

# the Point

*The Point is that we are willing  
to grow along spiritual lines.*

from Chapter Five of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

2007 **8**  
AUGUST

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

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of Alcoholics Anonymous

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## “MY NAME IS REX, AND IT’S BEEN THREE WEEKS SINCE I’VE CHASED MY TAIL.”

by Greg W.

My regular A.A. meeting forbids bringing animals, other than service animals, into the meeting room. I have no quarrel with this rule, since it is imposed at the request of our landlord, who graciously allows us to use this beautiful facility. However, as an animal lover, this rule has often led me to think about the role animals play in my recovery - what they give me, and what they teach me. I have even considered trying to start an animal-friendly meeting, recognizing that in this pet-mad city, there might be a great need for such a meeting in our A.A. community.

(Let me say at the beginning that the focus of this article will be on dogs and cats, since those are the animals

with which I have been privileged to spend most of my life. I do not mean to discount the importance in some people's lives of birds, fish, reptiles, and other mammals - on the other hand, if you bring Squeezy the boa constrictor to a meeting I am attending, you'll probably find me slithering out early.)

Animals teach us responsibility, because they demand it of us. We have to feed them, clean up after them, groom them, give them attention and exercise, and care for them when they are sick. Many of us, in our drinking days, could not even handle such basic responsibilities toward ourselves. The value of assuming responsibility and exercising it on a

(Continued on page 6)

The Point is published monthly to inform AA 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 AA members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of AA, nor does publication constitute endorsement of AA as a whole, the Intercounty Fellowship Board, the Central Office, or The Point Editorial Committee. Letters and articles to help carry the AA message are welcomed, subject to editorial review by The Point Committee.

# monthly calendar

Events, Highlights and Happenings

august 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<b>1</b> <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm, Annual 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)	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <u>FIRST MON</u> Access Committee Central Office, 5:30pm	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm  Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, 7 pm	<b>9</b> <u>SECOND THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office, 6:00 pm	<b>10</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/ Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office, 7 pm	<b>14</b> <u>SECOND TUE</u> SF Bridging The Gap 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF, 6:30 pm  SF General Service 1187 Franklin St., SF Orientation: 7 pm Meeting: 8 pm  Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael Orientation: 6:15 pm Bus. Meeting: 7:15 pm	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee, Central Office, 2 pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day  Living Sober Convention Committee, 1668 Bush, SF, 5:00 pm	<b>20</b> <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm  Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael, District Meeting: 8 pm	<b>21</b> <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee, Central Office; 6pm  Special Events Committee 216 Church St/ Market St., 7:30pm  San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma; Business Meeting: 12:30 pm  Trusted Servants Work- shop, Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, See Flyer Pg. 5!
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 7:30 pm	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Committee Meeting: 8 pm	<b>31</b> 	

## From the Editor

Woof! Woof! Welcome to the Dog Days issue of *The Point*. August is upon us and we're hoping to lighten things up with a little Sirius humor and a few playful wags... We hope you enjoy our little bit of fun and that you are absolutely not in need of the hair of the dog!

To our dismay, our former contributor of the *SoberScope* feature, Stella Lapsus, was recently translated to a higher sphere and is no longer bestowing bits of wisdom for us mere mortals. Don't worry; she's still alive, just transcended. We will miss her. Instead, the illustrious and inimitable Madame Salami, who you may remember as advisor to such stars as the main squeeze of a certain spinach-eating sailor, has consented to grace our pages with her insights.



Your anniversary is a month of inspiration for proud Leo. Fresh from another trip through the Steps, you're more responsible and reliable than ever. You're attracting new friends, sponsees, and admiring glances from adoring co-workers who bask in the glow of your creative energy. You love it at the top and hate it when your sponsor reminds you that you might just have to work to stay there.

No one loves a good heartfelt amends more than a Leo. You are a generous person and you easily forgive those

Please welcome her as she extols the virtues of that most remarkable beast, the sober Leo.

We're also offering some insights into the age-old question: Should I really bring Spot to the meeting with me? Our Bulletin Board contributor offers his opinion.

Please consider offering your words of wisdom for *The Point*. We're always happy to hear from San Francisco and Marin members who wish to write an article, ask Dear Alky for advice, or simply vent in the Bulletin Board. Let us hear from you!

Woof!

The Editor 

## LEO: JULY 23-AUGUST 23

by Madame Salami

who hurt you. You're quick to give praise but also expect it back. It's a bitter pill to swallow, though, that cleaning your side of the street is often its own best reward.

Look for Leo to roar into meetings, sit in the most comfy seat in the first row and regale the newcomers with dramatic and theatrical tales of drinking days gone by. Authoritative and affectionate, Leo is always quick to raise a paw for a new commitment and lend a supportive word to an A.A. in need.

the  
**Point**

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Your defects are few but powerful. You can be flashy, domineering, and snobbish. You have tons of friends and love to feel superior over each one. But don't dwell on your defects of character, little kitty. Look to the rest of the year for more than your fair share of fun, romance, and good times. The time has come, my roaring friend, to finally be happy, joyous and free.





### New Meetings:

Fri	6:00pm	Financial	NEW WHINE & DINE 86, 660 California St./ Grant, enter on California (CH, CI, DI, ME)
Sat	6:00pm	Pt. Reyes Stn.	MEN ONLY STAG, Firehouse, 101 4th St./ B St. (DI, ME, WH)

### Meeting Changes:

Wed	3:30pm	Sausalito	THINKING MEN'S GROUP, Sausalito Sailing Club (was Thu; was briefly disbanded)
Wed	6:00pm	Hayes Valley	TRANS RECOVERY, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St. (was 815 Hyde St. on Fri.)
Thu	6:00pm	Parkside	SUNRISE SUNSET WOMEN'S STEP (was 5:45pm)
Thu	6:15pm	Bay View	STAYING SOBER 1601 McKinnon/ 3rd St. (was 8pm)
Sat	7:00am	Fairfax	ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT HOUR (Remove ASL until further notice)
Sat	7:30pm	Hayes Valley	BIRTHDAY MEETING SF Alano Club, 1748 Market (was 12noon; Add "No Slips Signed")

### No Longer Meeting:

Wed	8:30pm	Novato	NORTH BAY BOOK STUDY 1907 Novato Blvd./ McClay Rd.
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**Please Note:** 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— JUNE 2007

Below are the meetings whose Trusted Servants registered with Central Office during June 2007—twenty-seven in San Francisco and nine in Marin. Thank you for registering!

### San Francisco

**7am Grab Bag Marina Dock** Mon. 7am; **10pm Smokeless Marina Dock** Sat. 10pm; **Each Day a New Beginning** Wed. 7am; **Early Start** Fri. 6pm; **Excelsior Free For All** Sat. 8pm; **Founders' Group** Sat. 5pm; **High Noon Wednesday** Wed. 12:15pm; **Hit It & Quit It** Sun. 12 noon; **Last Call** Sun. 10pm; **Mid-Morning Support** Sun. 10:30am; **Midnight Meditation** Sat. 12midnight; **New Whine & Dine 86** Fri. 6pm; **Rigorous Honesty** Thu. 12:05pm; **Saturday Easy Does It** Sat. 12noon; **Seacliff** Thu. 8:30pm; **Six O'Clock Step** Thu. 6pm; **Sought to Improve** Thu. 7:30pm; **Sunday Sunrise** Sun. 7am; **Sunset 9'ers** Mon. 9am; **Sunset 11'ers** Sat. 11am; **Sunset Reflections** Thu. 1pm; **Thursday Night Women's** Thu. 6:30pm; **Too Young** Sun. 8:30pm; **Trans Recovery** Wed. 6pm; **We Care** Tue. 12noon; **Women's 10 Years Plus** Thu. 6:15pm; **Work in Progress** Sat. 7pm

### Marin

**A Women's Journey of Recovery** Tue. 10am; **Attitude Adjustment** Sun. 7am; **Closed Women's Step Study** Tue. 3:30pm; **Noon Discussion** Thu. 12noon; **On Awakening** Sun. 5:30pm; **Primary Purpose** Wed. 8:30pm; **Reveille 5D** 7am; **Tiburon Big Book Group** Wed. 7:30pm; **Upon Awakening** Tue. 5:30am

## CONTRIBUTIONS

to Central Office were made through  
July 15, 2007 honoring the  
following members:

### ONGOING MEMORIALS

Morning After: Bob C. 32 years  
Silas P.  
Ken M.

### ANNIVERSARIES

**Hilldwellers:** Bonnie O. 22 years  
**High Noon:** Lord H. 18 years  
Jim M. 27 years



## TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

1101 O'Farrell St. Urban Life Center, SF, Tuesday 8PM

08/07	Speaker: Jim A.	From: 2nd Tradition Group
08/14	Speaker: Diane C.	From: Sausalito Cruising Club
	Speaker: Tom C.	From: Cocoanuts
08/21	Speaker: Joe L.	From: Here & Now Group
08/28	Speaker: D.K.	From: A is for Alcohol

## FRIDAY NIGHT ALL GROUPS

1101 O'Farrell St. Urban Life Center, SF, 8:30 pm

08/03	Host Group: Sunday Step Talk	Speaker: Pat C.	From: Big Book Basics
08/10	Host Group: High Noon	Speaker: Jay L.	From: Modesto
08/17	Host Group: Franciscan Group	Speaker: Benjie W.	From: Cow Hollow Men's
08/24	Host Group: Trudgers Discussion	Speaker: Alan K.	From: High Noon
08/31	Host Group: Nursery #1 Men's	Speaker: John T.	From: Steppin Up


## BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

250 Visitation Way, Community Center  
(under library), Brisbane, Sunday, 11AM

08/05	Speaker: Michael R.	From: South San Francisco
08/12	Speaker: Jack D.	From: Millbrae
08/19	Speaker: Alberto A.	From: San Bruno
08/26	Speaker: Larry B.	From: San Francisco

40th Anniversary on 09/23 with Speaker: Orrin C.

The Trusted Servants Workshop  
Committee of the

 Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous  
serving San Francisco and Marin Counties

is pleased to present a



***Secretary, Treasurer and  
Literature Person  
Workshop***

Three knowledgeable speakers will share their  
experience, strength and hope on these three  
important trusted servant positions. Learn how  
these vital roles interact and help your group  
carry the message

**Where:** Marin Alano Club  
1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, Ca  
Take the Central San Rafael exit. Turn left on  
3<sup>rd</sup> St. and right on Lincoln Ave.  
**When:** Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>,  
2pm to 4pm

Coffee and snacks will be provided.  
For more information contact Central Office at  
415-674-1821 or [tsw@aasf.org](mailto:tsw@aasf.org).

Parking is available 1/2 a block from the Alano Club at the  
Lincoln Hill Community Church or along Lincoln Ave. No  
parking on side streets.  
Note: The San Rafael Alano Club is not Wheelchair Accessible

Celebrate our 62nd Year Anniversary

***Tuesday Downtown Meeting of  
Alcoholics Anonymous***

**August 14, 2007**  
**Refreshments @ 7:00pm**  
**Meeting @ 8:00pm**

**Speakers—**  
**Tom C. 07/02/1987 Cocoanuts**  
**Diane C. 03/07/1974 Sausalito Cruising Club**

**St. Mark's Square**  
1111 O'Farrell Street

**No Beginners Meeting That Evening**  
**Free Parking**



Persons requiring reasonable accommodations, including sign language  
interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternate  
formats should contact the SF/Marin County Central Office  
(415) 674 - 1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.





# FOR THE SAKE OF THE HERD

by Matt T.

When I was first introduced to A.A., I was homeless and extremely unsociable. I went to a meeting up on a hill in Corte Madera and was greeted by a group of fellows with open arms and big smiles. I hadn't been so warmly accepted by anyone in a very long time. I drank that night after the meeting. I showed up the following week and was once again greeted by the same men with the same open arms and kind smiles. Even though I wasn't feeling good about myself, I was accepted by this group of men. This was fifteen years ago and I can still remember the warm welcome that I received and that kept me coming back. Only later did I realize that this was what we call *staying in the center of the herd*.

I was then invited to go to more meetings in different locations and found the same hospitality and camaraderie there. I was asked to dinner before meetings and to coffee afterwards. I was told to do things like get telephone numbers of other men and to call them when I needed help. I was told to stick close to the men and look for the winners and watch where their feet go. It was also suggested that I go up to the speaker after a meeting and thank them, or browse at the literature table or help put away chairs. Little did I know I was being *directed to the center of the herd* and my sobriety was being protected and nurtured.

Since I was homeless, I was told to stop hanging around slippery places and slippery people, so I stopped

hanging out at the soup kitchen and started frequenting The Alano Club instead. I hit three meetings a day in my first ninety days and picked up a few commitments. I got a sponsor right away and started working the steps. I followed my sponsor around like a puppy dog. He showed me how to focus in meetings and how to reach my hand out to the newcomer before and after meetings.

Today, with two years of sobriety, I am now more like one of those on the outer edge of the herd protecting the more vulnerable ones in the center. I have made A.A. my higher power and am more than happy to be of service. I have a sponsor and I'm working the steps. I am secretary of a meeting and work with Hospitals and Institutions.

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(I'm Rex: Continued from page 1)

daily basis is an important lesson in the life of an alcoholic.

Animals accept things as they are and live in the moment. We often hear things in the rooms like "be here now", "live mindfully", and of course "one day at a time". There is also a saying that the past is gone, the future has yet to arrive, and the present is all we have. Many of us forget these suggestions in our hurried daily lives and our equally busy heads. Animals teach us how to be present, because they live in the present at all times. Their full attention is on us, the situation, or the enthralling object of their desire. Just observe a dog joyfully playing fetch, or a cat focusing its complete attention on a suspected mouse-hole. Nothing matters but the moment and the situation. Whatever comes up later can be dealt

with then. Would that more of us could grasp that important truth.

Perhaps most important, animals teach us unconditional love because they give us exactly that. They accept us for who we are and what we do, with all of our character defects. Even when we get sober, alcoholics often feel that we are not accepted for who we are, that we do not belong. People disappoint us, relationships change, situations confuse us, and our heads tell us that we are not good enough. Beaten down by the world, we come home to a wagging tail, a pair of loving eyes, and a nuzzling nose, and we are reminded that we are just fine the way we are - and more than that, we are loved. I am reminded of the bumper sticker that says something like "I wish I were the person my dog thinks I am". Love and tolerance is the code of animals.

(Some might say that love is the dog's code, and tolerance the cat's code, but I am not going to open that can of worms.)

So back to that pet-friendly meeting. Being the grandiose alcoholic that I am, I have a few ideas for it. In addition to the usual cookies, of course, animal treats would be available, as well as generous quantities of cool water. Instead of chips recognizing sobriety milestones, collar tags could be given out. Some of our "pet" phrases might need some modification, of course. "No humane power could have relieved us of our alcoholism." "Progress not purrfection." "At some of these we barked" (I actually heard a reader of "How It Works" say this at a meeting.) And for me the greatest lesson of all, "Paws when agitated."

**TP**

# Dear Alky...



**Dear Alky:**

**I am wondering about the best way to handle conflict at a meeting. Is there a brochure or protocol to follow? Lately, I have attended two different meetings with sensitive issues which needed discussion. The first group handled a problem issue by a noticed business meeting which reported its outcome to the group.**

**A second meeting worried me more, as the secretary, once the meeting started, asked someone with a dog to leave. The dog was a service dog, with the disability tag. It was a small dog and not disruptive but the meeting space was a sanctuary. I was surprised that the secretary would ask someone to leave the meeting. An immediate group discussion ensued, taking up the meeting time. By the time the third person, made a motion for a business meeting to discuss the**

**topic and allowed the member and her dog to stay, the secretary agreed.**

**How do we as members and particularly secretaries get educated on appropriate ways to handle these issues?**

## **A Concerned Member**

Dear Concerned Member:

In general, it is suggested that matters affecting how a meeting is run, including changes to the format or other issues that require a group conscience, are handled in business meetings, typically held before or after the regular meeting time. These discussions are usually run by the group's General Service Representative, or sometimes the group's secretary. Our fourth tradition states that each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole. Therefore, in principle, a group is free to make decisions about whether or not to permit animals into the meeting space. However, in the case of a

meeting held in a church sanctuary or other rented space which places conditions upon the use of that space, the group should adhere carefully to those restrictions lest it risk losing the space entirely. Moreover, it is inappropriate for an A.A. group to disregard the concerns of its host/landlord entity and it does a disservice to the Fellowship as a whole if the group appears to show such disrespect.

In the case of service animals, it can be argued that prohibiting their admission to a particular meeting discriminates against the disabled alcoholic. However, in the Bay Area, we are blessed with a great variety of meeting spaces, many of which are accessible by wheelchair, and many of which permit the entry of animals. If the particular church in which your group meets does not extend such permission, those members who need the use of service animals should either find alternate meetings, or - where feasible - leave the animal outside and seek the assistance of other group members during the duration of the meeting itself.

--Alky 



## **FOUR LEGGED FRIENDS**

*by Tommy D.*

When a person brings a dog into a meeting, you can usually count on one of two reactions from those in attendance. Either folks flock to Fluffy and profess their undying love for the four-legged critter or folks huddle in a corner in shock that someone would dare bring an animal into something as serious as an A.A. meeting.

There are times when I have been both.

I don't come to meetings to have a strange animal lick or sniff various parts of my body. (That is for the privacy of my own home.) But at the same time, I have an almost innate desire to pet a cute animal. (This, I have learned, is best avoided when dealing with humans). My internal

conflicts aside, sometimes these animals have a much more important purpose.

Service animals play a vital role in the health and safety of many members of our fellowship. Having been at a meeting in a church where someone came with in with a service animal, I know there can be much confusion

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## The Three Legacies: Steps, Traditions and Concepts

Almost everyone in A.A. who has been around for a few days is aware of the Steps. We may not understand them at first or know how to apply them but we know what they are. A dawning of awareness usually comes a bit later for the Traditions. We are told that they are for the Group what the Steps are for the individual. Sometimes we may even glimpse the spiritual qualities embodied in the Traditions but usually we ignore them until a conflict arises in the Fellowship. We are then reminded of their importance.

The Twelve Concepts, on the other hand, are rarely discussed at the individual or group level. Yet they are an important part of A.A. heritage and as such should be understood, especially by those who seek to be of service to the Fellowship at large.

As Bill W. explained, "These Twelve Concepts therefore represent an attempt to put on paper the why of our service structure in such a fashion that the highly valuable experience of the past and the conclusions that we have drawn from it cannot be lost...

"Hence, a prime purpose of these Twelve Concepts is to hold the experience and lessons of the early days constantly before us. This should reduce the chance of hasty and unnecessary change."

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## STEP EIGHT

*by Michelle J.*

***"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."***

The sharing process of completing the Fifth Step with my sponsor brought some mild relief to my injured ego, which was rendered temporarily lifeless in light of the new perspective I had gained about myself. So, now what was I to do? I had begun to see the truth and in turn I continued to follow the suggestions of my sponsor. I worked the following steps as described in the Big Book. After praying the Seventh Step prayer, the program called for more action.

I have had the pleasure of receiving much wisdom and guidance from all of you who had come before me. Most of what I know about the program of A.A. I learned by taking suggestions from you. Other times I have relied solely on what is written in the Big Book. The most interesting suggestions I have heard so far have been about what to do with the sacred notebook containing my inventory. I have been told to bury it in the backyard, as a way of putting the past to rest. I have been told, among other things, to burn it in a sacrificial letting-go ceremony. All of these seemed reasonable, but what does the book tell us? When approaching Step 8, we are asked to make a list in preparation for going out and making our face-to-face admissions of our wrongs. If I had burned my in-

ventory, I might never have had the courage to revisit my demons and complete the steps. I believe, with all my heart that this would have resulted in my spiritual and physical death. If I expected to stay sober, and to be happy about it, I had to make every effort to right all the wrongs I had done, thus clearing the wreckage of both my past and present.

So, I held onto my inventory. I went back through it with a fine-tooth comb and created my list of all persons I had harmed. Some of whom I was willing to approach immediately. I could not wait to redeem myself. Luckily, I ran it by my sponsor first. She explained to me that while I was to remain hard on myself, I needed to be always considerate of others. Under her guidance, I refined my list into four columns and I got to work. The first column, the 'Now', was the most full. The second is the 'Partial Restitution' column: some wrongs that I could never completely make right. Third, there was the 'Deferred Action' column and finally the 'No Direct Contact' column. All the while I remained prepared to make amends whenever, wherever and to whomever necessary. When in doubt, I always refer to my handbook for life, The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.





## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

The following is a list of names and email addresses for IFB Officers and for most of the IFB committees. If you are interested in doing service on a committee, or if you wish to receive more information about a committee, please email that committee at the address.

### INTERGROUP OFFICERS:

#### **CHAIR**

Chuck K. chair@aasf.org

#### **VICE CHAIR**

Steve N. vicechair@aasf.org

#### **TREASURER**

Patrick M. treasurer@aasf.org

#### **RECORDING SECRETARY**

Ken J. secretary@aasf.org

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### **CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE**

TBD coc@aasf.org

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

Victor V. 12thstep@aasf.org

#### **ARCHIVES COMMITTEE**

Bruce K. archives@aasf.org

#### **LITERATURE COMMITTEE**

Currently Inactive

#### **ORIENTATION COMMITTEE**

Andy T. orientation@aasf.org

#### **THE POINT**

Victor V. thepoint@aasf.org

#### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Brian C. events@aasf.org

#### **ACCESS COMMITTEE**

Virginia M.. access@aasf.org

#### **TRUSTED SERVANTS**

#### **WORKSHOP COMMITTEE**

Patty M. tsw@aasf.org

#### **WEBSITE COMMITTEE**

Chair needed. website@aasf.org

#### **SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE**

Judi C. sfteservice@aasf.org

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

Jill H. picpc@aasf.org



## TRADITION EIGHT

by Jamie M.

***“Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.”***

I can't speak to this tradition from the experience of having worked at a Central Office either as a volunteer or a paid worker, only as a visitor or user—a “customer” of various central offices in the Bay Area, either by phone or in person, and Teleservice lines while traveling to other cities. What I can say is this—we are not in danger of being overtaken by creeping bureaucracy, if that's what professionalism means.

Can you imagine calling Teleservice and getting an automatic voice that says, “If you are currently drunk, please press one. If you are thinking about getting drunk, please press two. If you are sober and looking for a meeting, please press three. If you want to speak to a live person, the waiting time for assistance is currently 5 minutes?” I don't think so. Can you imagine seeing an announcement in *The Point* saying that Central Office wants us to pass an extra basket to pay for the purchase and installation of such a service?

As far as “special workers” - don't get me started. There are some examples of A.A. offices where the workers were very special.

This tradition has effectively guaranteed that the “corporate” face of A.A. will always be small town, relaxed, amateur. But that's not really the

point of this tradition, is it? The origin of this tradition came long ago, when Bill W. decided that he couldn't turn pro. He couldn't become a specialized alcoholism counselor. And that decision has saved many lives, including mine.

I must add a little something by way of honesty (at an H & I meeting in prison one time, an inmate told me, “I used to lie a thousand times a day. Now I'm practicing honesty and I only lie nine hundred ninety-eight.”) I'll admit I work as a professional helper. Because of my personal sobriety and my belief that the traditions, as well as the steps, keep me sober, I've never (in my office) told people to work step three around an issue, do an inventory, nor do 12th step work. I don't do sponsorship for money. I have told people to go to meetings and get a sponsor. I have told people I'm sober and am a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

While doing 12th step work with newcomers, we share our experience of sobriety, not our techniques or philosophies. If we're adequately humble about meeting a newcomer our experience can't help, we walk across the room and grab another sober alcoholic whose experience can help. That's the beauty of how

*(Continued on page 12)*



Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5.00 each month toward the support of Central Office. As a Faithful Fiver, your personal contribution can and will make our vital services possible. We'd like to

Ami Joy Y.	Jeanne C.
Andy T.	Jeff B.
Barbara M.	John T.
Brent H.	Judi C.
Brian N.	Karen K.
Callista S.	Liz & Aiden D.
Caroline A.	Loran W.
Casey L.	Mary F.
Catherine S.	Marty C.
David B.	Matt S.
David H.	Matt S.
David J.	Michael W.
David P.	Nancie G.
Dennis & Lucy O.	Pat P.
Doug C.	Paul W.
Elizabeth S.	Pene P.
Esther R.	Rich G.
Frances L.	Sheila H.
Giles H.	Stephanie D.
Greg S.	Steve A.
Greg W.	Steve B.
Herman B.	Steve F.
Jane K.	Terese B.
Janet B.	Tim M.

If you would like to become a Faithful Fiver, please download a pledge form from our website or call or stop by Central Office! You will receive a complimentary subscription to *The Point*. And remember, individual contributions are 100% tax deductible!



## CONCEPT VIII

by Sandra L.

***“The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly-active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.”***

When I became a Group Service Representative several years ago, it was my first encounter with the Twelve Concepts of World Service. I began to understand how well Bill W. prepared for Alcoholics Anonymous to continue to grow and survive after his and Dr. Bob's death. Concept VIII describes the relationship of the various service entities, and how they work together.

Concept VIII prescribes how the Trustees of the General Service Board, who are responsible for the good conduct of all our world service affairs, can best devote themselves to the larger critical matters of policy, finance, group relations, public relations, and leadership. In these matters, the Board is asked to function with great care and deliberation. The Trustees are the principal planners and administrators.

This Concept also defines the relationship of the Trustees of the General Service Board with its two subsidiary corporations: A.A. World Services, Inc. and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. Because of the larger problems which require the Board's close attention, its members cannot be distracted by the daily operation of the World Service office and A.A.'s pub-

lishing enterprises. In these areas the Board must delegate its executive function. The Board maintains custodial oversight by electing the directors of both the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and A.A. World Services, Inc. (a part of whom must always be Trustees).

This allows the executive direction of these separately incorporated and constantly active services to be securely lodged in the service organizations themselves, rather than in the General Service Board. Each of these corporate service entities possesses its own charter, executive, working capital, employees, offices and equipment.

Bill W. used the model of corporate business practice and applied it to the General Service Board. This model helped responsibility and authority remain in balance. Otherwise it would be difficult for decisions to be made if the Trustees were giving directives rather than listening to the participating decisions from the service organizations. Also, Bill found that the people who handled the money usually assumed greater authority, which meant that control of money was determining A.A. policy

*(Continued on page 13)*

# GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS

aaa MAY 2007

Name	May	YTD	Name	May	YTD	Name	May	YTD
<b>Fellowship</b>			Noon Hope F 12pm	67	239	AA Step Study Su 6pm		109
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	40	172	Noon Tu 12pm		440	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		52
Contribution Box	126	334	Primary Purpose W 830pm		25	Afro American F 8pm		53
2900 Alcolthon		389	Quitting Time		100	All Together Now Th 8pm	85	131
Deer Park Discovery Group		35	Refugee Th 12pm		260	Amazing Grace M 7pm		16
Fellowship Contribution		9	Reveille 7D 7pm	90	690	Any Lengths Sat 930am	52	709
IFB	75	332	Rise N Shine Sun 10am		150	As Bill Sees It Sat 8pm		66
Marin Teleservice		947	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm	47	95	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		274
Novato Fellowship Events Committee		149	Serendipity Sa 11am	127	226	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		12
Unidentified Group	912	1004	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)		300	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		152
<b>Total Fellowship</b>	<b>\$1,153</b>	<b>\$3,371</b>	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		209	Back to Basics W 8pm		62
			Sober & Serene F 7pm		375	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm		70
<b>Honors</b>			Step Sisters (M.V.) Sun 7pm		100	Bernal New Day 7D		790
High Noon Friday 1215pm		80	Steps To The Solution W 715pm	40	132	Big Book Basics F 8pm		272
<b>Total Honors</b>		<b>\$80</b>	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	75	300	Big Book Beginners		60
			Sunday Express Sun 6pm	100	200	Big Book Study Su 1130am		114
<b>Marin Group Contributions</b>			T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm		52	Birthday Meeting Sa 8pm		250
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		658	T.G.I.F. F 6pm		139	Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		34
Beginner's Help Th 8pm		100	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		614	Came To Believe Su 830am	35	143
Beginners W 7pm		350	Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag Th 8pm		77	Candlelight Meeting Th 10pm	21	63
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		295	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm	83	83	Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) W 8pm		341
Bolinas Monday Nioght & Step Study		50	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm		78	Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm		84
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		150	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		659	Code Blue Big Book Study	149	149
Creskide New Growth Sun 7pm		309	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm	366	556	Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm		109
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	209	886	Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		590	Design for Living Sat 8am		211
Fireside F 8pm Bolinas		76	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm	100	445	Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		584
Friday Night Book F 830pm	250	250	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		42	Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		43
Freedom Finders F 830pm		1200	Twice Blessed W 730pm	33	33	Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		660
Gratitude Tu 8pm		577	We, Us and Ours M 650pm	50	50	Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	130	302
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm	384	384	Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm		182	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		271
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		750	What's It All About F 12pm		92	Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		259
Hillside Candlelight F 830pm		50	Women on Monday M 7pm		54	Early Start F 6pm		713
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		112	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		119	Easy Does It Tu 6pm		361
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am	105	105	<b>Total Marin Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$2,124</b>	<b>\$16,947</b>	Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm		475
Island Group Th 8pm		168				Epiphany Group Th 8pm		60
Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		108	<b>SF Group Contributions</b>			Eureka Step Tu 6pm		257
Kids Welcome Group M 1130am		45	515pm Smokeless W		179	Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		680
Living in the Solution F 6pm		405	7am Grab Bag M 7am	55	55	Excelsior Free for All Sa 8pm	47	47
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		250	7am Marina Dock		154	Federal Speaker Su 12pm		252
Mill Valley 7D 7am		286	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		139	Fell Street F 830pm		131
Monday Blues M 630pm		212	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		15	Fell Street Step Su 8pm		91
Monday Night Women's M 8pm		109	830am Smokeless Th		22	Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		35
Monday Nooners M 12pm		180	A is for Alcohol Th 6pm		102	Fireside Chat Tu 8pm		345
More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		78	A New Start F 830pm	63	617	Fogwatch Tu 7pm		23
Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm		100	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		119	Founders' Group Sa 5pm		20
Noon Discussion Th 12pm		1002				Friday All Groups F 830pm		229

# GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS, CON'T...

Name	May	YTD	Name	May	YTD	Name	May	YTD
Friday Knights Th 730am		36	New Hope Big Book M 630pm		106	Sunset 9'ers F	76	222
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm	140	140	Newcomers Tu 8pm		277	Sunset 9'ers M		194
Friday Night Special F 8pm		10	No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm	32	32	Sunset 9'ers Su		432
Friday Noon F 12pm		68	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		10	Sunset 9'ers Th		129
Friday Reflections		10	One Liners Th 830pm	484	484	Sunset 9'ers W		128
Friday Smokeless F 830pm		83	Park Presidio M 830pm		60	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		360
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm	912	912	Pax West Th 12pm		838	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		285
Goodlands Su 2pm		36	Pure & Simple Su 6pm		274	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm		84
Greenhouse Meditation		82	Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women		26	Ten Years After Su 6pm	219	573
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm	884	884	Rebound W 830pm		185	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am		42
Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm	80	80	Rodeo Drive Birthday Cake Style F 10pm		31	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	113	453
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm	11	11	Room to Grow F 8pm		114	The Parent Trap M 1230pm		343
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm	159	338	Rose Garden Big Book Th 1205pm		84	The Pepper Group F 12pm	60	60
High Noon Friday 1215pm	60	192	Rule 62 W 10pm		525	Thought For The Day F 730am		36
High Noon Monday 1215pm		270	Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm		60	Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm	152	152
High Noon Saturday 1215pm		204	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm	228	228	Too Early Sat 8am	300	1670
High Noon Thursday 1215pm		322	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		480	Transrecovery F 630pm		18
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm		577	Seacliff Th 830pm	197	197	Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm		180
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	105	211	Second Chance Th 215pm		105	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		378
High Sobriety M 8pm		566	Serenity House		600	Tuesday Step Meeting Tu 130pm		2
High Steppers W 7pm		90	Serenity Seekers M 730pm		57	Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm		123
Hilldwellers M 8pm		118	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		284	Unidentified Group		103
Home Group Sat 830pm		127	SFPOA Th 7pm	275	275	Unidentified Group		68
How It Works Sat 2pm	37	37	Sisters Circle Su 6pm		215	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	385	805
Huntington Square W 630pm		751	Sisters In Sobriety M 7pm (SF)		4	Walk of Shame W 8pm		263
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		491	Sober Across the Board M-Sa 830am	40	180	Washington Square M 7pm		171
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		36	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		188	Waterfront Sun 8pm		200
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		118	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		90	We Care Tu 12pm		72
Last Call Su 10pm	101	101	Step Talk Su 830am	324	612	Wednesday Women's Big Book W 615pm	180	180
Like A Prayer Su 4pm	66	98	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		143	West Portal W 830pm		234
Lincoln Park Sat 830pm	77	174	Stonestown M 8pm		99	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	45	175
Live and Let Live Su 8pm		172	Straight Jackets Th 9am	21	137	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		504
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		36	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 930am		754	Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm		148
Luke's Group W 8pm	44	169	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm		114	Women's Promises F 7pm		50
Marina Discussion F 830pm		625	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		90	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		68
Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		120	Sundown W 7pm		360	YAHOO Step Sa 11am		106
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	229	1210	Sunset 11'ers F		45			
Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm		292	Sunset 11'ers M		50	<b>Total SF Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$6,684</b>	<b>\$39,123</b>
Monday Monday M 1215pm		97	Sunset 11'ers Su	14	148			
New Clay M 2pm		27	Sunset 11'ers W		72	<b>Total Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$9,961</b>	<b>\$59,522</b>

*(Tradition Eight: Continued from page 9)*

our program works. When a new-comer walks in, the entire group can share its experience, strength, and hope with him or her. We do want “special helpers” (see page 133, Book thumpers), but many of us know

from our experiences with professional recovery programs and professional helpers that, as earnest and committed as they might have been, as important as their teaching and support may have been, it was the 24/7 availability of real people—sober

friends, a sponsor, or perhaps that Teleservice line (if you are thinking about taking a drink, press 2) that really did the trick.



# WORKING LIKE A DOG

by Anonymous


As a child I was taught that the harder I worked the greater would be my reward. What is the reward of working hard? I associated working hard with making more money. This meant owning a home, driving a nice car, being happily married, going out to a nice dinner, etc. and having the respect of others, which I had earned by working hard. I also felt that if I worked hard I deserved to drink. Therefore, I both worked hard and drank hard. Eventually I put more effort into my drinking than I did into my work.

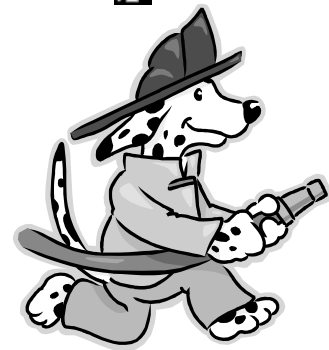
My life became unmanageable and I became powerless over alcohol. The rewards of working hard all disappeared. All I had was myself, my resentments, my bottle, and a lot of self pity. People, places, and things were the cause of my unhappiness. I had to drink. I still went to work, but only to collect a paycheck. I lived in self pity for many years and continued to drink not knowing how to escape the life that was *inflicted on me by others*. Alcohol and drugs were my only escape. The hole I was digging got deeper and deeper. There had to be a way out.

Someone suggested that I try going to A.A. I went, I listened, and figured

that I could overcome my misery by going to one meeting a week, drinking between meetings, and eventually I would lose the desire to drink. The more meetings I went to, the more I learned that drinking was but a symptom of my real problems. The realization that there was a tremendous amount of work involved in the Steps terrified me because I knew that I was going to have to face the real me. I was going to have to look people in the eye who I had harmed, admit my mistakes and finally make amends. I got a sponsor, got a service commitment, went to meetings, and worked the Steps. I learned that I was solely responsible for my life. Alcoholics Anonymous changed my life and gave me a toolbox full of spiritual tools. In A.A., I learned that the reward of working hard was a happy, joyous, and free life. I went to meetings every day, sponsored people, worked on committees, and life got better and better. A.A. had given me a life that I had never dreamed possible.

One day, the opportunity arose for me to buy the business that I worked for and I started working like a dog. Remember, had I not been a member of A.A. and changed my life this opportunity would have never come my


way. So what did I do? I started working 15 and 16 hour days. I started missing meetings and I stopped going to the gym. I was trying to please all of my clients. My attitude started to change. I was more irritable and discontent at home at the end of the day. I heard people talk at meetings about how they stopped going to meetings and before they knew it they were drinking again, but this didn't apply to me. I always wondered what my sponsor meant when he said "Don't let the life that A.A. gave you get in the way of your A.A. life". This is what I was doing. Needless to say I do not want to pick up a drink and go back to my old life, so I have decided that I need to continue doing the things that I have been doing in A.A. so that I can remain happy, joyous, and free. If I am going to work like a dog it is going to be in Alcoholics Anonymous. 



*(Concept VIII: Continued from page 10)*

regardless of the views of the workers and volunteers at the offices who could sometimes understand these matters better. Bill paid attention to earlier mistakes by the General Service Board in trying to run the service functions directly. He warned against too much concentration of money and authority.

Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an "upside-down" organization, because the ultimate responsibility and final authority for World Services rests with the A.A. groups, rather than with the Trustees, the General Service Board or the General Service Office in New York. As a GSR, I am responsible to act as a link between the conscience of my group and the

District Committee, the Area Assemblies, the delegates to the General Service Conference, and the General Service Board, whose policy decisions affect the A.A. World Services Board, the General Service Office, the A.A. Grapevine Board, and the Grapevine Office. 

# TRUDGING THE ROAD

by Richard P.

Travel can be a challenge for anyone in recovery. It takes us away from our routine and support system, and sometimes into slippery places, physical and mental. “Come on, it’s Vegas!” “My first trip to Paris, and I can’t have one glass of wine?” These people don’t know I’m in A.A.—one drink won’t hurt.”

Traveling for business can present a distinct set of challenges for the sober alcoholic. The act of long-distance travel by itself can be very stressful, as can the presentation or meeting prompting it, or the type-A colleague in the next seat who’s angling for your job.

I can identify with anyone facing those problems. Since 1999 I’ve worked in the sales divisions of two international software companies. I know what it’s like to arrive at a Holiday Inn Express in Plano, Texas at 1:00 AM on a rainy morning and hear the clerk laugh when you ask if there’s anywhere you can get something to eat.

Here are some tips I’ve learned that help me stay centered while I’m on the road, for work or play.

## **Check out meetings in your destination**

Unless you’re vacationing in Antarctica, you will probably have access to meetings. They keep you connected, and it’s fun to meet the local A.A. people. I’ve been made to feel very welcome by out-of-town groups, with invitations to dinner or folk’s homes. Many locations have meeting data on the internet, so if you’re really organized, or just anal-retentive, you can

plan your meeting schedule and get directions in advance.

## **Stay in touch with your support group**

Bring phone numbers. Book a call with your sponsor. If you’ve got a business meeting so nerve-racking that you’d prefer to spend the time driving nails through your hands, bookend it: arrange to call a sober friend just before and after. It’ll help you feel supported and centered.



## **Portable wisdom—bring literature with you**

### **Don’t put yourself in slippery situations**

Did you like to bide time between flights or on the plane knocking back a few? Deal with the isolation that can come with business travel by chatting up the bartender at the local watering hole? Are you spellbound by the thought of what you might find in the mini-bar? Being honest about temptations, and planning in advance how you’ll deal with them (like telling Housekeeping to remove the mini-bar), can literally save your sobriety.


### **...and decide in advance how to handle the ones you can’t avoid.**

Certain situations come with pressure to drink. Business parties and wedding receptions are a couple of events that are awash in alcohol. On some occasions, uncouth as it is, people may even demand to know why you’re not drinking.

It helps immensely to plan ahead how you’ll respond to such situations. There’s usually some action you can take to maximize your comfort level, such as skipping the happy hour and arriving for dinner, or just putting in a brief appearance. If someone insists on knowing why you prefer orange juice to vodka, you can quietly refuse to be put on the spot. “It doesn’t agree with me” is all you have to say. You can pray for them after the event.

Above all, remember you have the right and responsibility to bow out if you’re concerned a social function will endanger your sobriety.

And here’s what works for me best: I’m sober a long time, 24 years. It’s been so long since I’ve seen alcohol as an option, I’m really not tempted. Long-term sobriety is the most powerful tool I’ve got.

Good habits and honesty are all you need to be comfortable in recovery on the road. As time goes on, you’ll find, like everything else, it gets easier. You can look forward to telling your home group about successful, sober business trips and vacations that are a blast. And when it’s time for you to come home, your hosts won’t say “Thank God that lush is leaving.” Instead you’ll enjoy a sincere “Keep coming back!” 



# N.E.W. — NOTHING ELSE WORKED

by Mary Ann L.

I can surely tell you what it was like beforehand, toward the end, when everything was foggy and painful. I couldn't get out of bed, couldn't tell the school I wanted to drop their classes. Hangovers were murderous. I'd close my eyes and there would be these creepy crawlers in my bed, worms and snakes that invaded my small world. I had terrible migraines and couldn't eat; even when I drank it was hard. My own family became my bar acquaintances. My mother supported me with wine or alcohol as needed but I had to do it the way she wanted me to. My miracle cure (alcohol) had stopped working. I was a basket case. I'd moved from drinking in bars to residing in the back of the bus with a brown paper bag. In the end, I progressed to very old red cooking wine that had turned to vinegar with sediment in it.

Nothing seemed to work... I tried everything. I tried loud music, a change of clothes, a hair cut, a look at the personals, coffee, regular movies and then classic movies; I tried comedians, humorous messages, dog shows, a membership at the gym for one year, a relationship, more coffee and bars of dark chocolate I even tried jewelry, sculpting and a third college degree. I went for an air transportation degree to become a flight attendant, but in the end realized I had a fear of flying so I went for a B.A. in industrial arts.

I tried reading in the park. I then moved to organized spiritual practice. I tried Kabbalah, Buddhism, Yoga and then just a regular church. I thought it was a way to get people to like me.

Slowly I tried A.A., and did a not so thorough Fourth Step. I sporadically went to meetings.

I then had this wonderful dream about a fish. When I was a child, I had river-fished with my adoptive father and the dream captured a time when I caught this beautiful multicolored fish. It was a rainbow trout with real rainbows on its coat. In the dream, my fish took off its coat and was no longer colorful, but stayed the same old drab fish. I realized that the fish was the same with or without the colorful coat and saw we're all the same, just the way we are.

The dream helped to turn me around as I saw the need to work my A.A. program and, most importantly, saw that I wasn't terminally unique. The dream stays with me to this day. I just think of my fish with the rainbow colors and its transformations.

**TP**

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*(For the Sake of the Herd: Continued from page 6)*

I take a meeting into Marin General Hospital psych ward once a month. I have a Teleservice shift and I am the Intercounty Fellowship Representative for my home group in Fairfax. I make it to the IFB meeting once a month in San Francisco. I also answer the telephones at Central Office in San Francisco. I also used to take meetings into Helen Vine Detox in San Rafael for Bridging the Gap. There is plenty of service work to do in A.A. in order to be a useful *member of the herd*.

It says on page 181 of the *Big Book* "I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly".

I do it for four reasons: Sense of duty. It is a pleasure. Because in so doing I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip.

I just got off the phone here in Central Office with a woman who would have ninety days in two weeks and she was sick in bed and couldn't get out to a meeting. We chatted and marveled about how grateful we were to have this program. I told her I was writing an article on "*The Center of the Herd*" and I started explaining to her what that meant to me. I likened it to a musk ox herd in Alaska. The woman had never heard of a musk

ox. I am delighted to tell you that the musk ox is an ungulate that looks like a North American Bison or an African Water Buffalo. In order to fend off predators they form a tight circle, rears inside and heads facing outwards, the young and weaker herd members on the inside.

I liken our newcomers and the still suffering alcoholic to those in the inside of the herd and the stronger ones, say those with more time or serenity, to those with heads facing out on the fringe of the herd. The herd is like a protective family.

We are here not just to survive, but to stay strong and sober and to help others achieve sobriety. All are welcome to "The Herd".

**TP**

# IFB MEETING SUMMARY — JULY 2007

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.	Living Sober With HIV	P	Jamie G.	Fireside Chat	P	Olive B.	Steppin Up	P
Amy B.	Tuesday Chip	P	Jaime G.	Sesame Step	P	Patti M.	Bernal New Day	A*
Andy T.	Waterfront	P	Jenifer W.	Like A Prayer	P	Patty M.	Huntington Square	P
Anil K.	Tiburon Monday Mens Stag	A*	John G.	Each Day a New Beginning	P	Rebecca D.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Anthony J.	Serenity Seekers	P	Johnny G.	High Noon (Wed)	A**	Richard R.	We Care	P
Armando R.	Home Group	A*	Joe H.	Gratitude Group	R	Rick K.	Join the Tribe	P
Beatrice L.	Mid Morning Support	A*	Judy S.	Diamond Heights Group	P	Rick R.	Goodlands	A*
Brian C.	Hit It & Quit It	P	Karen A.	West Portal	A*	Roger C.	Early Start	P
Bruce K.	Sunset Speaker Step	P	Karin K.	24 Hour Plan	P	Ron M.	Live & Let Live	P
Carol E.	Happy Hour	P	Ken J.	High Sobriety	P	Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sat.	P
Casey L.	Sunday Corte Madera	P	Kevin N.	SFPOA	A*	Shawn M.	Regroup	P
Chuck K.	Ten Years After	P	Larry B.	Castro Discussion	P	Steve N.	Terra Linda Group	P
Dan C.	Downtown Mill Valley	R	Liz C.	Mill Valley Speaker	P	Tedra M.	Come N Get It	P
Dana R.	Saturday Sunset 9'ers	P	Mark W.	Living Sober with Hepatitis C	P	Thomas H.	Any Lengths	P
Danna P.	Treasurer	P	Matthew D.	Too Early	X	Tom K.	High Noon (Monday)	P
David C.	Mill Valley 7am	R	Matt T.	Fairfax Friday Night	X	Tracy F.	Keep Coming Back	P
David D.	Keep it Simple	P	Maury P.	Central Office Manager	P	Tracy G.	Wits End	P
Derek D.	Reality Farm	P	Michael L.	Fairfax Attitude Adjustment	P	Victor V.	Creative Alcoholics	P
Erica R.	Miracles on 24th St.	P	Nancy I.	First Place	P	Vincent L.	Artists and Writers	A*
Ian M.	Ass in a Bag	A**	Nicholas L.	Some Are Sicker Than...	P	Virginia M.	Women Who Drank Too Much	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

Rich D.	Eureka Step
David D.	Alt. Each Day a New Beginning
Michael P.	Sunset 9'ers Su 8am
Michael P.	Fri Morning 12 Steppers
Jim H.	Friendly Circle Beginners

## Liaisons Present

Alejandro D.	Living Sober
Don H.	Marin H&I
Kevin S.	Marin Teleservice
Karen S.	District 06
Ray M.	District 05
Robert B.	Bridging the Gap

Following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the July 2007 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:

**Chair’s Report:** Scott N. gave the report. Scott thanked everyone for allowing him to serve as Chair for the past year. He asked that after elections this evening, those who are transitioning out of currently held positions spend time with the

newly elected. With respect to the on-going discussion regarding the article, “What’s in a name?” Scott asked the IFB to remember that the direction the IFB will take on the issue should come from individual groups and not from the IFB down to groups.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Danna gave the report. Year-to-date Net Income through May 31, 2007 is \$9,779 and exceeds the budgeted Net Income by \$11,745. Unrestricted Cash as of May 31<sup>st</sup> totaled \$47,329 and is more than sufficient to pay for budgeted expenses for the next two months.

## Central Office Manager’s Report:

Maury presented the IFB with new Orientation Packets. These new packets will be used to supply each new member with information about serving on the IFB. Maury apologized for any missing information in last month’s minutes. Written notes were mistakenly destroyed before the final minutes were compiled. Pink pamphlets in the Orientation packet explain all of the service opportunities available within the IFB and beyond and suggested sharing these with your groups in order to boost committee participation. Lastly, Maury thanked all those who made themselves

*(Continued on page 17)*

(Continued from page 16)

available and worked on committees over the past year.

**Central Office Committee Report:** We discussed the Nominating Committee. One of the members revoked his offer to serve, which left the committee short of the required three members. The COC identified a number of possible alternates for Maury to contact. There was a discussion to propose a change to the by-laws regarding the nomination committee to mandate inclusion of an IFB member who is rotating off of the COC or has experience serving on the COC.

#### **Election of new IFB Officers:**

**IFB Chair:** Chuck K. was elected in the fourth round of voting.

**IFB Vice-Chair:** Steve N. was elected in the second round of voting.

**IFB Recording Secretary:** Ken J. was the only person available for the position. The IFB accepted him as Recording Secretary.

**Election of At-large COC members:** The nominating committee would have nominated five IFB members for the three at-large positions, but Chuck K. was earlier elected as IFB Chair, so four IFB members were presented and accepted by the board as the new COC members: Victor V., Tedra M., Richard R., and Rebecca D.. One of the members, Rebecca D., will complete Steve N's. At-large term as he made himself available and was elected as IFB Vice-Chair.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**12<sup>th</sup> Step Committee:** Victor gave the report. He stated that the Sunshine Committee, which takes AA meetings to AA members who are hospitalized or confined to home, is in need of support and places to take meetings to.

**Access Committee:** Virginia gave the report. She stated that the Teleservice Committee adopted guidelines and distributed them to all members regarding how to receive and make a call using the California Relay Service. The Committee is now focused on creating a pamphlet introducing their purpose and present information about accessibility and the assistive listening devices available to the AA community.

**Special Events Committee:** Brian C. gave the report. There is a flier for the

Honky Tonk Prom in the current issue of *The Point*. Please help spread the word about the event. He is also looking for volunteers to assist with the event. The committee is also in the process of planning for SF Unity Day.

**Orientation Committee:** Steve S. gave the report. Orientation is held at 6:00 PM before each IFB meeting. The new Orientation Packets debuted tonight.

**Outreach Committee:** Jaime G. gave the report. Many IFB members signed up to assist the committee by attending meetings. Few have followed through. Central Office now has a stock pile of information packets for outreach efforts. Jaime asked for those who are still available or who have gone out to groups to meet with him after the meeting.

#### **Liaison Reports:**

**General Service:** Karen S. gave the report. The last GSR meeting was spent listening to Area Officer, Sharon B's. report. She returned from the Panel 57 General Service Conference in NYC. The booklet with all of the information from the conference will be made available at the summer assembly in Petaluma on August 11, 2007 from 9AM to 5 PM. The assembly will be held at the Petaluma Community Center at 320 N. McDowell Blvd.

**Marin Teleservice:** Kevin S. is the new Marin Teleservice Liaison. This was his first report. Marin Teleservice will be providing the food for the Marin Unity Day celebration on Sep. 15. He also reported that their phone bill has been very high recently due to the large volunteers using cell phones with numbers outside the 415 area code.

**Bridging the Gap:** Robert B. gave the report. The committee's charge is to assist individuals who are leaving institutions get to their first AA meeting. The committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30.

**H/I Marin:** Don H. gave the report. The committee is looking for talent to perform at Marin County Unity Day on Sep. 15.

**Living Sober:** Alejandro D. gave the report. He thanked all of those who announced the conference at home meetings and Central Office for their presence at the

event. The next general planning meeting will be held August 26, 2007.

#### **Group Rep Reports:**

Mark W. requested that IFB form an inquiry into the actions of the COC regarding the exception of their group from recent schedules. Larry made a motion to table the issue until the next IFB meeting. The motion passed.

Amy, Ron, and Erica have agreed to assume the Greeter responsibilities.

Victor V. thanked all of the out going officers.

Submitted by

Chris T.

The next IFB meeting at 7pm on Wednesday August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 at 180 Harrison Ave. in Sausalito. Orientation precedes the meeting by one hour.

If your group does not have an elected Intergroup Representative, also known as IFB rep, please join us to see if it is a service position you might be interested in volunteering for.

The IFB is the policy making group for your Central Office and a good resource for questions or problems related to the group. It serves as the Board of Directors for the Central Office (a legal requirement for any California non-profit corporation).



*(Bulletin Board: Continued from page 7)*

about just what the rules are when it comes to having such a dog in a meeting. (For more on this see *Dear Alky*. Ed.)

Service animals are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities. Service animals are working animals, not pets. There are many of these types of assistance dogs, including hearing dogs, mobility assist dogs, walker dogs, seizure alert/response dogs, psychiatric service dogs, and SSigDogs, which assist persons with autism.

Under the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), businesses and organizations that serve the public must allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals into all areas of the facility where customers or visitors are normally allowed to go. This federal law applies to all businesses open to the public, including restaurants, hotels, taxis and shuttles, grocery and department stores, hospitals and medical offices, theaters, health clubs, parks, and zoos.

The ADA, however, does not apply to (1) private clubs exempted from coverage under Title II of the 1964 Civil Rights Act; (2) religious organizations or entities controlled by such organizations.

This does not mean that service dogs are not allowed in churches, church schools or other private meeting places. It simply means that it is important to check with the particular location or meeting place to find out their individual policies and procedures regarding service animals and to make your group aware of those rules.



**Marin County Unity Day 2007**  
**"Unity, the Key to Service & Sobriety"**

**Saturday, September 15, 2007**  
**2:00 – 10:00 pm**  
**Corte Madera Recreation Center - 498 Tamalpais Dr., Corte Madera**

You are invited to attend a wonderful day of carrying the AA message through Unity, Service and Recovery (and fun). The day will include:

- Panels, Skits, Big Book Trivia Contest, Raffles and so much more all day!!
- Potluck & Delicious BBQ, Live Music throughout the day and more!
- Sobriety Countdown & Speaker Meeting at 7:00
- Talent Showcase of our very own AA's singing, dancing and...to wrap up the day!

Marin County Unity Day is sponsored by the following service entities:

• Marin General Service	• Central Office/I.F.B.
• Bridging the Gap (BTG)	• Hospitals & Institutions (H&I)
• MCYPAA (Marin County Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous)	• Marin Teleservice
	• Al-Anon

To volunteer or if you have any questions, contact Kiki F. 415.342.1651 or [unityday07@yahoo.com](mailto:unityday07@yahoo.com).

No pets please.

## Recent Deaths

Silas P.  
Ken M.  
Dorothy G. (Monterey)

We print the names of any members who have recently died when the names have been sent to us. Unlike the **Ongoing Memorials** section, which appears on Page 4, **Recent Deaths** is for information only. This one-time listing is not dependent upon a contribution in the name of the deceased.

# Intercounty Fellowship of AA Financial Statement

## May 2007

	May 07	Jan - May 07
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Contributions from Groups		
Group Contributions	9,961.37	59,309.55
Honors	0.00	212.00
Total Contributions from Groups	9,961.37	59,521.55
Contributions from Individuals		
Individual - Unrestricted	71.00	11,965.20
Faithful Fiver	513.00	3,906.00
Honorary Contributions	128.00	613.00
Total Contributions from Individuals	712.00	16,484.20
Gratitude Month		
Gratitude Month - Groups	234.68	3,284.98
Total Gratitude Month	234.68	3,284.98
Sales - Bookstore	8,217.02	46,434.18
Special Event Income	0.00	923.64
Newsletter Subscript.	165.90	637.79
Total Income	19,290.97	127,286.34
Cost of Goods Sold		
Cost of Books Sold	5,287.64	30,236.08
Credit Card Processing Fees	157.32	917.55
Total COGS	5,444.96	31,153.63
Gross Profit	13,846.01	96,132.71
Expense		
Employee Expenses		
Wages & Salaries	8,823.84	43,134.96
Employer Tax Expenses	724.40	4,371.35
Health Benefits	1,092.22	4,969.22
Total Employee Expenses	10,640.46	52,475.53
Professional Fees		
Computer Consulting	62.50	343.75
Total Professional Fees	62.50	343.75
Bank Charges	0.00	0.00
Postage		
Bulk Mail	0.00	200.00
Postage - Other	0.00	335.00
Total Postage	0.00	535.00
Rent - Office	3,987.10	19,935.50
Rent - Other	75.00	450.00
Access Expenses	300.00	1,050.00
IFB Literature	0.00	39.79
PI/CPC	0.00	46.40
Filing/Fees	60.00	80.00
Insurance	0.00	1,932.00
Internet Expense	74.99	434.80
Office Supplies	181.37	1,015.08

	May 07	Jan - May 07
Paper Purchased	273.29	1,006.83
Software Purchased	59.90	100.75
Shipping	246.16	395.48
Printing	0.00	840.88
Equipment Lease	1,803.87	3,575.12
Repair & Maintenance	274.23	1,133.46
Security System	33.50	167.50
Special Events	0.00	892.96
Telephone	267.70	1,317.62
Phone Book Listings	79.00	395.00
Utilities	12.43	843.76
Training	33.20	33.20
Miscellaneous Expense	84.40	149.91
Total Expense	18,549.10	89,190.32
Net Ordinary Income	-4,703.09	6,942.39
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Interest Income	73.42	3,769.10
Total Other Income	73.42	3,769.10
Other Expense		
Depreciation Expense	75.67	378.35
Amortization Expense	45.91	229.55
Total Other Expense	121.58	607.90
Net Other Income	-48.16	3,161.20
Net Income	-4,751.25	10,103.59

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AUGUST 2007

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