature, Corrections, Treatment and Public Information. These committees make recommendations on topics which affect A.A.'s future and A.A. as a whole. Things change in our sobriety and in Alcoholics Anonymous based upon our experience, figuring out what works well, and what doesn't. Our service structure allows for that process of change and for each group to participate in decisions that affect the future of Alcoholics Anonymous should they choose to be involved. 

What is General Service?

by Shannon L.

When I first joined A.A., the first thing I thought was, "how do I become important here?" I remember there were lots of different commitments; the coffee commitment (perhaps number one), the literature commitment (kind of dry), the secretary commitment (very glamorous), and then the General Service Representative (grand supreme ruler). JUST KIDDING! It did seem however that the G.S.R. was omnipotent. They ran the steering committee, and their opinions were respected amongst the group. It seemed to be the most important job of all and accordingly required two years of sobriety. Around a year or so, I raised my hand for an alternate G.S.R. position because I needed a commitment. Two months later when the G.S.R. moved out of town, I was nominated for the full-time position.

I felt honored and even attended the business meetings. I really enjoyed the information and tried hard to make sense of it all. But when I attended the steering committee the chair asked if I'd like to address the group. I really didn't know how to start; I didn't even know what a home group was. I soon resented the group for giving me such a

big obligation. I stopped going to the group for about a month and then showed up to tell them I was resigning my position. I think there is a reason for the suggested two-year sobriety requirement.

I eventually took another G.S.R. commitment several years later and found that it opened a whole new world of A.A. to me. I finally understood what people meant when they said A.A. is an, "upside-down organization." A.A. is governed by the groups themselves because the groups make the decisions which are communicated to the larger A.A. organization via the G.S.R. who passes it on at the Area Assembly. From there, the Delegate brings the group consciences to New York to the General Service Office. We have four Area Assemblies per year, where major decisions can be made. Regional and day to day operations which need attention are addressed at district meetings.

All A.A. business meetings are open for anyone to attend. Discussions and decisions on smaller matters are put to a vote, and matters affecting the fellowship as a whole are brought to the larger district meetings. The district is the

(Continued on page 11)

Dear Alky

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

Dear Alky,

My group doesn't have an IFB Rep or a GSR. The only commitments I've taken are Coffemaker, Secretary, and Greeter. I am not good with numbers so I don't particularly want to be a Treasurer. My question is should I even try to take on an AA service position above the group level when I have not yet worked all the Steps and especially not Step Six and Seven. My biggest character defects are my control issues and I have heard that the IFB and general service will bring these to the surface big time. Am I asking for trouble if I run for either of these? Can being an IFB Rep or a GSR make me drink?

Power Tripper

Dear Power Tripper,

One of our age-old AA clichés is “service keeps you sober” and in my experience, that has been true. That said, it does not mean that every A.A. member must take every service position. The great thing about A.A. is that it isn't about rules – instead, we are a group of people who help one another through offering our experience and our suggestions for what has worked for us. It's great that you have been of service to your group in a variety of ways already; it sounds as if you are interested in doing something new. Your



Can being an IFB Rep or a GSR make me drink?

recognition that you have “control issues” is a good sign that you are already aware of that defect of character and perhaps you are already in the Sixth Step—becoming willing to have your higher power remove that defect to the extent it interferes with your usefulness to others.

Sometimes, a service commitment pushes your buttons in just the right way to help you make spiritual progress. That's why sometimes people joke that the alcoholics with financial issues need to be the group treasurer—to learn on the job how to manage finances. One suggestion would be to go ahead and volunteer to be the IFB representative (your group's representative to the board that governs and makes policy for your county's Central Office) or the GSR (your group's link to A.A. as a whole—s/he reports the group's thoughts to

the district committee member and to the delegate who then brings it to A.A. World Services).

If you are really concerned that your reaction to that type of committee work might be sobriety-threatening, you should definitely bring that concern to your sponsor and ask your Higher Power for a little guidance on the issue. Then just “take it easy.” As they say in the Big Book, the answers will come! If it turns out that these are not the right commitments for you, don't worry about it. Just keep being willing to be of service and the opportunities to do so will keep coming up.

Alky

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

Bulletin Board



I love *The Point*. I have always loved *The Point*. You could even call it love at first sight. It is probably the finest newsletter of any Inter-group in North America. The content is amazing. We have so much talent in our midst, and folks willing to share that talent

by writing thoughtful and informative pieces for inclusion in *The Point*. It is a wonderful contribution by and for the Fellowship in San Francisco and Marin.

But.... the look is... well, I hate to say it, less than completely inviting. In fact, in my opinion, it is boring and unreflective of the quality of the content. It is somewhat “rinky-dink” and certainly unprofessional. We definitely could do better. I have been thinking for a long time now

that the presentation does not live up to the principle of “attraction rather than promotion

I would love to see a new design for *The Point* that reflects the quality of both the creative and the recovery aspects of the San Francisco and Marin Fellowship. I would love to see a new design for *The Point*.

That said, we (*The Point* Committee), are inviting all members of the fellowship to help us bring about a new and exciting design for *The Point*. Now's the time for all you artists and writers out there, all you graphic designers and creative types, to put on your thinking caps and lend a hand for a new and more appealing version of *The Point*. Please submit all suggestions to *The Point* Committee through Central Office. Lend a hand! Thanks.

The Editor

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

Scott N. sconjovi@gmail.com

VICE CHAIR

Chuck K. 415-637-7330

TREASURER

Danna P. dannaip@earthlink.net

RECORDING SECRETARY

Chris T.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

TBA

12th STEP COMMITTEE

Victor V. 415.726.0518

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Bruce K. bruceken@aol.com

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

Steve N. snolan12000@yahoo.com

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Anthony J. tony_j@sbcglobal.net

THE POINT

Victor V. 415.726.0518

SPECIAL EVENTS

Needs Chair

SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE

Pene P. 415.200.6261

TRUSTED SERVANTS WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

Monika H. monihar2002@yahoo.com

WEBSITE COMMITTEE

Dan Z. 415.665.5166

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

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

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Jill H. 415.647.3553

Service Bulletin

What is the I.F.B.?

by Victor V.

The Tuesday night "Stepping Up" group of Alcoholics Anonymous elected me to be their IFB representative one-year and eight months ago. I had no idea what I was getting into. I attended an orientation meeting and after the meeting I was even more confused and certain I had made a mistake. The meeting seemed like a large business meeting. It took forever for any issues to get resolved. There were times I felt like getting up and leaving. I assumed that this was what all the IFB meetings were going to be like. It took me one year of attending meetings to begin to comprehend what the IFB was all about. And one of the things that helped, was getting involved!. Rather than just attending the meetings, I joined a couple of IFB committees. I met good people who take A.A. a step further. I made myself available. I wasn't always the most qualified, but I was willing to do whatever I could to be of service. Fear had held me back from many opportunities in my past, but A.A. has given me the tools to walk through any fear today.

What is the IFB? It stands for Intercounty Fellowship Board and it is our Intergroup. It was organized in 1945 and is responsible to the member groups of A.A. located in San Francisco and Marin. Legally, Central Office is a non-profit organization and the IFB is its Board of Directors. Its purpose is to coordinate services that individual groups cannot provide. Each A.A. group can elect a representative to the IFB, for a two year term, renewable once. Meetings are the first Wednesday of every month. Most of the work on the IFB is done via committee. One can surely learn the meaning of principles before personalities as a committee member. Also the opportunity to "practice these principles in all of our affairs" is ever present. My IFB membership has been a great opportunity for spiritual growth.

The committees that make up the IFB and their functions are: The Central Office Committee, which brings important issues to the board after doing background research; The Nominating Committee, which qualifies candidates for the Central Office Committee; The Point Editorial Committee, which is responsible for content and production of our monthly newsletter; The Literature Review Committee, which makes recommendations on locally printed material and assists other groups in making pamphlets; The Bylaws Review Committee, which reviews the current bylaws; The 12th Step Committee, which recruits volunteers, conducts workshops, and updates the phone list; Website Committee, which formulates and implements content of the website (www.aasf.org); The Special Needs Committee, which addresses the needs of A.A.'s who are hearing impaired or have access issues; The Orientation Committee, which presents orientation meetings for new IFB members; The Archives Committee, which reviews and catalogs historic literature, correspondence, documents, and materials related to A.A.; The Outreach Committee, which educates groups about the IFB and encourages membership; The Special Events Committee, which puts together, from start to finish, all events such as dances, bingo, Unity Day and Founder's Day; The Trusted Servants Workshop Committee, which teaches A.A. members about roles and responsibilities of group level servants; SF Teleservice, which recruits and coordinates volunteers to answer telephones when Central Office is closed

(Continued on page 15)

Big Book Study: Chapter Seven—"Working with Others"

by Belinda

"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail."

In my experience in A.A. over the past six and a half years, I have come to rely upon Chapter 7 as the "go to" guide for implementing Step 12 both in my daily life and in my work with sponsees. ("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.")

When I first began attending A.A. meetings I heard over and over—get a sponsor, work the Steps, get commitments, be of service and carry the message. I was hanging on by a thread, a fragile, resentful, angry thread, wanting to stop the insanity of my daily drinking and its wreckage, not to mention hoping to get through my "last" hangover without my usual remedy of opening yet one more beer.

The last thing I could imagine was carrying any message, much less being of service. I had no clue what the "message" was, much less any desire to carry it anywhere, and as for "service"—I was very clear. I'd done my time as a waitress, and I wasn't going to serve anyone anything, ever again. I was told to stop thinking and to start following suggestions. I asked a woman to sponsor me and we began at the beginning of the Big Book. I worked the Steps as she guided me, just as they are written. I learned to rely upon the Book, to trust that I would find what I needed there whenever I was struggling.

Around the time I celebrated my first year of sobriety, a woman approached me after a meeting and asked me to be her sponsor. There I was, in a position to carry the message to another alcoholic. I was scared to death. I had no "expertise". I'm not a psychologist. What if I did it "wrong"? What if I "ruined" someone? I was reminded by those with more wisdom and time than me that, once again, it's not about me. All I needed to do was be willing, ask God for help and use the Book. I had my sponsor, prayer and Chapter 7 to guide me. I agreed to work with her, and that was the beginning of a new and



*I told her I would be
there in a minute
when she was ready
to go to a meeting,
but until then I could
not help her.*

rich dimension to my sobriety, of the time when it really got "real". As it says, "Life will take on new meaning."

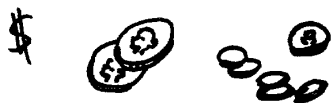
"Working with Others" has helped me through the anguish of knowing and caring for women who weren't ready to get sober, and choosing to work instead with someone who was ready; "To

spend too much time on any one situation is to deny some other alcoholic an opportunity to live and be happy." When one woman was holed up in a hotel and drinking around the clock, there were different points of view among the sober women trying to help her as to what to do. Turning to Chapter 7, I found the help I needed, "If he is not interested in your solution, if he expects you to act only as...a nurse for his sprees, you may have to drop him until he changes his mind. This he

may do after he gets hurt some more." I told her I would be there in a minute when she was ready to go to a meeting, but until then I could not help her.

When the invariable questions and decisions come up about how to participate in events and be at places where alcohol is served, we have our design for living in the "real" world clearly outlined in Chapter 7. "So our rule is not to avoid a place where there is drinking, if we have a legitimate reason for being there." The Book gives us a way to check our motives. We ask ourselves "Have I any good social, business or personal reason for going to this place? Or am I expecting to steal a little vicarious pleasure from the atmosphere of such places?" If you answer these questions satisfactorily, you need have no apprehension." Using this for myself and sponsees, I'm given firm guidance on how to "practice these principles in all my affairs."

I walked into my first A.A. meeting beaten, angry, defiant and desperate. I would never have believed that the suffering, the wreckage and the incomprehensible demoralization in my life had any purpose, much less that it would lead me to be of any use to anyone else. It turns out that "serving" my experience, strength and hope to other alcoholics is the best job I've ever had. ↑



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



A Day at Central Office

by Kathleen C.

In the time I have been in Alcoholics Anonymous, San Francisco Central Office has migrated from Irving Street to Market Street to its present location on Sacramento Street. I usually went to Central Office, wherever it was, to purchase meeting lists and Big Books. I never knew much about what else was happening there except that someone was usually on the phone listening and nodding and saying, "Just don't take that first drink!" Then I met a member of *The Point* Committee who came to the Women's Promises meeting to ask if anyone wanted to write about the Promises for *The Point* and the next thing I knew I was hooked. It was sort of like coming to my first A.A. meeting and I kept coming back. Now I am at Central Office at least two nights a month.

What is Central Office? Is it a club? Is it a bookstore? Is it a meeting? No. Yes. Sort of. San Francisco Central Office is not a club, although it is a fun place to hang out. It does have a bookstore, and it does have lots of meetings—service meetings.

Who is at Central Office and what goes on there?

There are two paid staff members, Maury and Peter, and lots of A.A.s doing service. What goes on at Central Office? Volunteers answer two phones during the hours when Central Office is open, then switch them over to Teleservice when the office closes so that twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the hand of A.A. is there, for anyone who wants to find a meeting or talk to a sober member of A.A. The Central Office staff and volunteers also: Publish and sell meeting lists; maintain a web site – www.aasf.org; cooperate with other A.A. entities – General Service Office in New York, General Service in San Francisco and Marin, PI/CPC (Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community); Hospitals and Institutions; Bridging the Gap, and other Central Office committees; order and sell A.A. literature and sobriety medallions ("chips"); participate in local A.A. events; maintain a list of A.A.s willing to go out on Twelfth-Step calls; publish a monthly newsletter, *The Point*; represent the Intercounty Fellowship at conferences and maintain contact with other Central Offices in North America. You can also go to Central Office for workshops on how to be a group secretary, how to handle a Twelfth Step call and how to be a speaker for community groups.

How can any member of Alcoholics Anonymous be a part of Central Office? Visit – everyone is welcome to stop by, meet the staff and volunteers, and browse the bookstore – we have books, including Big Books in many languages, pamphlets, meeting lists for San Francisco and Marin and even information on foreign meetings. We have a speaker tape lending library, as well as A.A. CD's for purchase. Volunteer – answer phones or help get out mailings. Communicate – keep Central Office informed about meeting locations, times and special events. Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB) representation – represent your group at the monthly IFB meetings. Encourage your home group to send regular contributions to Central Office. Donate individually – consider keeping up with inflation and putting \$2 in the basket; you can also donate directly to Central Office (limit is \$2,000 per year).

(Continued on page 11)

Literature Review

The AA Service Manual combined with The Twelve Concepts for World Service by Monika H.



The A.A. Service Manual is the resource to use for questions on service. The manual describes every level of service in Alcoholics Anonymous; from an individual taking a Twelfth Step call to the policies and proce-

dures for serving as world service delegate. Despite the "level" at which an alcoholic provides service, the definition of service cuts across all positions and is defined as; anything that allows the fellowship carry the message to another suffering alcoholic. According to Bill W., service is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action.

The manual begins with an overview of the fellowship's growth, written by Bill W. in 1951. A.A.'s already steady growth ballooned from 2,000 to 8,000 in 1941 after *The Saturday Evening Post* decided to do a piece about Alcoholics Anonymous. This phenomenal expansion served as a catalyst for the service structure expansion. With the national spotlight now being on Alcoholics Anonymous, the fellowship had to begin to deal with the public on a large scale. The manual describes the history, roles and responsibilities for each layer of the service structure that was designed to meet the deluge of suffering alcoholics. After reading the manual, one begins to understand that while meetings, conferences, books and pamphlets seem to occur and be written effortlessly throughout the world, there is an intricate service structure that supports these efforts.

The organizational structure of Alcoholics Anonymous is designed so that the collective conscience of the individuals (the group) is ultimately heard at the General Service Conference. The group conscience on proposed

actions is communicated to the group's elected general service representative (G.S.R.) who is responsible for conveying the conscience of the group to the area and district meetings and in turn, informing the group of decisions made.

Each group is organized into districts, collections of groups located near each other. The G.S.R.s of these groups select district committee members (D.C.M.s), who become part of the area committee. At the area assembly, a delegate is elected to represent the area at the annual Conference meeting. At the annual Conference meeting, matters of importance to the Fellowship as a whole are first considered and discussed by one of the standing Conference committees, then brought to the full Conference in the form of committee recommendations. Committee recommendations that are approved become Conference Advisory Actions. After the Conference, the delegate reports back to the area, working through D.C.M.s and group G.S.R.s. The General Service Board is made up of 21 trustees. It meets quarterly, and its actions are reported to the Fellowship through quarterly reports and also in the *Final Conference Report*.

The complex structure of the Alcoholics Anonymous service structure rests on the Traditions and Concepts of A.A., serving as a platform upon which this fellowship could best function. This can be seen in the upside-down structure of the organization; the trustees serve the groups. This structure continues to serve the organization well, allowing us to continually be a society of alcoholics in action; carrying the message to the suffering alcoholic. ↑

What is General Service (Continued from page 6)

link between the group and the structure as a whole.

The agenda at district meetings also consists of reports from different service entities like H&I, Public Information, Cooperation with the Public Community, Bridging the Gap, and Teleservice. The General Service Office is the umbrella under which many of these service entities are funded. The General Service Office is also responsible for changes made to literature or other media A.A. uses to address the public.

My experience at District General Service has allowed me to really explore the wonders of how this movement got started, how it remains, and how we can all encourage and guide its growth in an ever-changing world. ↑

A Day at Central Office (Continued from page 10)

There are service committee meetings that are open to observers to stop by, sit in and see if you want to be involved on a regular basis, including the following: Archives Committee, 12th Step Committee, S.F. Teleservice Committee, Literature Review Committee, *The Point* Committee, Special Needs Committee, Special Events Committee, and the Website Committee. See the calendar on p. 2 to find out when the committees meet. There is plenty going on at Central Office and you can be part of it!

I am responsible . . . when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help. I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible. ↑

AA Group Contributions - May 2006

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	May 2006	YTD	Name	May 2006	YTD
Fellowship			Rise N Shine Sun 10am	164.44	231.94
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	36.00	134.00	Saturday Serenity Sa 8pm		65.50
Contribution Box		220.07	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		147.17
Deer Park Discovery Group		40.00	Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag Su 830a		250.00
Gay Newcomers Group	6.14	19.71	Sober & Serene F 7pm		250.00
IFB	83.00	392.96	Steps to Freedom M 730pm		324.31
Men's Forum Tu		1,000.00	Steps To The Solution W 715pm		40.00
SEC Anonymous Prom		117.00	Streetfighters Sa 9am		46.80
The Chosen Ones		40.00	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		100.00
Unidentified Group	47.16	1,487.97	Sunday Friendship Sun 7pm		120.00
Total Fellowship	\$ 172.30	\$ 3,451.71	Survivors M 12pm		138.00
Marin Group Contributions			T.G.I.F. F 6pm		143.94
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		74.07	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		368.89
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm		50.00	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		370.54
Awakenings	186.00	186.00	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm		70.52
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		160.00	Thurs. Night Speaker, MV		796.50
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm	384.50	957.50	Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 8pm		550.00
Beginners Tu 7pm		156.00	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		503.98
Beginners W 7pm	362.98	472.98	We, Us and Ours M 650pm		189.50
Bounce Back M 6pm		120.00	Wednesday Noon W 12pm		383.00
Caledonia Sun 8pm		530.56	What's It All About F 12pm	64.50	64.50
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		112.50	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		194.17
Creskide New Growth Sun 7pm	55.00	94.00	Women on Monday M 7pm	61.57	211.84
Crossroads Sun 12pm	1,075.00	1,075.00	Total Marin Group Contributions	\$ 5,054.03	\$ 15,859.53
Experience, Strength & Hope(Marin) Sa 6pm		75.00	SF Group Contributions		
Fairfax Friday Night F 830pm		100.00	515pm Smokeless F		90.00
Freedom Finders F 830pm	830.00	830.00	6am Marina Dock Sa		60.00
Girls Night Out W 815pm		10.65	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		94.18
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		152.00	830am Smokeless Th		64.43
Gratitude M 2pm		20.00	830am Smokeless Tu	228.00	228.00
Happy Hour (Marin) Th 6pm		75.00	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		115.00
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	200.00	200.00	AA Step Study Su 6pm		286.75
Hillside Candlelight F 830pm		100.00	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		28.35
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am	160.19	255.79	Afro American F 8pm		89.17
Island Group Th 8pm		161.50	All Together Now Th 8pm	81.36	402.83
Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		120.00	Amazing Grace M 7pm		50.00
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		434.50	Any Lengths Sat 930am	243.00	540.60
Mill Valley 7D 7am	1,181.43	1,181.43	As Bill CCs It Sun 8am		80.55
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		22.72	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		337.24
Monday Blues M 630pm		272.50	Beginner Big Book Step Th 630pm		25.00
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		856.81	Be Still AA Su 11am		120.84
Monday Night Women's M 8pm	103.42	103.42	Beach Meeting\ Meditation Sa 930am	52.00	92.05
More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		30.00	Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		86.05
Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm	100.00	200.00	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm		269.71
Noon Tu 12pm		193.50	Big Book Basics F 8pm		346.05
Noon Hope F 12pm	125.00	125.00	Big Book Study Su 1130am	150.28	218.66
North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm		150.00	Boys Night Out Tu 730pm		21.00
On Awakening 7D 530am		210.00	Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		141.60
Primary Purpose W 830pm		300.00	Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) W 8pm		111.38
Refugee Th 12pm		30.00	Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm		88.00
Reveille 7D 7pm		100.00	Cocoanuts Su 9am		79.00

Name	May 2006	YTD	Name	May 2006	YTD
Cow Hollow Men's Group		124.50	New Life W 7pm		128.25
Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		11.11	Newcomers Tu 8pm		36.14
Design for Living Sat 8am		235.09	Newcomers Group Tu 7pm		214.50
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		528.00	No Reservation M 12pm	120.15	120.15
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		234.62	One Liners Th 830pm	413.37	1,081.23
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		198.82	Parkside Th 830pm		85.50
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		476.82	Park Presidio M 830pm		175.20
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		583.08	Pax West M 12pm	238.00	679.68
Early Joyous & Free Th 7am		60.00	Pax West Th 12pm		184.04
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		160.00	Rebound W 830pm		85.00
Early Start F 6pm		576.16	Rule 62 W 10pm		279.00
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm		855.18	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		351.29
Endless Summer F 830pm		26.00	Saturday Matinee 2pm		60.00
Eureka Step Tu 6pm	113.00	113.00	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		184.73
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		827.70	Seacliff Th 830pm		151.70
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		210.22	Serenity House		500.00
Fell Street Step Su 8pm	61.53	61.53	Serenity Seekers M 730pm		945.00
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		180.00	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		237.13
Fireside Chat Th 8pm		213.28	SFPOA Th 7pm		210.00
Fireside Chat Tu 8pm		81.28	Sisters Circle Su 6pm	41.54	370.45
Friday All Groups F 830pm		1,806.68	Sober & Centered F 7pm		120.95
Friendly Circle Su 830pm		254.34	Sober Across the Board M-Sa 830am	20.00	60.00
Four Forty Niners F 8pm		67.20	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		112.59
Gold Mine Group M 8pm	294.92	294.92	Step Talk Su 830am		671.18
Goodlands Su 2pm		88.98	Stepping Out Sat 6pm		32.77
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm	288.42	288.42	Stepping Stone Step Study M 7pm	375.00	375.00
High Noon Friday 1215pm		351.94	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		76.80
High Noon Monday 1215pm		518.48	Straight Jackets Th 9am	41.16	93.63
High Noon Thursday 1215pm		225.60	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 1030am		365.79
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm		285.42	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc Su 730pm		1,041.62
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm		228.41	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm	81.00	81.00
Hilldwellers M 8pm		74.40	Sundown Steps Th 630pm	123.00	123.00
Home Group Sat 830pm		292.80	Sundown W 7pm	203.33	203.33
Hot Java F 12am		90.00	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 545pm	50.40	109.20
How It Works Sat 2pm		55.39	Sunset 11'ers F		50.00
Huntington Square W 630pm		528.07	Sunset 11'ers Su		102.85
Ingleside Beginners Su 5pm		22.85	Sunset 11'ers Tu		87.00
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		60.00	Sunset 11'ers W		20.00
Just Alkies F 7pm		42.00	Sunset 9'ers F	55.09	225.59
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		906.45	Sunset 9'ers M		119.11
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		93.32	Sunset 9'ers Sa		131.65
Last Call Su 10pm		115.00	Sunset 9'ers Th		64.58
Light Steppers Su 7pm	50.00	170.00	Sunset 9'ers Tu		213.68
Like A Prayer Su 4pm	74.69	74.69	Sunset 9'ers W		196.09
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	42.00	287.96	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		278.00
Luke's Group W 8pm		60.00	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		80.00
Lush Lounge Sa 2pm		208.80	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm		187.00
Marina Discussion F 830pm		517.67	Ten Years After Su 6pm		410.56
Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		50.40	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am		112.80
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am		193.07	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	62.57	309.29
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am		125.00	The Parent Trap M 1230pm	272.59	272.59
Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm		69.17	They Stopped In Time M 8pm		130.98
Mission Fellowship		259.73	Too Early Sat 8am		312.05
Mission Terrace W 8pm		142.40	Transrecovery F 630pm		9.40
Monday Beginners M 8pm		300.00	Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm		90.00
New Highs W 130pm		70.80	Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am		27.36
New Hope Big Book M 630pm		22.69			

(Continued on p. 14)

SF Group Contributions, con't...

Name	May 2006	YTD
Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm	427.40	427.40
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	120.00	120.00
Walk of Shame W 8pm		120.00
Waterfront Sun 8pm		366.52
We Care Tu 12pm	129.16	313.08
Wednesday Women's Big Book W 615pm	120.00	180.00
West Portal W 915pm		103.21
Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm		34.92
Women Living Sober Sa 1030am		79.89
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		223.20
Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm		82.75
Women's Promises F 7pm		78.85
Work In Progress Sat 7pm		57.77
YAHOO Step Sa 11am		35.00
Total SF Group Contributions	\$ 4,572.96	\$ 34,264.90
TOTAL	\$ 9,799.29	\$ 53,576.14

Gratitude Month Contributions 2005

Received in April and May 2006

Date	Name	Amount
Marin Gratitude Month		
4/27/06	Steps to Freedom M 730pm	50.00
Total Marin Gratitude Month		\$ 50.00
SF Gratitude Month		
4/3/06	High Noon Monday 1215pm	133.95
4/11/06	Early Start F 6pm	160.85
5/10/06	One Liners Th 830pm	62.75
5/23/06	No Reservation M 12pm	16.33
Total SF Gratitude Month		\$ 373.88
TOTAL Gratitude Month		\$ 423.88

Is Your Group Linked to AA as a Whole?

By Brian F.

Most groups in the United States and Canada choose to be linked to A.A. as a whole by listing their group with the General Service Office (GSO) in New York, as well as with the Area Assembly, district and local central/intergroup office. Each group listed with GSO, whether it is "new" or has existed for years, is linked to the local general service structure and is automatically a part of the "group conscience" of A.A. in Canada and the US through their GSR's participation in district meetings and Area Assemblies. GSR's communicate his or her group's "conscience" on important matters affecting AA as a whole and on policies considered by the local district and Area Assembly.


An elected delegate represents CNCA's groups during the Annual General Service Conference in New York. The delegates are not representative of areas in the usual political sense. They are informed, not instructed. Delegates do not go to General Services Conferences to logroll special benefits for their respective areas. They go primarily to render a service to world A.A., to insure that A.A. continues to function as a whole. However, they should bring with them the viewpoints of their own areas or even local problems that may affect A.A. as a whole. Delegates are always servants, never senators.

California Northern Coastal Area 06 (CNCA) is a link in the chain of communication between the groups it serves and the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous. Geographically, CNCA encompasses 21,427 square miles of coastal counties, bordered on the north by

Oregon and on the south by San Luis Obispo County.

CNCA serves more than 51,000 AA members in 22 Districts. Each district's DCM Chairperson (DCMC) and the District Committee Members (DCMs) of our 153 subdistricts serve over 1800 registered groups via their General Service Representatives (GSRs). The districts and the area communicate through liaisons with the 23 Central Offices/Intergroups within CNCA boundaries, as well as with the autonomous Northern California Hospitals and Institutions Committee. Our Area is also one of the largest 7th Tradition contributors to GSO.

Each district is visited by one of our eight area officers each month. In addition to the monthly district and sub-district meetings, communication throughout the area is enhanced via four district-hosted assemblies per year, monthly area committee meetings, and our monthly newsletter, CNCA Comments, which is published in English and in Spanish. You can also visit us at www.cnca06.org

As stated in the GSR Preamble: "...As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach an informed group conscience, we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our fellowship. Let us therefore have the patience and tolerance to listen while others share, the courage to speak when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our groups as a whole." (Reprinted with permission of the AA Grapevine, Inc.) 

Psyched at the Psych Ward

by Mitzi H.

When I came back to A.A., I decided to follow the suggestions and got a sponsor. I did almost everything my first sponsor told me to do. I went to 90 meetings in 90 days; I got a commitment (as a greeter, which was difficult for me) and did all of the assignments she gave me.

After I had six months, my sponsor told me about her monthly H&I (Hospitals and Institutions) commitment and it seemed completely unappealing to me. No matter how she described her feelings of gratitude and appreciation for taking an A.A. meeting into a homeless shelter, I just couldn't relate. Every month she would lightly suggest I go to the H&I orientation and I would shrug it off.

Finally, a friend asked me to go with him to his H&I commitment because his partner was moving out of town. He and his partner had been bringing the A.A. meeting into a locked psych ward once a month.

"Go into a locked psych ward, voluntarily? No freaking way!" A part of me thought if I did go with him, the staff would instantly recognize how crazy I am and wouldn't let me leave.

But I agreed to go with him, because at that time I was still in my "people pleasing" stage. I thought if I said yes, he would (hopefully) be satisfied and quit talking to me about it. A week went by and he didn't mention it. Then, a couple of days before the last Saturday of the month, he called me.

"Are you PSYCHED?" He exclaimed when I answered my phone. He seemed to be PSYCHED about everything in life and especially psyched about being S-O-B-E-R! (he would occasionally chant this while clapping his hands and shaking his rump) and sober commitments. Normally this didn't bother me, I found him to be EXTREMELY enthusiastic, which was contagious and a great antidote

for my overall crankiness. But this time his enthusiasm was starting to get on my nerves.

"Um, psyched about what?" I said, feigning ignorance, hoping to confuse him with my forgetfulness and change the subject, avoiding H&I altogether. "Bringing the A.A. meeting to the psych ward, it's going to be KILLER!" he said. I could picture him with his cell phone in one hand and a cup of herbal tea in the other, glowing with the zeal children have for Christmas. He gave me directions and unbelievably, I went and even showed up early.

As I paced outside the facility, a number of scenarios went through my head, which revolved around me some how getting involuntarily (or voluntarily, at that time I could easily be persuaded) committed. When we finally went in and did the H&I meeting, I couldn't believe how much I enjoyed it. The clients were so grateful we were there; they were just as enthusiastic about A.A. as my friend was and they took all the literature we gave out. When we left, (the staff didn't even give me a second glance, except to say thank you) I was floating on air. I felt a deep sense of purpose and usefulness I never felt before.

H&I has helped me face my fears, real and imagined, especially with public speaking. And I understand that if I do ever take a drink again, I may end up in that very psych ward, because many of the clients I've met were just like I was; suicidal, frustrated and confused. I welcome all A.A. members to join me in this amazing commitment.

The San Francisco H&I Committee meets the last day of the month at Old First Church 1751 Sacramento St at Van Ness Ave., the orientation begins at 7:15pm, the business meeting at 8pm. The Marin H&I Committee meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1360 Lincoln in San Rafael, orientation begins at 6:15pm.

Please visit our website at www.norcalhandi.org ↑

What is the I.F.B.? (Continued from page 8)

and the SF PI/CPC Committee, which works to reach alcoholics through education, drunk driving classes, and community service organizations.

I always wondered why I felt such animosity and indifference toward the IFB, but now I know it was lack of knowledge and my unwillingness to get involved. Today I am on the 12th Step Committee and *The Point* Editorial Committee. I have met terrific people, grown spiritually, and learned a lot about A.A. "behind the

scenes". I have a lot of fun and, most importantly, I have remained sober. I can't wait to renew my term for another two years. Even though I can only remain on the IFB for two consecutive terms I can serve on any committee indefinitely. Alcoholics Anonymous has given me a life I never dreamed of by my going to meetings, getting a service commitment, getting a sponsor, working the steps, sponsoring others, and now being an IFB member involved on the committee level.

I love A.A.! ↑

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

Following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the July 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. The officers of the IFB are thanked. After this report, Steve R. resigns as Chair. Steve S., as Vice-Chair, steps into the Chair position for the remainder of the meeting and to fulfill the next year of service required of the past Chair.

Central Office Committee Report: Lynnore gave the report. The COC Retreat logistics were discussed. Funding and income allocation of the Special Events committee was discussed. The committee voted to adjust the Central Office Managers salary.

Treasurer's Monthly Report: Danna P. gave the report. The net loss for May was (\$2,702), which is \$87 less than the budgeted net loss of (\$2,789). Unrestricted cash as of May 31, 2006 totaled \$45,448 and is sufficient to pay the budgeted expenses for three months. Unrestricted cash decreased by (\$3,404) since April 30th primarily

due to the negative cash flow generated by the net loss for the month. An additional \$900 was deposited into the Supplemental Compensation Fund, which corrected the erroneous amount funded in April. There were no other significant changes in balance sheet accounts in May.

7th Tradition and reading of the 12 Traditions: \$94.60

2. Election of Officers for 2006-2007

Reading of The Third Legacy procedure

Reading of the definition of Chair from the Bylaws.

Election of Chair: The IFB members were polled for availability to serve as Chair. Four members made themselves available. Scott N. was elected by 2/3 vote in the second round of voting.

Reading of definition of Vice-Chair from the Bylaws.

Election of Vice-Chair: The IFB members were polled for availability to serve as Vice-Chair. Three members made themselves available. Chuck K. was elected by 2/3 vote in the fourth round of voting.

Reading of definition of Recording Secretary from the Bylaws.

Election of Recording Secretary: The IFB members were polled for availability to serve as Recording Secretary. Three members made themselves available. Chris T. was elected by 2/3 vote in the first round of voting.

Request for Greeters was made. Karin K., Steve N., and Judi C. made themselves available.

3. Election of COC at-large members.

The nominating committee presented five members for election to the COC. Carol E., Steve N., and Derek D. were elected.

IFB Committee Reports

12th Step Committee: Victor gave the report. There is a 12th Step Workshop on Wednesday, August 9th at 6:30pm at Central Office. The committee meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm at Central Office.

Archives Committee: No report. The committee meets the 3rd Sunday of the month at 2:00pm at Central Office.

Literature Review Committee: No report. The committee meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm at Central Office.

Orientation Committee: Tony J. gave the report. The committee needs members. Orientation is held one hour prior to each month's IFB meeting.

The Point Editorial Committee: No report. The committee meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:30pm at Central Office.

Special Events Committee: Brian H. gave the report. Brian H. will make himself available to chair the committee at the next meeting as he is the only committee member who is on the IFB. Founder's Day had a good turnout. The Committee meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm at Central Office.

Special Needs Committee: Pene gave the report. Please take the Special Needs Survey to your group to fill out. Muriel P. donated two copies of How It Works, The 12 Steps, The 12 Traditions, and the Promises in Braille to Central Office for anyone who may need them. The committee approved an outreach flyer. An information flyer on Communication Strategies has also been circulated. The committee will be approaching the IFB with a proposal for special needs requirements on all future events. The Committee meets on the 4th Tuesday at 2pm at Central Office.

Trusted Servants Workshop Committee: Maury gave the report. The last Trusted Servants Workshop on the Treasurer was not well attended. There may be a workshop at Marin Unity Day in Sept. The committee meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 5:30pm at Central Office.

Website Committee: Dan Z. gave the report. The committee needs members. The committee meets the 2nd Thursday at 6pm at Central Office.

5. Standing Committee Reports

SF Teleservice: Four new volunteers attended orientation signing up for two shifts. The committee meeting time will change from 7:00pm to 6:00pm. The term 'online,' which used to refer to the person answering the hotline, will be changed to 'primary.' The new 'Hotline Forwarding Instruction' wallet card will be distributed with the Teleservice packet from now on. Day Coordinators for Monday and Tuesday are needed. The 12th Step Volunteer list is being revised. The committee meets the 3rd Monday at 6:00pm at Central Office.

PI/CPC: There is a Speaker Workshop on Thursday, July 20th at 7:00pm at Central Office. Three presentations were made to Lincoln

High School in June. Also in June, there were four DUI classes with eight speakers. The committee manned a table at the Living Sober conference. The Committee meets on the 2nd Monday at 7pm at Central Office.

6. Non-IFB Liaison Reports

General Service, SF: Karen gave the report. An NCCAA Liaison is needed. The committee meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 1187 Franklin Street. Orientation is at 7:00 p.m. and the business meeting is at 8:00 p.m.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, August 2, 2006 at the Star of the Sea Church at 180 Harrison Street, Sausalito, CA at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren H., IFB Secretary

The Point is looking for a layout editor.

Responsibilities:

The Layout Editor is primarily responsible for the layout and design of all pages containing editorial content. The Layout Editor flows in text, finds and places graphics, and ensures that all pages of *The Point* are laid out in an attractive and readable fashion. The Layout Editor also participates in brainstorming content and may contribute to each issue by authoring assigned articles.

Requirements:

The Point Layout Editor must be able to attend *The Point* Committee meetings on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. They should be organized, detail-oriented, and possess strong computer skills (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!

A.A. Acronym— A.A. = Altered Attitude

By Bree L.

One member of our group calls these A.A. acronyms the “A.A. Frisbees” that float above meetings. We can reach up, take the “Frisbee” as it sails by and use it for a while before we pass it on to the next person. These gems don’t necessarily land for a long time but they potentially change those of us who catch them and use them for our own.

Altered Attitude is a “Frisbee” I recently caught and then realized that since I joined A.A. my attitude has taken a logarithmic change. Not only did I change but my perception of those around me changed as well. When I came in, I was the all-knowing behavior monitor, not so much for myself but certainly for those around me. Today I remember the negativity and my hyper-critical way of seeing life. My children surely didn’t appreciate all my hard efforts. My boss certainly didn’t know the finer points of managing people and my co-workers always seemed to need my enlightenment.


I was surrounded by “turkeys.”

Then my sponsor mentioned gratitude which was about the last consideration I could muster for all those incompetents. It was beyond my comprehension to think that being thankful for anything or anybody could change a situation. Someone shared at a meeting that when they went to sleep they alphabetized the things and people for which they were thankful. I didn’t see where doing something so simple would do any harm so I gave it a try. My list began with my Aunt Elva who encouraged me to go to nursing school. Next came my brother Bill who turned out to be a good friend, then my car that I’d bought

with my own money and next my daughters, followed by a therapist named Evalyn who helped me through a bad marriage. So it went on and sometimes it changed, to my boyfriend, or a kind co-worker named Barbara, but each time I had an opportunity to stop and think about the pleasant association I’d had with each item on my list. I even tried starting mid-alphabet because I got tired of the same letters and rarely got down to my Sponsor or my Walkman or my dog Puppy.

I began falling asleep more easily and surprisingly the “turkeys” in my life became less like turkeys and more like people as my attitude toward them shifted, ever so slightly.


Along with the nightly gratitude list, I heard about doing the knee-work and the foot-work, leaving the results to my HP. This meant praying about an issue, doing the next right thing and letting go. All the pointed suggestions I’d been dishing out somehow were not working and my own procrastination was catching up with me. There also wasn’t much I did without some expectation of the results. This told me to pray, do the right thing and let go of the results.

My altered attitude is still under construction but I’m thankful for the changes already made. This week I read the chapter on spiritual awakening and it said that change was not necessarily quick and my altered attitude has been gradual, but oh so rewarding. I wouldn’t take back the person who came into this program on a bet and as long as I stay on the path I won’t have to. 

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@aasf.org. This policy is subject to revision. 

Financial Statement

May 2006 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	May 06	Jan - May 06
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Contributions from Groups		
Group Contributions	9,799.29	53,576.14
Total Contributions from Groups	9,799.29	53,576.14
Contributions from Individuals		
Individual - Unrestricted	1,284.83	4,121.73
Faithful Fiver	677.00	2,917.00
Honorary Contributions	208.00	763.15
Total Contributions from Individuals	2,169.83	7,801.88
Gratitude Month		
Gratitude Month - Groups	79.08	2,950.28
Total Gratitude Month	79.08	2,950.28
Sales - Bookstore	8,115.06	45,640.04
Special Event Income	0.00	2,730.14
Newsletter Subscript.	11.06	242.40
Total Income	20,174.32	112,940.88
Cost of Goods Sold		
Cost of Books Sold	5,045.87	29,149.62
Credit Card Processing Fees	162.54	766.47
Total COGS	5,208.41	29,916.09
Gross Profit	14,965.91	83,024.79
Expense		
Employee Expenses		
Wages & Salaries	7,726.10	38,191.79
Employer Tax Expenses	628.30	3,896.55
Health Benefits	952.00	4,161.00
Workers Comp Ins.	0.00	714.61
Total Employee Expenses	9,306.40	46,963.95
Professional Fees		
Computer Consulting	0.00	343.75
Outside Services	294.00	294.00
Total Professional Fees	294.00	637.75
Bank Charges		
Credit Card Clearing	0.00	0.00
Bank Charges - Other	0.00	0.00
Total Bank Charges	0.00	0.00
Postage		
Bulk Mail	0.00	400.00
Postage - Other	0.00	111.00
Total Postage	0.00	511.00
Rent - Office	3,833.75	19,168.75
Rent - Other	75.00	150.00
Filing/Fees	60.00	320.00
Insurance	0.00	1,826.00
Internet Expense	136.12	501.63
Office Supplies	289.03	1,343.47
Shipping	79.40	78.70
Equipment Lease	1,771.25	3,510.85
Repair & Maintenance	188.00	1,091.44
Security System	33.50	232.50

	May 06	Jan - May 06
Special Events	400.00	500.00
Telephone	245.91	1,195.25
Phone Book Listings	76.50	382.50
Utilities	300.19	1,095.30
Bad Checks	0.00	0.00
Total Expense	17,089.05	79,509.09
Net Ordinary Income	-2,123.14	3,515.70
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Interest Income	338.54	1,390.09
Total Other Income	338.54	1,390.09
Other Expense		
Depreciation Expense	677.89	2,095.33
Amortization Expense	238.78	1,193.90
Total Other Expense	916.67	3,289.23
Net Other Income	-578.13	-1,899.14
Net Income	<u>\$ (2,701.27)</u>	<u>\$ 1,616.56</u>

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