

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

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

# The Point

**November 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](http://www.aasf.org)  
[aa@aasf.org](mailto: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.

## History of Gratitude Month

by Rick K.



At the September 2002 meeting of the Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB), our Intergroup which serves San Francisco and Marin County, it was resolved that November would be Gratitude Month not only this year, but indefinitely, so that the IFB would not have to address the question each and every year.

Gratitude Month is a time set aside for us to express thanks to the Fellowship. Traditionally here in the Bay Area, Gratitude Month is practiced in A.A. meetings by passing the Seventh Tradition basket a second time, with the entirety of the collection from the second basket being contributed to Central Office. However, groups around the country and around the world each have their own customs for celebrating Gratitude Month, including holding Tradition discussion meetings in place of the regular format, or by making "gratitude" the topic for the meeting discussion during the month.

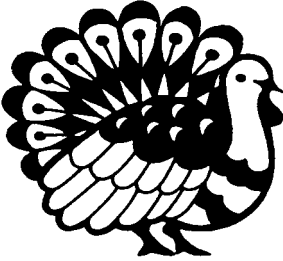
The History of Gratitude month within A.A. dates back to the 1940's when the General Service Board hosted small "Gratitude Dinners." By the 1960's they had become larger, more elaborate "Gratitude Luncheons." The motivation behind these gatherings was to express personal gratitude for sobriety and appreciation to our professional friends for their articles, books, radio and T.V. interviews relating to A.A. over the past year.

The luncheons were discontinued in 1968, but the concept of gratitude persisted and expanded in scope. For decades now, A.A.s in the U.S. have set aside all of November as Gratitude Month - marking the occasion with special contributions to G.S.O. In the spirit of the Seventh Tradition, A.A. is self-supporting through its members' contributions and frequently turns away money from well-meaning outside contributors. This means that the active input of every A.A. is vital to the life of the Fellowship.

There is no prescribed manner for celebrating Gratitude Month. Groups are encouraged to come up with their own imaginative ways to foster an attitude of gratitude among fellowship members. Box 459, the GSO's newsletter, put it so

*(Continued on page 6)*

# November 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1 FIRST WED</b> Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm, Meeting 7 pm, 1187 Franklin St./ Geary, First Unitarian Church, S.F. (Feb., May, Aug., & Nov in Sausalito at 180 Harrison Ave., Sausalito, CA: Star of the Sea Church)	2	<b>3 FIRST FRI</b> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office, 5:30 pm	<b>4</b> General Service Fall Election Assembly, Antioch, CA
<b>5 FIRST SUN</b> SFYPAA Committee (San Francisco Young People in AA), SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St./ Octavia, 12:30pm	<b>6 FIRST MON</b> Spirit of SF Committee, Central Office, 7:30 pm	7	<b>8 SECOND WED</b> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm  Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, 7 pm	<b>9 SECOND THU</b> Website Committee Central Office, 6 pm	10	<b>11</b> SF Unity Day, See Flyer in this issue or see the Events Calendar on our website for more details! <a href="http://www.aasf.org">www.aasf.org</a>
12	<b>13 SECOND MON</b> SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 7 pm	<b>14 SECOND TUE</b> SF Bridging The Gap 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF, 6:30 pm  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	<b>15 THIRD WED</b> Literature Review Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm	16	17	18
<b>19 THIRD SUN</b> Archives Committee, Central Office, 2 pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	<b>20 THIRD MON</b> SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm  Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael, GSR Sharing: 7 pm District Meeting: 8 pm	<b>21 THIRD TUE</b> San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo, 7:30 pm	22	23	24	<b>25 FOURTH SAT</b> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 10 am Business Meeting: 12:30 pm
<b>26 FOURTH SUN</b> Living Sober Convention Committee, 1668 Bush, SF, 5:30 pm	27	<b>28 FOURTH TUE</b> 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	29	<b>30 LAST THU</b> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Committee Meeting: 8 pm	<div>Thanksgiving Holiday Central Office Closed</div>	

## From the Editor...

November never fails to bring us Thanksgiving Day and Gratitude Month. It's time to gobble up and to dig deep in gratitude for the precious gifts we have been given. If your group hasn't already, please consider a group conscience to pass the basket a second time, with all proceeds going to support the important work that Central Office does for all of us.

As usual I'd like to remind our readers that *The Point* is yours! We look forward to contributions from the Fellowship in the form of articles, Dear Alky questions or concerns for the Bulletin Board. If you'd like to contribute call Central Office for length guidelines.

Also, we're working real hard on getting our new look together for the New Year. Maybe 2007 will bring a new direction for *The Point*. Happy Thanksgiving all!

-The Editor

## Joke of the Month

A man is waiting for his wife to give birth. The doctor comes in and informs the dad that his son was born without a torso, arms or legs. The son is just a head!

After 21 years, the son is now old enough for his first drink.

Dad takes him to the bar.

With all the bar patrons looking on curiously the boy takes his first sip of alcohol.

Whoosh! A torso pops out!

The father, shocked, begs his son to drink again.

The patrons chant "Take another drink!"

The bartender still shakes his head in dismay.

Whoosh! Two arms pop out! The bar goes wild.

The father, crying and wailing, begs his son to drink again.

The patrons chant "Take another drink!"

The bartender ignores the whole affair.

By now the boy is getting tipsy, and with his new hands he reaches down, grabs his drink and guzzles the last of it.

Whoosh! Two legs pop out. The bar is in chaos.

The father falls to his knees, tearfully giving thanks!!

The boy stands up on his new legs and stumbles to the left....then to the right ... right through the front door, into the street, where a truck runs over him and kills him instantly.

The bar falls silent.

The bartender sighs and says...

"He should have quit while he was a head!"



### 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.,  
Kenneth D., Maury P., Mike L.,  
Morgan L., Rick K., Victor V.,  
Bree L. and Jean M.

Thanks to all who contribute time and energy in creating our newsletter! If you want to help or submit an article, email [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org) or call 415-674-1821.



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## MEETING CHANGES

**New Meetings:**

Thu 8:00pm Laurel Heights THE 12 SCHLEPPERS, Jewish Community Center, 3200 California St./ Presidio, Room 315

**Meeting Changes:**

Sun 6:00pm	Misson	PURE & SIMPLE St. Luke's Hospital, 2555 Cesar Chavez, Solarium (was 3278 Cesar Chavez)
Mon 12:10pm	Financial	EMARCADERO STEPS & TRADITIONS South of Howard between Spear & Steuart (was 201 Spear St.)
Mon 1:10pm	Financial	EMARCADERO GROUP <b>Temporarily Cancelled</b> (was 201 Spear St.)
Tues 12:10pm	Financial	EMARCADERO REFLECTIONS South of Howard between Spear & Steuart, Outside (was 201 Spear St.)
Wed 12:10pm	Financial	EMARCADERO AS BILL SEES IT South of Howard between Spear & Steuart, Outside (was 201 Spear St.)
Wed 1:10pm	Financial	EMARCADERO SPEAKER/ DISCUSSION <b>Temporarily Cancelled</b> (was 201 Spear St.)
Wed 6:00pm	Castro	LIVING SOBER WITH H.I.V. 501 Castro/ 18th St., 2nd Floor (was 1800 Market, Rm. 300)
Thu 12:10pm	Financial	EMARCADERO BIG BOOK South of Howard between Spear & Steuart, Outside (was 201 Spear St.)
Fri 12:10pm	Financial	EMARCADERO GRAPEVINE YMCA, 169 Steuart St./ Howard; Ask greeter for Room (was 201 Spear St.)
Fri 7:15pm	Hayes Valley	SOBER & CENTERED SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St./ Octavia (was 1800 Market St. at 7pm)
Sat 4:00pm	Hayes Valley	GAY & LESBIAN PEOPLE OF COLOR, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St./ Octavia (was 1800 Market St.)

**No Longer Meeting:**

Fri 8:30pm	SOMA	ENDLESS SUMMER 43 Dore St./ Howard St.
Fri 11:00pm	San Rafael	FRIDAY NIGHT LATE NIGHT Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., 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 September 2006

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

**San Francisco**

The 12 Schleppers Thu. 8pm; A is for Alcohol Tue. 6pm; Bernal Big Book Sat. 5pm; Big Book Basics Fri. 8pm; Best Damn Big Book Discussion Thu. 8pm; Castro Monday Big Book Mon. 8:30pm; Fair Oaks Big Book Study Mon. 8pm; Mon. 8pm; Friday Reflections Fri. 12pm; How It Works Sat. 2pm; How It Works Now Sat. 3:00pm; Lesbians Living Sober Tue. 8:15pm; Midnight Meditation Madness Fri. 11:59pm; Monday Morning Men's Meeting Mon. 6am; New Friday Big Book Fri. 12pm; The Pepper Group Fri. 12:00pm; Pure & Simple Sun. 6pm; Seacliff Thu. 8:30pm; Stonestown Mon. 8pm; Valencia Smokefree Fri. 6pm; Wits End Step Study Tue. 8pm; Women's Kitchen Table Group Tue. 6:30pm

**Marin**

11th Step Meeting Mon. 8pm; Beginners Meeting Tue. 7pm; Ross-San Anselmo Mon 8pm; Sunday Express Sun. 6pm; Tuesday Twelve Step Tue. 6:30pm

### CONTRIBUTIONS

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

#### ONGOING MEMORIALS

Dina R., Lita G.,  
Bob C. & Donald W.

#### ANNIVERSARIES

Mid-Morning Support:  
Denise H. 21 years  
Linda J. 14 years

## Coming Up!

### FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

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

<u>DATE</u>	<u>HOST GROUP</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>FROM</u>
11/03	Sonoma Men's Stag	TBA	Huntington Square
11/10	Hoodlum Haven	Elizabeth C.	Stonestown Group
11/17	Sunday Mrng Gay Men's Stag	Patrick M.	Sausalito Star of the Sea
11/24	Oyster Point Discussion	Brigette L.	

### BIRTHDAY MEETING

1748 Market St. S.F. Alano Club  
Saturdays 8:00 pm

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
11/04	Tom G.
11/11	Teresa L.
11/18	Scott C.
11/25	Virginia S.

### TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>Home Group</u>
11/07	Steve R.	Valencia Smoke Free
11/14	Russell G.	Sunset Speaker Step
11/21	Carlos	1010 Valencia
11/28	Angie	Mid-Morning Support

### BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>FROM</u>
11/05	Claudette T.	El Sobrante 29 Yrs
11/12	Kathleen W.	San Francisco 19 Yrs
11/19	Don B.	Pleasant Hill 21 Yrs
11/26	Brad R.	Daly City 1 Yr

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

### 12th-Step Workshop



Wednesday, December 13th 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. Also learn about *The Sunshine Club* and taking meetings to those that are homebound or in the hospital due to illness or injury.

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!  
e-mail: [aa@aasf.org](mailto:aa@aasf.org)

Celebrate the Traditions with us at the  
(Now-We-Think-it's-Going-to-be...)

### Annual Traditions Celebration

— formerly known as the  
Some-Kind-of-Annual, Every-So-Often Traditions Workshop

Saturday, Nov. 4th, 2006  
1pm—3pm

ILWU Clerks Hall on Berry St.  
(at the foot of 2nd and King Streets —  
NE corner near the ball park)

Opening Presentation on the Importance  
of our Traditions with Si P.

*Followed by twelve speakers sharing on the  
History of the Traditions*

*For more information and directions see the flyer on the  
Central Office website Events Calendar — [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org)*

## Coming Up!

A Fundraiser for  
**Living Sober / Western Roundup**

### New Years Eve Masquerade Ball

**Sunday, December 31st**  
**7:30 pm AA—AI Anon meeting**  
**8:30 pm DANCE**  
**Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy**  
**4235 19th Street @ Collingwood**  
**\$15 Suggested Donation**  
**No one turned away for lack of funds.**

For more information contact :  
**Zach D., 831-840-5440 or Stephen H., 415-865-9978,**  
**twelvreal@aol.com**

*\*If ASL is needed for any event, please give 72 hour advance notice.*

### PI/CPC SPEAKER WORKSHOP

(Public Information/Cooperation with the  
Professional Community)

**@ UNITY DAY!!**

*Saturday, November 11th, 2006 – 11:30 a.m.*

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

Unity Day will be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Marks Urban Life Center: 1301 Franklin St @ O'Farrell St.

There is a two-year continuous sobriety requirement to be a speaker but no time requirement to serve on the committee. Come and join us!

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

### The Alano Club

**Sunday, November 5, 2006**

A.A. Birthday Meeting Hosts a Special  
5-6 p.m. Chip Meeting. Speaker Si P.

**The Alano Club is One Year Old**  
**Help us Celebrate!**

*Everyone is Welcome between 3-5 p.m.*  
*For Food, Fellowship, & Fun*

### SF UNITY DAY

**Saturday, November 11, 2006**

**1101 O'Farrell from 10 am to 5 pm**

**SEE THE INSERT IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE,**  
visit the website—[www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org)—or call Central Office

**Workshops on:**

**PI/CPC**  
**Trusted Servants**  
**Sponsorship**  
**Teleservice**

**Presentations on:**


**H & I**  
**Bridging the Gap**  
**General Service**  
**IFB**

#### *History of Gratitude Month (Continued from page 1)*

well: "How about trying something new, something your group has never done before, which will make the members' gratitude more tangible and real?" Here in the Bay Area we've always been good about finding new and inventive ways to do things, so let's be creative!

Gratitude. It's a weighty, high-dignity word, but in truth

its close companions are humor and joy. As Bill W. observed early on in *Alcoholics Anonymous* (p. 132), Outsiders are sometimes shocked when we burst into merriment over a seemingly tragic experience out of the past. But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others." What greater cause can there be for rejoicing than this?

*(Much of this article is reprinted, with permission, from Box 459, Volume 46, No. 5. October – November 2000)* 

# Dear Alky

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

Dear Alky,

**My home group is going in a direction that I don't like. The Secretary yells at people and there are always a bunch of people coming in for the free coffee that don't contribute a whit to the meeting. I want to quit and yet feel like I need to help on some level but just end up frustrated every week.**

**Any suggestions??**

**Thanks,**

**Breezy**



I want to quit and yet feel like I need to help on some level but just end up frustrated every week.

seemingly only to drink coffee may be either too shy to speak up, or questioning whether they are really an alcoholic. Maybe someone who others think is only there for the coffee will hear something that makes them realize that they have a problem and that there is a solution. I suggest that if you are disturbed by these "non-contributing" folk, you walk up and introduce yourself to one of them. Welcome them, offer your number and try to get to know them. If you continue to feel disturbed, the best solution is to throw yourself the more into your own program and helping others.

Regarding the secretary yelling, that is a different thing altogether. Every A.A. group is self-governing in matters such as who takes what service position. If the secretary's behavior is such that you think it adversely affects the group's ability to carry the message to the suffering alcoholic, perhaps at the next business meeting you should bring up the issue. If you are feeling uncomfortable, you are probably not the only person who is. It is your responsibility to help keep your meeting focused on principles, rather than personalities.

-Alky

Dear Breezy,

You've identified two separate issues in your home group that are bothering you—the secretary yelling and the people whom you believe are not contributing to the meeting. The second issue is the easier to answer—our third tradition states that the only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking. Unless you happen to be a mind-reader, it seems to Alky that you are not qualified to assess someone else's desire to stop drinking. A person who comes to the meeting

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



## Bulletin Board

I just read an article in the August issue of *The Grapevine* and I feel terrible. It's from a woman in Santa Rosa who walked into a meeting and every time she started to sit down she realized the seats were all saved. Here is what she says:

I'm tapped on the shoulder by a smiling woman my age. "Excuse me," she says. "These seats are saved." Yes, of course they are. Saved for all the friends who want to sit together — rows and rows of them. Saved for the regulars who come each week and stick together. How wonderful for them to have close relationships in A.A. I'm reminded of how I felt in high school, when I didn't know which

group to sit next to because no one invited me to join them. I feel excluded, physically and emotionally.

(*A.A. Grapevine*, reprinted with permission)

She eventually found a place to sit, but I feel her pain at not being part of the in-crowd. Her experience makes me realize that every time I save seats for myself and my posse, when we go to a chip meeting or if one of us is speaking, that we are giving up the chance to reach out to someone who needs to feel connected. There are lots of meetings in San Francisco where you have to get there an hour or more ahead of time to save yourself a seat. Is this right?

-Former Seat-Saver

## 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](mailto:sconjovi@gmail.com)

#### **VICE CHAIR**

Chuck K. 415.637.7330

#### **TREASURER**

Danna P. 415.595.9141

#### **RECORDING SECRETARY**

Chris T. 415.261.2522

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### **CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE**

David P. [david@leadershipunleashed.com](mailto:david@leadershipunleashed.com)

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

Victor V. 415.726.0518

#### **ARCHIVES COMMITTEE**

Bruce K. [bruceken@aol.com](mailto:bruceken@aol.com)

#### **LITERATURE COMMITTEE**

Steve N. [snolan12000@yahoo.com](mailto:snolan12000@yahoo.com)

#### **ORIENTATION COMMITTEE**

Anthony J. [anthony@sobersots.org](mailto:anthony@sobersots.org)

#### **THE POINT**

Victor V. 415.726.0518

#### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Brian H. 415.724.5956

#### **SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE**

Pene P. 415.200.6261

#### **TRUSTED SERVANTS WORKSHOP COMMITTEE**

Monika H. [monihar2002@yahoo.com](mailto:monihar2002@yahoo.com)

#### **WEBSITE COMMITTEE**

Dan Z. 415.665.5166

#### **SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE**

Judi C. [sfteservice@aasf.org](mailto:sfteservice@aasf.org)

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

Jill H. [picpc@aasf.org](mailto:picpc@aasf.org)

## Service Bulletin

# Marin Unity Day

*by Anonymous*

This year was my second time attending Unity Day in Marin. As someone who lives and works in San Francisco, I often forget that our Central Office supports not only our city but also Marin County. I had a great time last year focusing on fellowship with both people I knew and new friends I met that day. This year was an even better experience for me because I went not only for fellowship, but also for service.

The day started off a bit quietly with more people volunteering than sitting in seats, but that changed quickly and by the end of the night it was standing room only. As the day began with entertainment on the stage, I had an opportunity to speak with a newcomer who had just relocated from Monterey. She was very nervous since her mother was 'interviewing' her sponsor out on the patio while she checked out the tables for different service entities. It was a great way for me to start the event and remind myself what events like Unity Day are all about: coming together and reaching out with a solution to those who need one.

During my time at one of the information tables, our delegate, Francisco, spoke about the last conference. I have heard him several times in the last couple of years and it was great to see how his service has changed him and given him much more comfort in front of a crowd. He shared with us his experience as a humble trusted servant for our area and talked about some of the challenges that lie ahead for A.A. across the world.

The Trusted Servants Workshop Committee then held a workshop on the position of Secretary. Even with many people out on the patio, the attendance for the workshop was great. I knew it was a success when at the end the questions were flowing from the audience. A lot of experience was passed on and potential solutions to dilemmas faced on a regular basis by Secretaries.

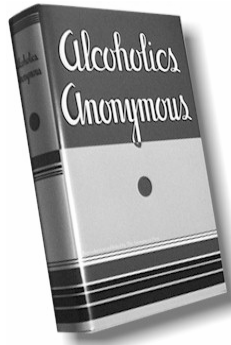
Dinner was fantastic just as it was last year and I again had more time to catch up with some old friends while making new ones. I met the most new people by being of service helping clean up after the dinner. Nothing makes someone quite as happy as taking their plate after a good meal and it was a privilege to make so many people smile.

The highlight of the evening for me was getting to hear Tom I. from North Carolina. His story showed exactly what being active in A.A. for 49 years can do. His hope, strength, and ability to care for the well being of complete strangers were a joy to listen to. His concern for the individual and A.A. as a whole came out with every word. I wish you all could have been there to hear his words. If you didn't get a chance to come to this year's event, I hope you can make it next year. You might also want to go to Unity Day in San Francisco on November 11<sup>th</sup>. The same sense of connection and caring will be here on our side of the bridge as well. ↑

# Big Book Study: Chapter Ten—"To Employers"

by Kathleen C.

Bill W. did not write the chapter "To Employers" in *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Bill was a maverick stockbroker who mostly worked alone. Henry "Hank" Parkhurst, the author of this chapter, was at one time assistant manager of a corporation department employing sixty-six hundred men. He appreciates the irony of one day firing a man for alcoholism and soon after realizing that he himself is an alcoholic.



In 1939, when the first copies of *Alcoholics Anonymous* appeared on bookstore shelves, those shelves also held *The Jungle*, which recounted horrendous conditions for factory workers and *The Grapes of Wrath*, about the desperation of migrant farm workers. America was starting to climb out of the depths of the Great Depression, with the helping hand of the federal government. President Roosevelt established a Department of Labor, to oversee worker welfare, as well as Social Security, for workers who were elderly or disabled. Employers were beginning to think of employees more as a resource to be developed and less as commodities to be discarded when they became worn out or damaged.

Some of the workers in "To Employers" are damaged by their alcoholism to the point of death. Paul jumps from a hotel room window after a binge, leaving a note saying his boss was the best he ever had, and was not to blame in any way. The author opens a letter and out falls a newspaper clipping, the obituary of one of the best salesmen he ever had, who shot himself six weeks after being fired for drinking. A woman calls to ask if her husband's company life insurance is still in effect. He has hanged himself. He too was fired for drinking.

These were the author's most brilliant, hard-working, valuable employees, yet every one was lost to alcoholism. Sometimes he had given them second and even third and fourth chances, as they struggled mightily to sober up, to no avail. How could he have diverted their paths to self-destruction? When he threatened to fire them it didn't work. When he gave them a leave of absence even including a cure, it didn't work. He came to believe that consequences and physical treatment are only part of the

*The first step in the employee's recovery is overcoming denial.*

solution. He learned that the program of action in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* is essential for an alcoholic worker's recovery.

The first step in the employee's recovery is overcoming denial. Employers may also deny the existence of alcoholism in their work force. It's true that most people can drink moderately, and even be annoyed with the alcoholic, that he could be so weak, stupid and irresponsible. The enlightened employer realizes that the alcoholic employee suffers from a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual illness. He confronts the worker about his drinking, asks him if he is willing to do anything to get well and offers him hope, in the form of physical treatment and a program of action. He recognizes that "He needs to undergo a change of heart, a transformation of thought and attitude. He had to place recovery over everything, for without recovery we would have lost both home and business." As the author himself admits, "Had they fired me first, and had they then taken steps to see that I was presented with the solution contained in this book, I might have returned to them six months later a well man."

Offering a program of recovery to its alcoholic employees is not just the right thing for an employer to do, it is also good for business. A company that spends millions for research every year can't afford to overlook the cost of alcoholism, in both dollars and human misery. Today many workers' health insurance policies cover at least one round of treatment for alcoholism. Many companies have Employee Assistance Programs, to direct the alcoholic to treatment and A.A.

After the worker returns from treatment, the good boss will not take advantage of his desire to make amends, perhaps by working sixteen-hour days. "You may need to encourage him to play once in a while." He does encourage the newly-sober alcoholic to work with co-workers in recovery. "This work is necessary to maintain his sobriety." If the recovering alcoholic stumbles, if he has a slip or a relapse, the employer may wish to give him another chance, but doesn't need to feel

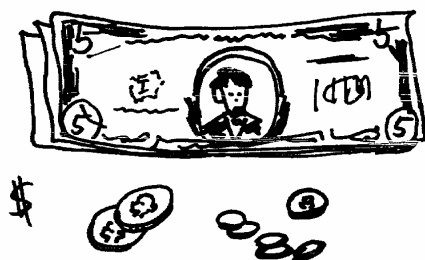
(Continued on page 15)

## 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:

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




## Self Supporting?

by Victor V.

Recently I read an article in the February issue of the *AA Grapevine* entitled "A Buck in the Basket". A fellow member of A.A. shared how back in 1963 people at meetings put a dollar in the basket. He also shared about inflation over the past 43 years. While reading this article I began to think about how much money I put in the basket and realized that if everyone was like me and put one dollar in the basket we would be far from self-supporting. A.A. has given me the opportunity for a great life, one I never expected to have. It is up to me to practice what I have been taught in A.A. on a daily basis in order to see the 9<sup>th</sup> Step promises stay alive in my life. It is also up to me to make sure that I do my part in supporting A.A. I started to think about the thousands of dollars I spent on alcohol and anything else that I thought would make me feel good in the past 30 years. The money I put in the basket at meetings, to support this life-changing program, which is my life, was a very small percentage of what I spent on destroying my life. This did not make a whole lot of sense to me.

When I go to a meeting, I jump in my truck, spend \$3 in fuel to get to the meeting and back, buy a cup of coffee for \$2.05, put \$2 in the meter when I park, and then drop a dollar in the basket to support an organization that has given me a life greater than I ever imagined. Does that make sense? It doesn't to me!

As the treasurer of a meeting of about 25 people, our rent is \$123 per month. We decided by group conscience to pay the rent and send any left over money to Central Office. I am embarrassed to say that in the last 5 months we have paid rent and supported Central Office with a whole \$9. Sometimes I have to ask for the basket to be passed a second time. Our coffee maker contributes all of the goodies for her commitment (this itself may even be a "violation" of Tradition 7). She does this voluntarily and if she asked for reimbursement I would have to appeal to the members of the meeting to dig a little deeper. Some people can't afford to put anything in the basket, but some of us, like myself, can certainly afford to put more than a dollar in the basket. As treasurer, I don't feel that we are self-supporting. Tradition 7 states that we should be self-supporting declining outside contributions. To me this means we A.A. members must support our own organization and not ask for help outside of A.A.. This means we need to support our meetings by paying the rent, buying refreshments, supplying literature, supporting Central Office, supporting the New York Office, and supporting the Hospitals and Institutions Committee. We, the members of A.A., need to carry the message to the alcoholic still suffering and one of the ways we do this is by our financial support of our recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I don't ever want to see A.A. suffer because of a lack of support. I now see how costs have gone up and I feel I need to do my part to fight inflation. I have decided that I will put a minimum of \$3 in the basket at every meeting I attend. If I miss a meeting then at the next meeting I will double my donation. I can't tell anyone else what to do, because A.A. has taught me that I am only responsible for my actions, but I can certainly do my part to support this wonderful organization that helps so many alcoholics. 

## Literature Review

# The Home Group: Heartbeat of A.A.

by Steve N.



I have a home group because I needed a place as a newcomer where I could feel safe. I needed a place where I could find the love and tolerance that I needed to feel comfortable and to fit in. I walked into my home group a hot two days out of treatment and was greeted by two men who seemed to know everybody by name and they showed genuine affection towards the other men entering the courtyard. Little was I to know that on that first night I would walk away with the phone number of the man who would become my sponsor and a meeting phone list of over a hundred guys.

The soft cover book, *The Home Group: Heartbeat of A.A.*, is a collection of thirty-four articles reprinted from the A.A. *Grapevine*. The book was published in 1993 and is in its second printing. The articles are divided into four sections: *Where Recovery Begins*, *The Joys of Service*, *The Lessons of Experience* and *The Traditions at Work*. The book is 128 pages. In the preface, the editorial staff explains that a home group is much more than a place where a person can feel comfortable around other members of A.A. "It is where A.A. members grow up in sobriety by the time honored process of trial and error. It is where they learn to put the needs of others, especially the needs of the group, ahead of their own desires. It is where they first have the opportunity to serve others, and where they

learn of opportunities to serve beyond the group. It is where they begin to adopt the guiding principles of Alcoholics Anonymous as working realities in their own sober lives." (Preface).

The story in *Where Recovery Begins* about the Blizzard of '82 and the lights being out at the church, struck me hard. The A.A. member had gotten off the bus fifteen miles from home, in waist deep snow and found the church where his home group met dark, silent, and locked. On his long walk home in the storm, he began to recall all the episodes that occurred at meeting. Some tragic stories and many healthy memories, but the thing that troubled him was that the meeting met no matter what.

The amazing thing about A.A. meetings is that they are just like the individual members that comprise it. Some meetings open their doors an hour or so before the meeting, when the coffee and setup people arrive. The lights are on and I know that there will be a meeting. Other meetings, often much smaller ones that require very little set up and do not have coffee, often open the doors just minutes before the meeting. In this case, the meeting had moved up the street because the church was using the building that night.

The section on the *Traditions at Work* has a story about a member's participation in his home group's inventory.

(Continued on page 15)

## Abundant Gratitude

by Kenneth D.

I recently joined The Point committee and was 'railroaded' into writing this article – no, actually I volunteered but I would not have done so if I had not been pushed by several of the other committee members. The topic for this issue is abundance and gratitude.

I have to admit that I have been a slow learner when it comes to gratitude. I am always looking at the bigger, better, faster 'stuff' in life or the higher paying job or the popularity of others and desiring that prestige, or the better relationship and perpetually asking 'When do I get mine?' After all, that's why I got sober, right? Right? I got sober to get the power, the property, and the prestige that I so well deserved. Well, actually no. I got sober because I hated myself and I hated my life, and I knew that if I didn't change, my life was going to end,

either by my own hand or as the result of my drinking.

I had always believed that it was what I had in life that made me happy. If I had an abundance of friends or money or sex, somehow any of those things would make me feel complete. Definitely all three would be bliss, and would make me happy. I believed that outside forces would cause my consciousness to shift – and as a result, I would be happy and grateful.

As the result of good sponsorship and by actually listening at meetings, I have learned that gratitude is not the result of 'getting' stuff; it is not the by-product of what we call abundance. Gratitude is a shift in consciousness; or if you prefer, a shift in perception, that I can choose or not. Of course, I do not wake up each

(Continued on page 15)

# AA Group Contributions - August 2006

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	August 2006	YTD	Name	August 2006	YTD
<b>Fellowship</b>			Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		434.50
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	36.00	216.00	Mill Valley 7D 7am		1,760.29
Contribution Box	138.20	310.04	Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		22.72
Deer Park Discovery Group		40.00	Monday Blues M 630pm		461.71
Gay Newcomers Group		19.71	Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		938.81
IFB	75.26	644.99	Monday Night Women's M 8pm		103.42
Marin Teleservice		1,347.87	Monday Nooners M 12pm	180.00	180.00
Men's Forum Tu		1,000.00	More Will Be Revealed F 12pm	100.00	130.00
SEC Anonymous Prom		117.00	Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm		200.00
The Chosen Ones		40.00	Newcomers Step M 730pm		117.60
Unidentified Group	402.60	2,640.57	Noon Tu 12pm		193.50
<b>Total Fellowship</b>	<b>\$ 652.06</b>	<b>\$ 6,376.18</b>	Noon Hope F 12pm	82.50	207.50
<b>Marin Group Contributions</b>			North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm		150.00
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		172.67	On Awakening 7D 530am		210.00
7am Grab Bag M 7am		40.00	Pathfinders Tu 12pm		66.00
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm		50.00	Primary Purpose W 830pm		300.00
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		1,149.65	Refugee Th 12pm		30.00
Awakenings		186.00	Reveille 7D 7pm		300.00
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		160.00	Rise N Shine Sun 10am		231.94
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		1,279.59	Saturday Serenity Sa 8pm		65.50
Beginners Tu 7pm		156.00	Serendipity Sa 11am	115.00	115.00
Beginners W 7pm		472.98	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)		150.00
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		127.08	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		247.85
Bounce Back M 6pm		120.00	Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag Su 830a		250.00
Caledonia Sun 8pm		530.56	Sober & Serene F 7pm		250.00
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		250.00	Steps to Freedom M 730pm		324.31
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm	50.00	144.00	Steps To The Solution W 715pm		70.00
Crossroads Sun 12pm		1,075.00	Streetfighters Sa 9am		46.80
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm		168.40	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	250.00	250.00
Experience, Strength & Hope(Marin) Sa 6pm	108.00	183.00	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		100.00
Fairfax Friday Night F 830pm		100.00	Sunday Friendship Sun 7pm		120.00
Freedom Finders F 830pm		830.00	Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm		692.50
Girls Night Out W 815pm		10.65	Survivors M 12pm		138.00
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		152.00	T. G. I'm Sober M 6pm	73.77	73.77
Gratitude M 2pm		20.00	T.G.I.F. F 6pm	98.71	424.77
Happy Hour (Marin) Th 6pm	108.00	183.00	T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm		94.56
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		200.00	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		1,347.89
Hillside Candlelight F 830pm		100.00	Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag Th 8pm		350.87
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		255.79	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		370.54
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am		100.00	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm	115.00	185.52
Island Group Th 8pm	245.08	406.58	There is a Solution Tu 6pm		270.49
Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm		126.50	Thurs. Night Speaker, MV		1,018.00
Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		120.00	Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 8pm		550.00
Living in the Solution F 6pm		492.66	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		715.11
			We, Us and Ours M 650pm		189.50

Name	August 2006	YTD
Wednesday Noon W 12pm		383.00
What's It All About F 12pm		64.50
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		304.17
Women's Step Study Group M 12pm	120.00	120.00
Women For Women W 12pm		50.00
Women on Monday M 7pm		211.84
Working Dogs W 1205pm		550.00
<b>Total Marin Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 1,646.06</b>	<b>\$ 25,494.59</b>

#### SF Group Contributions

515pm Smokeless F		132.03
6am Marina Dock Sa	114.60	174.60
7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		94.18
830am Smokeless Th		64.43
830am Smokeless Tu		228.00
A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	26.82	163.29
A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		115.00
AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		59.10
AA Step Study Su 6pm	254.76	541.51
Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		206.90
Afro American F 8pm		89.17
All Together Now Th 8pm		592.35
Amazing Grace M 7pm		50.00
Any Lengths Sat 930am	194.96	946.54
Artists & Writers F 630pm		180.00
As Bill CCs It Sun 8am		80.55
As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		680.40
Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		140.92
Beginner Big Book Step Th 630pm		25.00
Be Still AA Su 11am		120.84
Beach Meeting\Meditation Sa 930am		92.05
Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		86.05
Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	164.94	683.97
Bernal New Day 7D	400.00	400.00
Big Book Basics F 8pm		502.41
Big Book Study Su 1130am	112.50	331.16
Blue Book Special Su 11am		36.88
Boys Night Out Tu 730pm		21.00
Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		141.60
Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) W 8pm		111.38
Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm	77.86	77.86
Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm		88.00
Cocoanuts Su 9am		79.00
Come N Get It F 630pm		17.45
Common Welfare Th 8pm		32.20
Courtside Tu 1215pm		234.60
Cow Hollow Men's Group		124.50
Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		11.11
Crocker Park Sa 4pm		19.00
Just Alkies F 7pm		42.00
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		1,376.99
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		93.32

Name	August 2006	YTD
Design for Living Sat 8am		387.95
Diamond Heights Tu 830pm		400.00
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		1,333.87
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am	446.90	681.52
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		291.53
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		422.41
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		581.46
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		877.28
Early Joyous & Free Th 7am		60.00
Easy Does It Tu 6pm	70.00	230.00
Early Start F 6pm		576.16
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	273.00	1,787.58
Endless Summer F 830pm		26.00
Epiphany Group Th 8pm		35.00
Eureka Step Tu 6pm		113.00
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		827.70
Experience, Strength & Hope W 715pm		23.13
Federal Speaker Su 12pm	217.35	427.57
Fell Street Step Su 8pm		61.53
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		180.00
Fireside Chat Th 8pm		213.28
Fireside Chat Tu 8pm		81.28
Founders' Group Sa 5pm		28.20
Four Forty Niners F 8pm	158.00	225.20
Friday All Groups F 830pm	384.18	2,766.56
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		140.00
Friday Night Special F 8pm		14.00
Friday Smokeless F 830pm		47.40
Friendly Circle Su 830pm		968.34
Gold Mine Group M 8pm		294.92
Goodlands Su 2pm		88.98
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm	126.60	415.02
High Noon Friday 1215pm		699.87
High Noon Monday 1215pm		633.75
High Noon Saturday 1215pm		89.66
High Noon Thursday 1215pm		506.66
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm		509.22
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm		356.71
High Sobriety M 8pm		404.22
High Steppers W 7pm		135.98
Hilldwellers M 8pm	305.26	379.66
Home Group Sat 830pm		292.80
Hoodlum Haven F 8pm		760.00
Hot Java F 12am		90.00
How It Works Sat 2pm		104.33
Huntington Square W 630pm		528.07
Ingleside Beginners Su 5pm		22.85
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		462.00
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		122.40
Sober Across the Board M-Sa 830am	40.00	140.00
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am	67.65	180.24
Step Talk Su 830am	150.00	941.18

Name	August 2006	YTD	Name	August 2006	YTD
Last Call Su 10pm		183.40	Stepping Out Sat 6pm		32.77
Light Steppers Su 7pm		170.00	Stepping Stone Step Study M 7pm		375.00
Like A Prayer Su 4pm		74.69	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		180.60
Live and Let Live Su 8pm		90.85	Straight Jackets Th 9am	51.00	189.03
Living Sober W 8pm		208.80	Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm	120.00	120.00
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		287.96	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 1030am	867.80	1,233.59
Luke's Group W 8pm		130.80	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc Su 730pm	327.00	1,368.62
Lunch Bunch Th 12pm	120.00	120.00	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		81.00
Lush Lounge Sa 2pm	122.04	330.84	Sundown Steps Th 630pm	64.26	261.63
Marina Discussion F 830pm		1,685.18	Sundown W 7pm		203.33
Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		226.26	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 545pm		109.20
Men's Gentle Touch M 7pm	180.00	180.00	Sunset 11'ers F		50.00
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am		347.13	Sunset 11'ers Su		160.47
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am		125.00	Sunset 11'ers Tu		87.00
Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm	258.60	327.77	Sunset 11'ers W		20.00
Mission Fellowship		259.73	Sunset 9'ers F	58.27	358.80
Mission Terrace W 8pm	80.15	222.55	Sunset 9'ers M		222.37
Monday Beginners M 8pm	395.34	695.34	Sunset 9'ers Sa		381.01
Monday Monday M 1215pm		222.00	Sunset 9'ers Su	234.00	234.00
New Highs W 130pm		70.80	Sunset 9'ers Th		126.38
New Hope Big Book M 630pm	72.00	94.69	Sunset 9'ers Tu		213.68
New Life W 7pm		128.25	Sunset 9'ers W		196.09
Newcomers Tu 8pm		36.14	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		278.00
Newcomers Group Tu 7pm		214.50	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		190.68
No Reservation M 12pm		120.15	Surf Tu 8pm		325.00
One Liners Th 830pm		1,081.23	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm		233.25
Parkside Th 830pm		85.50	Ten Years After Su 6pm	935.87	1,346.43
Park Presidio M 830pm		175.20	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am		112.80
Pax West M 12pm		1,025.88	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	75.35	647.72
Pax West Th 12pm		184.04	The Parent Trap M 1230pm		272.59
Rebound W 830pm	295.80	380.80	The Pepper Group F 12pm		72.00
Red Road Healing Circle Th 6pm	63.71	63.71	They Don't Know Who We Are Sat 7pm		180.00
Rule 62 W 10pm	189.55	468.55	They Stopped In Time M 8pm		130.98
Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm		160.20	Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm		378.53
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		841.59	Too Early Sat 8am		312.05
Saturday Matinee 2pm		60.00	Transrecovery F 630pm		9.40
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		341.64	Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm		132.00
Seacliff Th 830pm		151.70	Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am		93.36
Serenity House		500.00	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		528.83
Serenity Seekers M 730pm	737.40	1,682.40	Unconditional Surrender F 10am		31.00
Sesame Step Tu 730pm		237.13	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm		252.00
SFPOA Th 7pm		210.00	Walk of Shame W 8pm		120.00
Sinbar Su 830pm		117.80	Washington Square M 7pm		95.85
Sisters Circle Su 6pm		370.45	Waterfront Sun 8pm	262.86	835.96
Sisters In Sobriety M 7pm (SF)	25.00	25.00	We Care Tu 12pm		361.28
Sober & Centered F 7pm		255.49	Wednesday Women's Big Book W 615pm		180.00
West Portal W 915pm		180.84	Women's Promises F 7pm		78.85
Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm		34.92	Work In Progress Sat 7pm	140.17	197.94
Women Living Sober Sa 1030am		79.89	YAHOO Step Sa 11am		35.00
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		341.83	<b>Total SF Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 9,261.55</b>	<b>60,581.25</b>
Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm		82.75	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 11,559.67</b>	<b>\$ 81,030.55</b>

# Another Gratitude Month—Oh Boy

by Anonymous

This year will mark my sixth consecutive Gratitude Month in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. Yes, time does go by fast and staying sober one day at a time does add up to many days. It seems that I should be learning a thing or two, however.

I have an awful lot to be grateful for. Since that day after Thanksgiving in 2000 when I was at my emotional and spiritual bottom and finally asked for help, my life has changed a great deal. I finished an education in another field of study, I started my own business, I've sponsored a few folks and have gone through a few sponsors myself, and have really gotten to understand the word "serenity" and sometimes actually have peace. I have seen a few fellow A.A.'s come into the program and go out – some to return again, and others not. I have given my card and phone number to countless newcomers and other folks in the rooms and can count on two hands how many calls I've received. But that's another story for another column.

I have done a lot of service in A.A. as well. Since that first service commitment of being a Greeter at a meeting, I've

done virtually all of the other commitments that one can have at a meeting. Just this year I took the dreaded coffee commitment. That is growth for me. I've done and still do Teleservice, did a Hospitals & Institutions stint, and have been on another rather active committee in the program for over four years now. And, I've attended hundreds of meetings and shared my story at least 10 times, I'm sure.

So what am I truly grateful for on this Gratitude Month and at this anniversary? I think that it has to do with all of the things just mentioned and that I have had a clear head through every one of them. I have actually shown up for A.A. and other people, both inside and outside of the rooms. And, ultimately, I haven't had a drink in over 2,000 days! That is phenomenal to this alcoholic and if it is the only thing that I can be grateful for, so be it. This program truly works and I am extremely grateful for that. I guess I also have to settle with the notion that the longer the time I have in A.A., the less I know. I guess I'll keep coming back for awhile. ↑

## *The Home Group: Heartbeat of A.A. (Continued from page 11)*

Not all groups take a regular inventory, but the Traditions were designed to help the group function using the collective experience of all the groups that have gone before; all the success and failures. His description of the process is informative. He looks at some of the questions

his grouped asked and discussed. They can be found in the A.A. Group pamphlet and the Traditions checklist.

Having the *Home Group: Heartbeat of A.A.* close at hand allows me to keep in touch with how far I have come in my sobriety and how far I have to go, both in love and service to my home group. ↑

## *Big Book Study "To Employers" (Continued from page 9)*

guilty if he lets him go. By giving him access to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, he has already done enough. By working the program of recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous, the employee may not only obtain a daily reprieve from alcoholism, but also become an even better

worker. The author himself recovered and at the close of this story describes owning a little company. His two recovering alcoholic employees produce as much as five normal salesmen. "But why not? They have a new attitude, and they have been saved from living death. I have enjoyed every moment spent in getting them straightened out." ↑

## *Abundant Gratitude (Continued from page 11)*

morning in a state of gratitude. I do not hit the alarm clock, wake up and go to work grateful that I have a job. And I certainly do not ride the bus and become overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude – as some lady's purse jabs me in my side as she passes by or as I wonder what that smell is and where the heck it's coming from! No, I

have to shift my perception into gratitude, and then I become grateful. When I do manage to remember this, I find myself becoming less stressed, more comfortable and less 'restless, irritable and discontent'. My state of consciousness changes and I experience that sense of ease and comfort I had always sought in the drink. ↑

# IFB Meeting Summary — October 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	
Andy T.	Waterfront	P	Don B.	Friday Fell Street	R	Nicholas S.	Sutter St. Beginners	P
Anil K.	Tiburon Monday Mens Stag	P	Drea B.	Serenity Seekers	A**	Omar C.	Tuesday Chip	P
Anthony J.	Founders Group	P	Dylan C.	They Stopped in Time	P	Orion P.	Marina Dock 6am	P
Armando R.	Home Group	A*	Gaspar L.	Keep It Simple	P	Patty M.	Huntington Square	P
Beatrice L.	Mid Morning Support	P	Greg S.	Beginner's Warmup	R	Paul M.	Too Early	P
Ben N.	Stepping Up	P	Jaime G.	Sesame Step	P	Penelope P.	Amazing Grace	P
Brian H.	Living Sober with HIV	P	Joe H.	Gratitude Group	A*	Rebecca D.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Bruce K.	Sunset Speaker Step	A*	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	A*	Rebekah D.	Fell Street Step	P
Carol E.	Happy Hour	P	Karen A.	West Portal	P	Richard R.	We Care	P
Casey L.	Sunday Corte Madera	P	Karen S.	Alumni Group	P	Rick K.	Join the Tribe	P
Chris H.	Friendly Circle	A*	Karin K.	24 Hour Plan	P	Roger C.	Early Start	P
Chris T.	Keep Coming Back	P	Larry B.	Castro Discussion	P	Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sat.	P
Chuck K.	Ten Years After	P	Liz C.	Mill Valley Speaker	P	Steve N.	Terra Linda Group	P
Clifford B.	Spawn of Straight Jacket	P	Luis M.	High Noon Tuesday	P	Steve S.	Past Chair	P
Dan C.	Sunday Night Castro SD	A*	Mark W.	Blue Book Special	P	Tedra M.	Come N Get It	P
Dan Z.	Each Day a New Beginning	P	Matt T.	Fairfax Friday Night	P	Thea L.	Walk of Shame	A*
Dana R.	Saturday Sunset 9'ers	A*	Mauri P.	Central Office Manager	P	Tom K.	High Noon	P
Danna P.	Treasurer	P	Michael L.	Attitude Adjustment Hour	P	Tom R.	Mill Valley 7AM	P
David P.	Eureka Step	P	Michelle W.	Cow Hollow Young Peoples	R	Vickey D.	Sisters Circle	P
Derek D.	Reality Farm	P	Monika H.	SFPOA	P	Victor V.	Creative Alcoholics	A*
Doug	Fireside	P	Nicholas L.	Some Are Sicker Than...	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			Visitors			IFB Liaisons Present		
Tracy	Wits End					Karen S.	SF General Service	
Harold	Marina Discussion					Steve N.	Marin General Service	
Judy S.	Diamond Heights Group					Casey L.	Marin Teleservice	

## Monthly IFB Meeting Summary October 4, 2006

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

### IFB Reports:

**Chairs Report:** Scott N. gave the report

Scott attended Marin Unity Day and noted the sense of fellowship and willingness to be of service. SF Unity Day is November 11, 2006 at the Urban Life Center. We will be looking for volunteers to staff our table at the event.

There has been some progress towards contacting groups that have used Central Office's tax ID number to open bank accounts. More efforts to be made.

Spirit of San Francisco is also approaching and we'll be looking for volunteers for the IFB table there as well.

Scott asked IFB members to remind their home groups of the service commitments available on subcommittees and that one does not need to be on the IFB to participate.

The Outreach committee met for the first time in over a year. Jaime G. is the new chair.

Please remind your groups that November is Gratitude Month.

**Treasurer's Report:** Danna P. gave the report. The net loss for August of (\$2,805) was \$960 less than the budgeted net loss of (\$3,765). Unrestricted cash as of 8/31/06 is \$49,314 and sufficient to pay for budgeted expenses for three months.

**Central Office Committee Report:** Chuck K. gave the report.

Chuck read the roles and responsibilities of the COC.

*(Continued on page 17)*

*Minutes (Continued from page 16)*

The COC reviewed prospective goals for the remainder of the year, and who would be willing to take a leadership role in accomplishing each goal. Tony organized a fellowship event for COC members.

Chuck researched the term, "boss" in terms of what it means for the COC to be the COM's boss. No recommendation for change was made at this time.

Danna will request an Equifax report to find out if other groups are using Central Office's tax ID number for banking purposes.

Scott attended SF Unity Day planning meetings. The theme is "Service, Sponsorship, and Self-Support in a Changing World; Everybody is Welcome". The COC approved up to \$500 for ASL translation at the event.

**Central Office Manager's Report.** Maury gave her report.

We have been having trouble getting some phone shifts filled and are in need additional substitutes. One year of sobriety required.

The American Red Cross Disaster Preparedness training is scheduled for October 25, 2006 at Central Office at 6:30pm. If you are interested, please contact Maury.

Maury reported on her trip to Akron, OH, which she stated was a valuable experience. She purchased CD's of each workshop and presentation and will make those available to the appropriate committees. It may be possible to post these to the password protected area of our website via voice files as well.

**Special Outreach Committee Report:** Jaime and Scott N. gave the report.

The report began by reading a Pitch Outline that individuals may use when asking groups to participate in the IFB. A list of Talking Points was also demonstrated.

The floor was opened and the committee received much feed back.

The committee meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 6 PM at Central Office.

**Service Sponsorship:** Steve S. asked for a volunteer to speak about service sponsorship. Rebekah D. shared her experience. Patty then spoke about not having a service sponsor. Steve asked that all who are interested in finding a service sponsor to see him after the meeting.

The Seventh Tradition was collected and the Twelve Traditions were read.

**IFB Committee Reports:**

**12 Step Committee:** Nick gave the report. The committee welcomed new members. They are discussing a way for 12th Step volunteers to take meetings to individuals who are house bound or in hospitals.

**Archives Committee:** No report.

**Special Events Committee:** Brian H. gave the report. The committee is currently working on Oktoberfest, which is being held on October 21, 2006. The committee will be meeting the next two Tuesdays in order to prepare for the event. The committee routinely meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

**Literature Review:** Steve N. gave the report. January is the 60th

anniversary of Central Office. The Literature Review Committee is developing a pamphlet on the history of Central Office and is looking for people with stories, photos or memorabilia of the history of the office. The print date for the pamphlet is in seven weeks.

**The Point Editorial Committee:** No report.

**Orientation Committee:** No report.

**Special Needs Committee:** Pene gave the report. Two meetings have recently requested ASL interpretation. Pene believes that with the savings from unused funds, both meetings could be served.

**Trusted Servants Workshop:** Monika gave the report stating that the committee was busy in September with two workshops. The first was a Literature Commitment Workshop with 17 AA's attending. Lots of positive feedback was received. The second event was a Secretary Workshop held at Marin Unity Day. The committee will also present a Secretary Workshop at SF Unity Day on Nov. 11th.

**Website Committee:** Dan Z. gave the report stating that the online schedule has been updated. All churches listed now have names. A zip code search feature is about to be released. Dan asked for volunteers to assist with launching a new meeting search program. Dan also presented Central Office with the Webby Award the committee received.

**Schedule Committee:** Larry gave the report. The committee met with our print broker to discuss schedule pricing. One change the committee is investigating at this time would include adding an inch to the height of the current schedule. This would result in more efficient paper cutting and decrease the cost per unit. The committee is not recommending any change at this time.

**Special Committee Reports:**

**SF Teleservice:** Maury gave the report for Judi C. The committee welcomed Dana R. as the new Teleservice Information Chair and thanked Scott B. for his service. The committee is trying to collect email addresses from all of the Teleservice volunteers to facilitate cost effective and timely distribution of information and announcements.

**SF PI/CPC:** Maury gave the report for Bruce K. September activities included; speaking at three schools, and three DUI classes. A Spanish language PSA was submitted to KSOL. The quarterly workshop will be held at Unity Day on November 11, 2006. Several engagements are planned for October.

**Non-IFB Liaison Reports:**

**SF General Service:** Karen gave the report. There was some discussion about the increase in the price of chips. There will be open positions in the new panel and elections will be held in November. Further discussion and planning for Unity Day completed the meeting.

**Marin General Service:** Steve N. gave the report. The current panel is up for rotation for both area and district officers. There will be an election assembly in Vallejo on 11/4/06. Also during the September meeting, the Area Registrar spoke about Tradition Nine. An orientation for new GSR's and introduction to Concept Nine also took place.

**Marin Teleservice:** Casey gave the report. The committee discussed Marin Unity Day and an on-going concern regarding individual AA members giving misinformation when making announcements about

*(Continued on page 18)*

## G.I.F.T.S.— Getting It From The Steps

by Bree L.

Believe me, when I first approached the steps, getting something back was not my motivation. I just wanted relief from the craziness in my head. Telling myself that I wasn't in charge on that First Step was such a relief. I was not the prime mover but in fact powerless. Even today as I write this my body relaxes a fraction and my breathing gets easier as I think of just letting go.



Step Two was a breeze. I loved the concept of a Group Of Drunks or Good Orderly Direction and my Higher Power came easily. I had no qualms with Step Two, that is until I ran into Step Three.

Still to this day, I have that come-here, go-away relationship with Step Three. I knew I didn't want to drink and my H.P. could handle Southern Comfort. My divorce, problems with my children or obtuse co-workers were my territory. These items needed my sophisticated direction. It's only been over time that I've loosened my tight grip on those matters. My H.P. isn't limited to problems with alcohol or the things I used to think about when I went to church.

Step Four, I fought as I wanted to do it my way, answering prepared questions or writing a detailed history. This was such a heavy task that, of course, I procrastinated forever. 'Tomorrow is another day' was my mantra around Step Four. It wasn't until I followed the Big Book directions with the columns and that last

line where I looked at my part that true relief came. The natural following was to do Step Five. I heard of a man who had committed suicide and they found an unshared Fourth Step in his desk. That gave me a sense of "Just do it."

Step Six and Step Seven come for return visits every so often. As I let go of my resistance and usher in willingness, praying that willing to be willing prayer. Things get easier.

Steps Eight and Nine were also hard. I'd gotten just enough comfort from those beginning steps that I wanted to rest on my gains and enjoy the newfound life. Gradually, I began to realize that things could get even better. I craved more intimacy with my husband and children. Of course, I was the main obstacle so the Eighth and Ninth Steps got me closer to those goals.

I remember at one point early on feeling like I was in some river rapids holding onto a branch as my life flew by. That branch was A.A.

Now, I'm enjoying the maintenance steps, sometimes I'll put off the Tenth Step until it grows into a Fourth Step but I know eventually I'll get together with my sponsor, write a bit and settle things out. The hardest part seems to be in getting started.

Steps Eleven and Twelve – I saved the best for last. Maintaining that conscious contact and sharing the gift of sobriety – doesn't get much better than that! ↑

### Minutes (Continued from page 17)

Teleservice. These individual group reps are not the same AA's who are actual Teleservice volunteers and do not attend the Teleservice committee meetings. The discussion was about developing outreach to meetings in order to clarify the information given out about Marin Teleservice.

Marin PI / CPC: No report.

Bridging the Gap: No report.

H&I: No report.

Spirit of San Francisco: No report.

### Group Rep Reports:

Patty M. thanked the IFB for the feedback she received regarding how individual groups handle money and using the treasurers' bank accounts.

Derek D. reminded us that if a group voted to participate in Gratitude Month in prior years there is no need to take a new group conscience unless a home group member makes a new motion to reverse the previous decision.

Maury added there are other ways to contribute instead of financially, too. Individuals can be reminded that volunteering and being of service is also a way to express gratitude. She also asked reps to remind group treasurer's to note "Gratitude Month 2006" on the contributions and to submit them as soon as possible.

The Meeting was adjourned. The next IFB meeting will be held on November 1, 2006 at the Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Avenue, Sausalito, CA at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris T.

IFB Secretary

# Financial Statement

August 2006 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	Aug 06	Jan - Aug 06		Aug 06	Jan - Aug 06
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>			<b>Insurance</b>	0.00	1,826.00
<b>Income</b>			<b>Internet Expense</b>	212.39	790.29
<b>Contributions from Groups</b>			<b>Office Supplies</b>	43.25	1,947.88
Group Contributions	11,574.67	92,605.22	<b>Shipping</b>	-158.05	-24.59
<b>Total Contributions from Groups</b>	11,574.67	92,605.22	<b>Equipment Lease</b>	1,936.05	5,446.90
<b>Contributions from Individuals</b>			<b>Repair &amp; Maintenance</b>	188.00	1,678.18
Individual - Unrestricted	150.78	5,755.51	<b>Security System</b>	33.50	333.00
Faithful Fiver	432.00	4,583.00	<b>Special Events</b>	-79.48	1,270.52
Honorarium Contributions	84.00	1,247.15	<b>Telephone</b>	503.91	1,967.42
<b>Total Contributions from Individuals</b>	666.78	11,585.66	<b>Phone Book Listings</b>	153.00	612.00
<b>Gratitude Month</b>			<b>Utilities</b>	297.22	1,842.22
Gratitude Month - Groups	0.00	3,576.00	<b>Travel</b>	461.35	461.35
<b>Total Gratitude Month</b>	0.00	3,576.00	<b>Bad Checks</b>	0.00	0.00
<b>Sales - Bookstore</b>	7,862.84	70,445.81	<b>Total Expense</b>	17,658.93	128,610.22
<b>Special Event Income</b>	0.00	2,953.14	<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	-2,932.86	6,831.22
<b>Newsletter Subscript.</b>	11.06	353.00	<b>Other Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Total Income</b>	20,115.35	181,518.83	<b>Other Income</b>		
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>			Interest Income	404.26	2,522.19
Cost of Books Sold	5,206.21	44,783.79	<b>Total Other Income</b>	404.26	2,522.19
Credit Card Processing Fees	183.07	1,293.60	<b>Other Expense</b>		
<b>Total COGS</b>	5,389.28	46,077.39	Depreciation Expense	37.72	2,563.55
<b>Gross Profit</b>	14,726.07	135,441.44	Amortization Expense	238.78	1,910.24
<b>Expense</b>			<b>Total Other Expense</b>	276.50	4,473.79
<b>Employee Expenses</b>			<b>Net Other Income</b>	127.76	-1,951.60
Wages & Salaries	8,350.00	62,717.89	<b>Net Income</b>	-2,805.10	4,879.62
Employer Tax Expenses	676.04	5,862.79			
Health Benefits	952.00	7,017.00			
Workers Comp Ins.	0.00	714.61			
<b>Total Employee Expenses</b>	9,978.04	76,312.29			
<b>Professional Fees</b>					
Accounting	0.00	1,300.00			
Computer Consulting	0.00	343.75			
Outside Services	0.00	294.00			
Professional Fees - Other	0.00	-330.00			
<b>Total Professional Fees</b>	0.00	1,607.75			
<b>Bank Charges</b>					
Credit Card Clearing	0.00	0.00			
Bank Charges - Other	0.00	0.00			
<b>Total Bank Charges</b>	0.00	0.00			
<b>Postage</b>					
Bulk Mail	0.00	600.00			
Postage - Other	181.00	424.01			
<b>Total Postage</b>	181.00	1,024.01			
<b>Rent - Office</b>	3,833.75	30,670.00			
<b>Rent - Other</b>	75.00	525.00			
<b>Filing/Fees</b>	0.00	320.00			

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November 2006

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