

the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

2007 **10**
OCTOBER

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

THE GIFT OF SPIRITUALITY

by Robert C.

I met my third sponsor for the first time in 1983. I was just beginning my journey on the path ahead of me and was full of anger and frustration with the world, but especially for anyone who appeared to be proselytizing. In those early days, if you spoke openly about religion to me I was likely, quite literally, to pick up a folding chair and throw it at you. I know that sounds funny, but it's true. People often ducked whenever I stood up to share at a meeting in those days, and I was often asked very firmly to leave.

The man who would become my third sponsor was speaking at the Wild Bunch in Berkeley and the gist of his pitch appeared to be about how spirituality was an essential piece of life but that it's not the same thing as choosing a religion. At less than a year sober, I didn't have the ears to hear what he was saying. All I heard was something like "You must believe in Jesus!" So I stood up to grab the folding chair I had been sitting on when a huge pair of arms slammed against me and forced me back down

into a seat. "Don't you throw that chair at that nice man." said my grand sponsor, seriously and softly. I looked into his huge brown eyes, considered how powerful his arms were, and decided not to throw anything at anyone.

About seven years later I had been asked by my second sponsor to go out into the world and ask people what they thought "God" was. It was when I approached the man who would become my third sponsor that I got an interesting answer to my question of "What is God?"

He turned to me and said "Who asked you to ask me this?" I told him that my sponsor had. His serious face broke into a peaceful expression and he stepped a little closer to me saying "I'm afraid that he has lead you astray." Confused I asked him why? He smiled a broad, generous smile and said "I can't tell you anything at all about God. That's for you."

This was the best direction anyone had ever given me with regards to a

(Continued on page 14)

A publication of the

Intercounty Fellowship

of Alcoholics Anonymous

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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

october 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 <u>FIRST MON</u> Access Committee, Central Office; 5:30pm	2	3 <u>FIRST WED</u> 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)	4	5	6
7	8 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/ Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office, 7 pm	9 <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	10 <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, 7 pm	11 <u>SECOND THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office, 6:00 pm	12	13
14	15 <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael, District Meeting: 8 pm	16 <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, 7:30 pm	17 <u>THIRD WED</u> Website Committee, Central Office; 6:30pm	18	19	20
21 <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	22	23 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 7:30 pm	24	25 <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Committee Meeting: 8 pm	26	27 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma; Business Meeting: 12:30 pm SF Teleservice Appreciation Party, See Flyer on p. 6
28	29	30	31			

From the Editor

Welcome, readers, to our October issue of *The Point*. We hope you enjoy our offerings this month. We especially invite you read our cover article, a heartfelt remembrance of a beloved Bay Area A.A. member. A special “thank you” to Robert C. for this gift to us.

We focus in this issue on Tens – the Step, Tradition and Concept that is! We have an excellent article on “outside issues” being brought into A.A. meetings and another on what it means to do a false Tenth Step.

A quick reminder that next month is Gratitude Month and many meetings will need to take a group conscience on participation. Let’s not forget all the hard work Central Office does for us and show our gratitude with action!

As always we’d like to invite interested readers to submit articles for publication in *The Point*. We welcome articles from all San Francisco and Marin members. We prefer shorter pieces, usually under a thousand words, and only edit for length and clarity. And, lest we forget, *Dear Alky* is always there for you. Send your questions!

And, once again we’d like to invite interested members to consider joining *The Point* Committee. We still don’t have a Marin representative and we still need more feminine energy! We meet on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at 5:30pm at Central Office. Come join us! It’s a wonderful committee and a worthwhile commitment (as are they all).



LIBRA: SEPT. 23-OCT. 22

by Madame Salami

October can be a trying time for indecisive Libra as they busy themselves constructing this year's costume for the annual A.A. Halloween fete. Halloween is Christmas for the vain. And with an innate talent for fashion and a love of looking at themselves in the mirror, expect Libra to be in the center of the holiday parade — though they may be late and they may ask someone to carry them about half-way through.

Libra’s even temperament and love of people gives them a keen sense of the human psyche, an appreciation of diplomacy and a strong desire for

true balance. They are great sponsors, but highly frustrating to needy sponsees looking for quick answers. Libras long for justice and harmony, but are in no hurry for the right answers. They like to consider all sides and like to get it right the first time.

Careful though, my Libran friend, sometimes your wish to get things right can make you seem indecisive and your reluctance to act, lazy. Fight the urge to compare and criticize. That only leads to resentment, which makes those nightly reviews go longer and longer into the night. And we know you’d rather be sleeping on

those luxurious sheets that took you months to research and buy.

Stop deciding and finally take up your friend on that speaking opportunity at the weekend meeting. People listen to you because you have something important to say and know how to articulate what you mean. This month, quit contemplating the words of others and take time to listen to your own. You might surprise yourself when you see just what God has done for you that you couldn’t do for yourself.

And have fun at that party, you’re a shoo-in for Best in Show.



the
Point

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Meeting Changes:

Sun	11:00am	Inner Sunset	SUNSET 11'ERS Church, 850 Judah St. Enter on Funston (was listed as 1390 14th Ave)
Mon	3:00pm	Cathedral Hill	MONDAY NOONERS 1111 O'Farrell St./ Franklin (was 2pm)
Wed	3:00pm	Cathedral Hill	THE DAILY REPRIEVE 1111 O'Farrell St./ Franklin (was 2pm)
Wed	7:30pm	Castro	MIRACLES OFF 24TH ST. Church, 100 Diamond St./ 18th St. (was 665 Elizabeth St.)
Thu	6:15pm	Financial	STEP SISTERS 235 Montgomery (was 7:15pm)
Fri	3:00pm	Cathedral Hill	FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT 1111 O'Farrell St./ Franklin (was 2pm)

No Longer Meeting:

Sun	3:00pm	Hayes Valley	AA PAMPHLETS SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St.
Sun	7:30pm	South of Market	HAWKS PIPE GROUP 450 Harrison St.
Mon	2:00pm	Hayes Valley	NEW CLAY SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St.
Mon	6:00pm	Haight Ashbury	THE FAMILY AFTERWARDS 1757 Waller St.
Wed	7:00pm	Marina	4TH STEP WORKSHOP 2118 Greenwich St.
Thu	12noon	Hayes Valley	LUNCH BUNCH SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St.
Fri	10:00am	Hayes Valley	BOOKENDERS SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St.
Fri	7:15pm	Hayes Valley	JETS SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St.
Fri	12 midnight	Outer Sunset	HOT JAVA 1396 La Playa St./ Judah St.

RECENTLY REGISTERED TRUSTED SERVANTS— AUGUST 2007

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

San Francisco

6 AM Marina Dock Fri. 6am; **Alumni** Wed. 8:30pm; **As Bill Sees It** Tue. 12:10pm; **Embarcadero Grapevine** Fri. 12:10pm; **Design for Living** Sat. 8pm; **Franciscan Noon Discussion** Mon. 12noon; **Friendly Circle Beginners** Sun. 7:15pm; **Friday Smokeless** Fri. 8pm; **Goodlands** Sun. 2pm; **Greenwich Speaks** Mon. 8am; **High Noon Saturday** Sat. 12:15pm; **Joys of Recovery** Tue. 8pm; **Live & Let Live** Sun. 8pm; **New Friday Big Book** Fri. 12pm; **No Regrets** Tue. 7am; **Parkside** Thu. 8pm; **Rule 62** Wed. 10pm; **Sinbar** Sun. 8pm; **Straitjackets** Thu. 9am; **Valencia Smokefree** Fri. 6pm; **What It's Like Now** Mon. 6pm; **Women Living Sober** Sat. 10am; **Work in Progress** Sat. 7pm

Marin

Larkspur Beginners Fri. 7pm; **Larkspur Step** Wed. 8:30pm; **Monday Nooners** Mon. 12noon; **Six O'Clock Sunset** Thu. 6pm; **Sunlight Of The Spirit** Thu. 7pm; **Women Who Drank Too Much** Mon. 7:30pm

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Silas P.
Ken M.

ANNIVERSARIES

High Noon:
Jeanne C. 28 years, Steven H. 17 years, Toby D. 16 years, Nina V., Sean D., Dave H. 4 years, Tom H. 3 years, Lou B. 2 years, Danny H. 1 year
Here & Now: Joe L. 8 years
Island Group: Frances L. 45 years
Kids Welcome: Bethany R. 6 years
Santa Rosa Fellowship:
James D. 24 years

COMING UP

mark your calendar

FRIDAY NIGHT ALL GROUPS

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

10/05 Host Group: Tues. 6AM Marina Dock Big Book
 10/12 Host Group: TBA
 10/19 Host Group: Serenity Step
 10/26 Host Group: All Groups Committee

Speaker: Sarah O.
 Speaker: Dave R.
 Speaker: Bill K.
 Speakers: Connie B. & Jack G.

From: Expect a Miracle, Brandon, Florida
 From: Join the Tribe
 From: El Sobrante Fellowship.
 From: San Francisco Fellowship's Early Years

TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

10/02 Speaker: Sidney From: Valencia Smoke Free
 10/09 Speaker: Xavier S. From: Sun Night Survivor Group
 10/16 Speaker: TBA From: TBA
 10/23 Speaker: Liz From: Valencia Smokefree
 10/30 Speaker: Paul From: 7 Seas

BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

10/07 Speaker: Bill S. From: Midway, So. San Francisco.
 10/14 Speaker: Jimmy G. From: Re-Group, San Francisco
 10/21 Speaker: Greg W. From: Keep It Simple, S.S.F.
 10/28 Speaker: Marissa From: Watch your Step, S.S.F.

THE SPIRIT OF SAN FRANCISCO 2007

WE ARE NOT A GLUM LOT

15TH ANNUAL AA CONVENTION WITH
 AL-ANON PARTICIPATION
 OCTOBER 12TH - 14TH, 2007



AA SPEAKERS & MORE

Friday Night - Clancy I. - Venice, CA
 Saturday Morning - Spirit of Service Panel
 Saturday Afternoon - Karen G. - Los Angeles, CA
 Saturday Evening - Frank J. - Sherman Oaks, CA
 Sunday Morning - Theresa F. - N. Hollywood, CA

AL-ANON SPEAKERS

Friday Night - TBA
 Saturday Afternoon - Ellie H. - Hopkins, MN
 Saturday Afternoon - Craig M. - Lincoln, NE

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Friday Night - Comedy Show
 Saturday - Golden Gate Dinner Buffet
 Saturday Evening - Sobriety Dance
 Sunday Morning - Raffle

ONLINE REGISTRATION
 COMING SOON AT
WWW.SPIRIT-SF.ORG

NEW THIS YEAR -
 SPANISH SPEAKING AA
 MARATHON MEETINGS

Located at...Holiday Inn Golden Gateway -1500 Van Ness Avenue at California

Returning this year THE SPIRIT OF SAN FRANCISCO 2nd ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC
 Located at Harding Park Golf Course - Home Of The 2005 World Golf Championships
 Thursday, October 11th - \$150.00 REGISTRATION FEE INCLUDES CART, LUNCH, RANGE BALLS, AND TEE PRIZES

FRIDAY ALL GROUPS

66TH ANNIVERSARY

Friday October 26, 2007

7:30PM Entertainment & Refreshments
 8:30PM Speaker Chip Meeting

Speakers from San Francisco Fellowship
 Early Years
 Connie B. and Jack G.

Urban Life Center

1101 O'Farrell at Franklin

DRESS ATTIRE: 1940'S OR PRESENT



Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at meetings of IFB, COC, IFB committees and service events sponsored by the preceding entities, including sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative format should contact the SF/Marin County Central Office (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.






**LIVING SOBER
Halloween Dance
& Costume Contest**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2007
\$15 (or contribute what you can)

Ellard Hall 100 Diamond Street (at 18th)
 6:00 pm Al-Anon / AA Meeting
 7:30 pm Festivities

More info at www.livingsober.org
 A benefit for Living Sober Western Roundup
 For disability access / ASL please call 415-978 2478

SAN FRANCISCO TELESERVICE



Presents Its
**AA Speaker Meeting
 and
 Third Annual Volunteer
 Appreciation Day**
Saturday, October 27, 2007

Fellowship & Teleservice Outreach—Noon Teleservice Panel with Questions & Answers—12:30-1:30 Lunch—1:30 PM AA Speaker Meeting—2:30 PM Speaker—Ted R. Coffee & Desserts & More Teleservice Outreach—3:30 PM
--

Costumes Optional/
Urban Life Center
1111 O'Farrell/cr Franklin

For more information, please contact Judi C. at jfteleservice@austf.org

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 later than Monday, October 22, 2007.

**Annual Traditions
 Celebration**
Saturday, November 3rd, 2006
from 1pm—3pm

ILWU Clerks Hall on Berry St.
 (at the foot of 2nd and King Streets)
**Opening Presentation on the
 Importance of our Traditions**
 Followed by Twelve Speakers sharing on the
 History of each

Contact Paul P. —235-6111 or Glen R. —350-8284 for
 more information

*"So long as the ties that bind us together prove far
 stronger than those forces which would divide us if they
 could, all will be well"*
 —AA Tradition: How It Developed reprinted with permission of A.A. World
 Services, Inc.

Unity Day 2007

**Presented by San Francisco General Service
 and
 the Intercounty Fellowship Board**
Saturday, November 10, 2007, 9:30 AM - 5 PM

St. Mark's Urban Life Center –
 1101 O'Farrell at Franklin, San Francisco

**Join us for workshops, speakers, food, fellow-
 ship and more!**

Weekly Planning Meetings: Fridays, 6:00 pm -
 7pm
 Central Office, 1821 Sacramento Street near Van
 Ness

Contact person –Cannon H.
 415-573-6370
cehukins@aol.com

Dear Alky...

Dear Alky,
I recently moved here from another state and was happy to find a sponsor I feel connected to. The move had me feeling like a newcomer all over again so I am motivated to start working the steps again. When discussing this with my new sponsor, I was told that since I had already done a Fourth Step I didn't need to do another one, but will cover that base with daily Tenth Steps. While I understand this theory, my practice has lacked somewhat and I am guessing I am not alone. (Progress, not perfection and all.) Alky, I've been sober several years now and the truth is I have a laundry list of resentments - gained since I put the bottle down. Please share your thoughts with me and other readers on this.

**With a growing list,
Resentful**

Dear Resentful,

In my opinion, there is not one correct way to do the steps. Alky is aware of folks who

work them as your new sponsor suggests — one time through the Twelve Steps formally and thereafter, just ten, eleven and twelve. The philosophy behind this method, as Alky understands it, is that once a person has been led through the steps by a sponsor, the alcoholic with some sober time should focus her attention on working the steps with newcomers. Therefore, the “maintenance steps” suffice for keeping her in fit spiritual condition. Plenty of other members of the Fellowship start over at Step One from time to time and work through them all — sometimes with a new sponsor. It seems this is your inclination. From what Alky has seen over the years, both methods work fine. It simply depends upon the preferences of the alcoholics involved.

The discussion of Step Ten in the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* is helpful because it points out several different ways in which ongoing inventory may be taken. In addition to the “spot-check” inventory and end-of-day reviews, the “12 & 12” also suggests doing a more thorough overhaul from time to time: *“Then there are those occasions when alone, or in the company of our sponsor or spiritual adviser, we make a careful review of our progress since the last time. Many A.A.s go in for*

annual or semiannual house cleanings. Many of us also like the experience of an occasional retreat from the outside world where we can quiet down for an undisturbed day or so of self-overhaul and meditation.”

That passage makes clear that the difference between a Fourth Step and an in-depth, periodic Tenth Step is really just a matter of semantics. Since you already feel connected to your new sponsor, perhaps you should simply request an appointment for a longish discussion of your Tenth Step and prepare a thorough inventory of the resentments that have accumulated since you did your Fifth Step. While you're at it, you can also review your fears and update your sexual inventory. In this way, you can accomplish essentially the same house cleaning as you would achieve by doing an entire new set of steps. And finally, try not to sweat the definitions too much. In Alky's view, those who are continuing to “clean up their side of the street” on an ongoing basis — no matter what they call it — are doing the best thing they can do to ensure lasting sobriety. So, welcome to California and happy inventorying!

AP

BULLETIN BOARD

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

by Maury P.

In July I had the good fortune of hearing our Area Delegate, Sharon B., give her report from the 57th Annual General Service Conference, which was held at the end of April in New York. I went to hear Sharon give her report because each year decisions are made at that conference that affects A.A. as a whole.

While I learned many important details about shipping costs and volume discounts on literature – issues that directly affect our Central Office and therefore, the groups in San Francisco and Marin - and about upcoming changes to conference approved literature, I also learned some things that I was not expecting to hear

about, things that astonished me. For example, if every group in North America were to contribute \$142 directly to the General Service Office in New York in 2007, they would be self-supporting (remember “we” are “them”) and thus, able to sell literature **at cost!** Similarly, an individual

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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 TEN

by A Local Sot

"Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

Merriam-Webster On-line Dictionary defines *prompt* as:

Main Entry: **prompt**

Function: *adjective*

Etymology: Middle English, from Latin *promptus* ready, prompt, from past participle of *promere* to bring forth, from *pro-* forth + *emere* to take

1 : being ready and quick to act as occasion demands

2 : performed readily or immediately
<*prompt* assistance>

Synonyms: immediate, punctual, timely

Related Words: apt, quick, ready, willing; opportune, seasonable; early

Antonyms: belated, late, tardy

When working with character defects, of which I have plenty, I have found it useful to follow this advice and to remedy negative situations as quickly as possible. When I am *quick* to make amends, I am *apt* to avoid the same action in the future, and become *willing* to grow spiritually in the present. To deny my part in any negative situation by refusing to make amends immediately cuts me off from the sunlight of the spirit and alienates those who would help me and those whom I would help.

By delaying I am only rubbing salt into the wound (actually a mental wound, self-inflicted and gaping)

and causing *myself and others* a lot more pain.

As I began to write this article I was involved in a situation at work that truly required me to make amends. I was short-tempered and rude to the office manager and a part of me thought it was okay because I was leaving the job for other employment anyway. Besides, he was rude to me first! After all, I may never see this person again and I had just given notice that I was leaving. In a way, it was no big deal...

This was one of those situations where the necessity of making amends was purely internal – what would I rather be, right or happy? On reflection, I was certainly not happy with the way I had acted. It was completely counter to the principles of recovery and felt just plain bad. By now, I had left the job. What to do? Wait until I see this person again? Let sleeping dogs lie and hope it just blows over? Call this person?

Then it occurred to me! Follow directions! Make amends promptly! Write a letter asking for forgiveness and send it right away! Don't delay until it's too late for any meaningful apology. So I did and I'm glad I did. I felt better right away and I hope and pray the recipient of my letter realizes that I am sincere and didn't get sober to be an asshole... **TP**

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

Victor V. coc@aasf.org

12th STEP COMMITTEE

Shawn M. 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

Michael P. website@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Judi C. sfteservice@aasf.org

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Jill H. picpc@aasf.org



TRADITION TEN

by Carolyn R.

“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

When I first started coming to A.A. meetings, I wanted relief from my daily need for alcohol. All I wanted to know was how to stop drinking every day. In those early months of my sobriety, the Traditions meant little more than another piece of literature sometimes read during meetings, and an excuse to pass the basket after the speaker was done sharing. As an alcoholic in early sobriety, I was focused on me and me only, and how I was going to get through that day without a bottle. Sure, I had heard the saying, “The Traditions are to the group what the Steps are to the individual.” In my head that meant that the Steps were the topic of the meeting, and the Traditions were the topic of the business meeting once a month.

Tradition Ten states, “Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.” Bill W. expands in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* that the survival and spread of recovery through Alcoholics Anonymous is of far greater importance than any other cause A.A. could champion. To the alcoholic, recovery from alcoholism is to be restored to life itself.

The message of Tradition Ten is also consistent with A.A.’s primary purpose, as stated in Tradition Five,

which is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. As illustrated in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, taking a particular political or social stand is not only divisive to the members within A.A., it is also detrimental to A.A. as a whole. An early precursor to A.A., the Washingtonian Society, failed because it allowed politicians to use its organization to further their political aims. Bill W. states that the Washingtonians were doomed once they diverted from helping alcoholics and tried to reform America’s drinking habits. The A.A. founders were determined not to repeat the Washingtonians’ mistake, and vowed to keep A.A. out of any public controversy.

Potential alcoholics seeking to recover from their disease might otherwise be discouraged from attending A.A. because of differing opinions. Although individual members will disagree on political and social matters, as a group A.A. takes *no* position, thereby avoiding controversy of any sort. Our purpose is recovery from alcoholism. Any other issue – outside issue – would divide and conquer an individual’s chance for personal recovery.

I appreciate how the Traditions ensure my sobriety and my spiritual growth. The Traditions ensure that

(Continued on page 11)



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 thank the following members for joining:

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

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 X

by Jeff O.

“Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority – the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and bylaws.”

Tradition Nine suggests minimal organization. However, if A.A. is to function, servants must know their responsibilities and corresponding authorities. Without them, would my *Grapevine* arrive? Would the pamphlet *Too Young* get revised? Would volunteers answer the A.A. hotline?

Concept X states that authority should equal responsibility. Bill W writes, “Nearly all governments and societies” seriously deviate from this concept. I’ve witnessed professional situations in which directors force mandates down to the workers. If things go amuck, workers on the ground might be tempted to say “whoa, stop, please, listen.” But, there are no clearly defined authorities that sufficiently match the workers’ responsibilities. Concept X protects A.A. from “the inevitable clashes, confusion, and ineffectiveness” that result without properly delegated authority.

In the *A.A. Service Manual*, various authorities and responsibilities of A.A. groups, General Service, the Trustees, and service corporations are defined. The groups (at the “top” of the structure) delegate authority, typically via General Service, all the way “down” to GSO (General Service Office) and the *Grapevine*. Concept X guarantees that operational structures will function harmoniously and

effectively — so long as people know what their “respective responsibilities and corresponding authorities actually are.” By granting servants rights and status, both legally and traditionally, A.A. prevents “departmentalization.”

What about *ultimate* authority? Ultimate authority must lead somewhere. Servants must know who the final boss is. Our Trustees may fire executives. Our Delegates may censure or reorganize the Trustees. Groups might exercise the “power of the purse” by not contributing money. In healthful organizations, the influence of ultimate authority will be *felt*, as part of the structure, but hopefully seldom used.

Additionally, we endow trusted servants with a traditional “right of decision.” We trust servants with discretion, to act according to their conscience. To alleviate tyrannies of a bare majority who might abuse authority, or of an over-bossy executive, A.A. guarantees a “right of appeal” to every minority and every worker.

The coffee maker, *Grapevine* Rep, and GSR must know their roles if the group is to function. But, how organized must A.A. be? Can job descriptions be remembered informally?

(Continued on page 15)

THE FALSE TENTH STEP

by Rick K.

"I'm sorry, but it wasn't my fault."

"Whatever..."

"It doesn't really matter."

Do you hear yourself saying these words much too often? Then it might be a sign that you're practicing the *False Tenth Step*. I define this as a knee jerk response to situations where we have unwittingly caused harm, such as saying one thing or another at the time but not looking at your part in the resentment or fear or keeping to ourselves the resentments and fears that we might benefit from doing a proper Tenth Step.

Alcoholics Anonymous describes the Tenth Step in the following way: "We continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness." It goes on to state: "Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear. When these crop up we ask

"Being a person in early sobriety, I found myself balancing a fragile serenity with the demands of the job."

God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone."

When I was managing a sober house in Marin County I was put in the role of house dad. Being a person in early sobriety, I found myself balancing a fragile serenity with the demands of the job. As time went by I found myself becoming more stressed out by the seeming battle between myself and the unruly residents in my home. I started to let the job get to me by taking the indiscretions of the residents personally. I found myself constantly getting angry, resentful and

afraid of enforcing the rules of the house.

Not once during this time did I sit down and do a proper Tenth Step to get relief from myself. By putting pen to paper, I might have been able to dissect resentments and fears and find my part in them. If I had done this, I would have hopefully diffused any built up stress in the process.

Instead, I practiced the False Tenth Step by saying what I needed to say at the moment but nothing more. I put the blame on the others and without doing the work I needed to do in order to grow from the situation. My Part? Are you serious? I was the victim!

Today I no longer manage a sober house. In the end my childish attitude and refusal to look at my part in situations made my life and those around me too miserable. I can now say, looking back on it all, that if I had done a few proper Tenth Steps at key times, I might have saved myself untold grief. I have learned from my mistakes and hopefully this will not happen again.



(Tradition Ten: Continued from page 9)

self-centered sick alcoholics like me can learn to stop drinking and become spiritually well. In fact, the Traditions work in such a way that, if an A.A. group abides by them, their members won't even realize it.



Attention Readers

The Point Committee is discussing ideas for new features in 2008. We are also considering saying goodbye to some of the current ones. We'd like your help—what do you want to read about? Please write to us and give us your feedback.. You can reach us at thepoint@aasf.org. Don't be shy!

Additionally, let us know if you would like to be added to our list of contributors. If we publish your articles you will be thanked with a complimentary one-year subscription.

GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS

aaa JULY 2007

Name	Jul07	YTD	Name	Jul07	YTD	Name	Jul07	YTD
Fellowship			Marin City Groups 5D 630pm	250		Total Marin Group Contributions	\$5,204	\$26,108
2900 Alcolthon		389	Mill Valley 7D 7am	286				
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	26	228	Monday Blues M 630pm	299	511	SF Group Contributions		
Contribution Box	54	388	Monday Night Women's M 8pm		109	515pm Smokeless W		332
Deer Park Discovery Group		35	Monday Nooners M 12pm		180	7am Grab Bag M 7am		55
Fellowship Contribution		9	More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		78			
Gay Newcomers Group	11	11	Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm	100	200	7am Marina Dock		154
IFB	75	498	Newcomers Step M 730pm		484	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	60	199
Marin Teleservice		947	Noon Discussion Th 12pm	131	1,132	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		58
Novato Fellowship Events Committee		149	Noon Hope F 12pm	49	288	830am Smokeless Th		22
Unidentified Group		1,004	Noon Tu 12pm		440	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm		102
Total Fellowship	\$166	\$3,659	Primary Purpose W 830pm		25	A New Start F 830pm		617
			Quitting Time		100	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm	80	80
Honors			Refugee Th 12pm		260	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm	87	205
High Noon Friday 1215pm		80	Reveille 7D 7pm		690	AA Step Study Su 6pm		109
Total Honors	\$0	\$80	Rise N Shine Sun 10am		150	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	77	129
			San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		95	Afro American F 8pm		53
Marin Group Contributions			Serendipity Sa 11am		226	All Together Now Th 8pm		186
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am	800	800	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)	162	462	Amazing Grace M 7pm		16
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm		80	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm	71	280	Any Lengths Sat 930am		722
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		2,658	Sober & Serene F 7pm		375	Artists & Writers F 630pm	252	252
Awakenings Sa 830am		35	Step Sisters (M.V.) Sun 7pm		100	As Bill Sees It Sat 11am	84	84
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm	785	785	Steps To The Solution W 715pm		132	As Bill Sees It Sat 8pm		66
Beginner's Help Th 8pm		200	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm		300	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	375	649
Beginners W 7pm		350	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		200	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		12
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		295	Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm		126	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		147
Bolinas Monday Nioght & Step Study		50	Survivors M 12pm	72	72	As We Understood Him Mon. 7pm	107	107
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		150	T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm		90	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		152
Creskside New Growth Sun 7pm		309	T.G.I.F. F 6pm		139	Back to Basics W 8pm		62
Crossroads Sun 12pm		352	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		614	Be Still AA Su 1215pm		157
			Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag Th 8pm	150	227	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm		70
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	197	1,083	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		83	Bernal New Day 7D		1,077
Fireside F 8pm Bolinas		76	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm		147	Big Book Basics F 8pm		272
Freedom Finders F 830pm		1,200	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		1,059	Big Book Beginners		60
Friday Night Book F 830pm		250	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm		556	Big Book Study Su 1130am		114
Girls Night Out W 815pm		75	Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		590	Birthday Meeting Sa 8pm		250
Gratitude Tu 8pm		577	Tiburon Big Book Group W 730pm	155	155	Blue Book Special Su 11am	30	30
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		485	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		445	Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		34
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	750	1,500	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		42	Came To Believe Su 830am		143
High & Dry W 12pm	900	900	Twice Blessed W 730pm		33	Candlelight Meeting Th 10pm		63
Hillside Candlelight F 830pm	30	80	We, Us and Ours M 650pm		50	Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) W 8pm		341
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		112	Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm		182	Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm		84
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am		105	What's It All About F 12pm	181	273	Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm	15	15
Island Group Th 8pm	189	357	Women For Women W 12pm		97	Code Blue Big Book Study		149
Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		108	Women on Monday M 7pm		54	Common Welfare Th 8pm	115	115
Kids Welcome Group M 1130am		45	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am	184	303	Courtside Tu 1215pm	221	221
Living in the Solution F 6pm		405						

GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS, CON'T...

Name	Jul07	YTD	Name	Jul07	YTD	Name	Jul07	YTD
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm		469	Last Call Su 10pm	140	241	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	54	197
Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		61	Let It Be Now F 6pm	155	155	Stepping Out Sat 6pm	24	24
Design for Living Sat 8am	118	329	Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm		79	Stonestown M 8pm		99
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am	356	940	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		98	Straight Jackets Th 9am	17	191
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am	141	183	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm		174	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 930am		754
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am	161	821	Live and Let Live Su 8pm		172	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm		257
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	4	306	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	222	259	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc Su 8pm		368
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	147	418	Luke's Group W 8pm		169	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm	60	150
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		259	Marina Discussion F 830pm	420	1,045	Sundown W 7pm		666
Early Start F 6pm		713	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	174	174	Sunset 11'ers F		45
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		361	Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		233	Sunset 11'ers M		50
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm		995	Men's Gentle Touch M 7pm		154	Sunset 11'ers Su		148
Epiphany Group Th 8pm		60	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am		1,453	Sunset 11'ers W		72
Eureka Step Tu 6pm		257	Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm		521	Sunset 9'ers F		222
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		680	Monday Beginners M 8pm	700	700	Sunset 9'ers M		194
Excelsior Free for All Sa 8pm	100	147	Monday Monday M 1215pm	117	213	Sunset 9'ers Sa	297	297
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		252	New Clay M 2pm		27	Sunset 9'ers Su		432
Fell Street F 830pm		131	New Hope Big Book M 630pm		106	Sunset 9'ers Th		129
Fell Street Step Su 8pm		127	New Life W 7pm	369	369	Sunset 9'ers W		128
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		35	Newcomers Tu 8pm	108	385	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		360
Fireside Chat Tu 8pm		345	No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm		32	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm	156	441
Fogwatch Tu 7pm		23	No Reservation M 12pm		605	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm		84
Founders' Group Sa 5pm		20	Noon Smokeless F 12pm	76	76	Ten Years After Su 6pm	415	988
Friday All Groups F 830pm	1,335	1,564	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		10	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am		42
Friday Knights Th 730am		36	One Liners Th 830pm		484	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	55	588
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		140	Park Presidio M 830pm		60	The Parent Trap M 1230pm		343
Friday Night Special F 8pm		20	Pax West Th 12pm		838	The Pepper Group F 12pm		60
Friday Noon F 12pm		68	Pure & Simple Su 6pm		274	Thought For The Day F 730am		36
Friday Reflections		20	Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women		26	Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm		152
Friday Smokeless F 830pm	211	294	Reality Farm Th 830pm		128	Too Early Sat 8am		2,070
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm		912	Rebound W 830pm		185	Transrecovery F 630pm		18
Goodlands Su 2pm		36	Rodeo Drive Birthday Cake Style F 10pm		31	Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm		180
Greenhouse Meditation		82	Room to Grow F 8pm		114	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		378
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm		884	Rose Garden Big Book Th 1205pm		84	Tuesday Step Meeting Tu 130pm		2
Haight Street Explorers Th 830pm		80	Rule 62 W 10pm		525	Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm		195
			S.F. Bermuda Tri. Birthday Cake F					
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm		11	10pm	167	167	Unidentified Group		171
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm		338	Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm		148	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	172	977
High Noon Friday 1215pm	210	518	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm	164	392	Walk of Shame W 8pm		409
High Noon Monday 1215pm		537	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		794	Washington Square M 7pm		171
High Noon Saturday 1215pm		204	Seacliff Th 830pm		197	Waterfront Sun 8pm		350
High Noon Thursday 1215pm		322	Second Chance Th 215pm		105	We Care Tu 12pm	52	124
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	125	702	Serenity House		600	Wednesday Women's Big Book W 615pm		180
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	38	377	Serenity House Sat 830pm	300	300	West Portal W 830pm		234
High Sobriety M 8pm		566	Serenity Seekers M 730pm		57	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm		175
						Women Who Drank Too Much Tu		
High Steppers W 7pm		135	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		414	615pm	25	25
Hilldwellers M 8pm		397	SFPOA Th 7pm		275	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		644
Home Group Sat 830pm		127	Sinbar Su 830pm	78	78	Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm		148
How It Works Sat 2pm		37	Sisters Circle Su 6pm		215	Women's Promises F 7pm		50
Huntington Square W 630pm		751	Sisters In Sobriety M 7pm (SF)		4	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		68
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm	609	1,100	Sober Across the Board M-Sa 830am	40	260	YAHOO Step Sa 11am		106
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm	50	86	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm	144	332	Total SF Group Contributions	\$9,810	\$56,132
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		549	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		90			
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		118	Step Talk Su 830am		612	Total Group Contributions	\$15,180	\$85,979

(The Gift of Spirituality: Continued from page 1)
spiritual life. The man who would become my third sponsor was the first person I had ever met who explained to me that, while he had profound beliefs of his own, they were personal and private, that if I wanted to know more, I needed to seek that path myself.

Shortly after this exchange I stopped working with my previous sponsor and began to seek openly anything I could find out about spiritual practice and growth.

A few years later I asked Si to sponsor me. He laughed and happily agreed. We worked together as a team for many years. I love his family as if they were my own.

As his life came to a close, I reminded Si of many of the funny things he'd said over the years about how he wanted to go out of this life. He once said he wanted to have a bag of tobacco and a pipe on his death bed, to which he laughed and said that was silly and no, of course he didn't want that. He also said that he wanted to die in the arms of a beautiful woman. I always loved that story, and I feel quite sure that wish came true.

But upon reminding my third sponsor of how he'd like to step out of this life in style, he said to me that he had been blessed with a wonderful life

*"Si gave me the great
gift of compassion
and humor."*


beyond his wildest dreams, that he had the love of a beautiful wife, three beautiful sons, a beautiful daughter, and feels the presence of God in his heart, and in his life. Not one moment goes by when he doesn't feel blessed and grateful for everything he had been given.

I knew when we had this conversation that we were saying goodbye. I could see in his eyes that he was ready, and fearlessly present, prepared for the end of his life. Gratefully it came quickly, while he was sleeping at home. He simply stopped breathing.

Of all the friends, teachers, family, and comrades I've had in my life (and let me tell you there have been a lot) Si was the man who brought the message of love into my innermost private thoughts, meditations and activities. He always told me that the secret to the universe is love. All you've got to do is love, and everything will be just fine.

This is my root belief. However strange or difficult I may appear to be, coming from a place of deep and unconditional love. This is a gift I could never have lived without. Don't get me wrong, I fail at this task all the time. I am an alcoholic. Alcoholism remains cunning, baffling and powerful in my day to day experience.


Si gave me the great gift of compassion and humor. He would always remind me with cheer and delight that nothing I was talking about made any sense to him. My problems didn't have anything to do with my pocket-book, or my love life, but that what I was actually suffering from was a stiff case of alcoholism and I'd better get to a meeting, or better yet hit my knees and thank God for giving me such a beautiful life with such high class problems. I was always surprised by that answer. Somehow I just never saw it coming.

Thank you my friend. Safe journey, and may God, as you understand God, bless your heart, and ferry your soul into the next world with dignity, grace, ease, and all the love and kindness you have shown so many thousands of people in this world. I love you, and remain forever your student, your peer, your sponsee, and above all, your friend. 

(Bulletin Board: Continued from page 7)
contribution of \$6.37 per year, per A.A. member would have the same effect. Six dollars and thirty-seven cents – that's two lattes! That's one burrito! Can you believe it?!

Know what else I found out? *The Grapevine*, which is constantly struggling to remain self-supporting, needs only 9300 additional annual subscrip-

tions to do so. 9300! Oddly, there are 93 General Service Areas in North America. If each one were able to generate 100 subscriptions, *The Grapevine* would be completely self-supporting. Our Area goes from Monterey to the Oregon border and inland to the Central Valley. What's more, our Intergroup alone covers 569 square miles – San Francisco and Marin Counties – and we have almost

800 meetings per week between us. If 12% of those meetings had a meeting subscription we'd be doing our part. So, come on San Francisco and Marin A.A.'s – let's show New York our stuff; let's do our part to help A.A. be self-supporting, let's practice the Traditions in all our affairs and stay sober and help others whilst doing so. What do you say?! 

B.E.S.T.— BEEN ENJOYING SOBRIETY TODAY

by Bree L. and Jen W.

“The best thing about my sobriety today is that I know I have the ability to take care of myself,” says Jen W. She didn’t know there was such a choice before coming into A.A. and she was always angry, because no one was taking care of her the way she thought it should be.

Prior to A.A., she was a relatively successful drug dealer. She wanted to go to college and dealing helped make that happen. She would buy just a bit more “product” for herself. Her drugs were free (in that she used her own products) but drinking was the expensive part. Drinking booze is not as expensive as drugs, but as Jen says, “It all depends on the drinks and the drugs you use.” She dosed with “cocktails,” which were a bit of this and a bit of that, to get to her desired state.

Jen graduated after seven years and four colleges with a degree in a specialized field that she now works in. She doesn’t see herself as a high-

bottom drunk. As she says, anything above the grave is a high bottom.

She couldn’t afford all the liquor she was drinking after graduation nor could she stop dealing. She became decreasingly discerning about her alcohol and drugs. The fact is that she just didn’t want to feel and would drink whatever was in front of her; tequila or whiskey, it didn’t matter. She used to think she was a “pothead,” but today she knows her drug of choice was “more.”

Jen says she couldn’t stop drinking until she realized she had a choice. She sees a huge difference between *trying not to drink and choosing not to drink*. Also, she can choose the people in her life, choose her relationships, and be around people that foster the same ideas. Her choice is to be of maximum service to her Higher Power and her fellow humans. Jen says, “I have no idea what that looks like but I am willing to show up for my life today.” She can separate

herself from the fray and see where it is someone else’s deal and not hers. It is not her job to make another person understand if they don’t want to.

“Today, I have a choice to take care of myself, to go to Pilates, even though I don’t like to do it, I feel better afterwards. It is the same with meditation. My brain tells me I don’t have time but I still try to meditate at least once a week and I can feel the difference when I do.” Jen says.

Today she most enjoys life’s many choices. She wants to say “yes” and allow the abundance to flow in. This means she has to be willing to receive as well as give. It doesn’t mean there are no bitchy days, but in order to receive she has to know those days as well as the good ones. She has to know sadness to know happiness and trying to hold tight to one means she might miss out on the other. This is all a human experience. Yes, she enjoys sobriety today, absolutely. **TP**

(Concept X: Continued from page 10)

Passed on orally? When should we write them down? What about “customs” that nobody ever wrote down? Now, regarding delegated authority: we know to “inform” our GSRs, and never “instruct” them. But, how much authority should be delegated? Type of coffee? Assortment of Literature? Announcements? Are style and humor allowed? If the group decides to revise the meeting format, must revisions be proofread and edited at business meetings? Now, two really tricky questions: If a trusted servant deviates from the

norm, who, if anyone, should correct him? Do we need a group conscience for *everything*, e.g., for fellowship, carpools, phone lists, or small reimbursements? These are merely questions for each trusted servant, group, and member to explore through group inventories and so on.

When visiting a group at which I have no responsibility, I never voice my opinion. This of course, is my opinion. Double-meaning intended.

Several years ago, I was involved with a group that was evidently struggling with rules and regulations. I

stumbled upon the pamphlet, A.A. *Tradition, How it Developed*, by Bill W. He writes: “At one time or another most A.A. groups go on rule-making benders.” Yes, and Bill writes about authority there too; though not as balanced and harmonious as the idyllic principles embraced by Concept X: “Then, the Group Elders, now clothed with authority, commence to get busy.” *Clothed with authority?* The best rule to remember might be #62 where we are reminded not to take ourselves “too damn seriously.” **TP**

IFB MEETING SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 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 Jim H.	Friendly Circle Beginners	A** Patrick M.	Treasurer	P
Amy B.	Tuesday Chip	A Joan T.	They Stopped In Time	A Patti M.	Bernal New Day	A
Andy T.	Waterfront	P John G.	Each Day A New Beginning	P Patty M.	Huntington Square	A
Anil K.	Tiburon Monday Mens Stag	A Judy S.	Diamond Heights Group	P Rebecca D.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Anthony J.	Serenity Seekers	P Karen A.	West Portal	P Rich D.	Eureka Step	A**
Armando R.	Home Group	P Karin K.	24 Hour Plan	A Richard R.	We Care	P
Beatrice L.	Mid Morning Support	R Ken J.	High Sobriety	P Rick K.	Join the Tribe	P
Brian C.	Hit It & Quit It	A** Kevin N.	SFPOA	R Rick R.	Goodlands	R
Bruce K.	Sunset Speaker Step	P Larry B.	Castro Discussion	P Roger C.	Early Start	P
Carol E.	Happy Hour	P Liz C.	Mill Valley Speaker	A Ron M.	Live & Let Live	P
Casey L.	Sunday Corte Madera	A Mark W.	Living Sober with Hepatitis C	A Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sat.	P
Chuck K.	Ten Years After	P Matthew D.	Too Early	P Shawn M.	Regroup	P
Dana R.	Saturday Sunset 9'ers	P Matt T.	Fairfax Friday Night	P Steve N.	Terra Linda Group	P
David D.	Keep it Simple	A** Maury P.	Central Office Manager	P Tedra M.	Come N Get It	P
Derek D.	Reality Farm	A** Michael L.	Fairfax Attitude Adjustment	P Thomas H.	Any Lengths	P
Erica R.	Miracles on 24th St.	P Michael P.	Sunset 9'ers Su 8am	P Tom K.	High Noon (Monday)	P
Jamie G.	Fireside Chat	P Michael P.	Fri Morning 12 Steppers	P Tracy F.	Keep Coming Back	P
Jaime G.	Sesame Step	P Nancy I.	First Place	A** Tracy G.	Wits End	P
Jenifer W.	Like A Prayer	P Nicholas L.	Some Are Sicker Than...	P Victor V.	Creative Alcoholics	A
		Olive G.	Steppin Up	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.

Visitors

Kate
Paul
Hank
Judi C.

Liaisons Present

Don H.
Ray M.
Mary R.

Following in an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the September 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: Chuck K. gave his report. He attended the General Service meeting for District 6, and discussed an IFB Liaison for District 6. The liaison would report back to the IFB concerning pertinent issues. District 10 will be approached next. Then the positions will be filled. The GSRs

had a discussion about the issue of group names. The consensus was that groups are autonomous and could choose whatever names they wanted, within reason. They were not opposed to groups that mentioned two diseases. They also decided that this is a local issue and is to be decided by the IFB, and their discussion ended.

Treasurer's Report: Patrick M. gave the report. Y-T-D Net Income through July 31, 2007 was \$15,263.11, which is \$13,804.11 better than budget. Unrestricted cash as of July 31st, 2007 was \$50,051.70, which is \$4,085.66 less than at the end of June 2007 and nearly equal that of July 2006. A new bank account was opened at Wells Fargo,

and the prudent reserve and reserve for computers was transferred from Bank of America. This was previously approved by the Central Office Committee.

Central Office Manager's Report:

Maury P. presented the report. Volunteers are always needed for regular and substitution phone shifts. One year of sobriety is required. Volunteers are needed to represent the IFB at Marin County Unity Day on Saturday, September 15th and at the Spirit of San Francisco conference in mid-October and at San Francisco Unity Day on November 10th. Maury will miss the October IFB meeting as she will be attending the 22nd Annual Central Office/Intergroup/AAWS seminar in Oklahoma

City. Gratitude Month is coming, so Reps should begin to mention it at their meetings. She also referred to the article in the most recent Box 459 about Intergroups/Central Offices. Central Office will be closed on November 22nd and 23rd, and on December 24th, 25th and 31st.

Central Office Committee Report:

Richard R. gave the COC report. The COC reviewed the Central Office Manager's and the Treasurer's reports. Bookstore prices were discussed and Patrick was asked to analyze current prices and bookstore revenue. Participation at the Marin Unity Day was addressed. It was decided to hold a Trusted Servant Registration drive starting in January 2008 in order to improve the number of meetings in contact with Central Office.

Report on group names: Bruce K. reported on the history of the IFB dealing with this issue in the past. The IFB spent three months studying and deliberating the subject. They studied the literature on the Traditions, talks and writings by Bill W., and other information as available. And when a vote was taken, the IFB was unanimous save one abstention in allowing groups to be listed identifying themselves as special interest meetings. Roger C. from the Ad Hoc Committee gave their report. After meeting four times over the past two months, the committee members explored two areas:

1) The current and ongoing discussion about specific group names and how they should be listed on the Central Office website and published meeting schedules.

Recommendation: Central Office would adopt a standing policy that a group's name by itself does not constitute an outside affiliation, except when a group name includes the proper name of a person (living or dead) or institution, the name ought not be grounds for exclusion from the schedule.

2) A broader conversation of how Central Office can better support new A.A. groups as they come into contact with Central Office.

Recommendation: Each new group would be visited by IFB members, or a "New Group Trusted Servant Orientation" could be formed.

Questions about clarification of the issue were asked. Maury explained the current Central Office policy in dealing with group

names and the published meeting lists. A variety of questions were asked regarding singleness of purpose, dual purpose, special interests, and common interests. A writing by Bill W. was read. Ultimately, Chuck K. asked the Reps to return to their groups with the new information for further discussion and consideration. There was no opposition to the suggestion.

Committee Reports:

12th Step Committee: Shawn M. reported that the committee includes the Sunshine Club and the 12 Step workshops and needs more members.

Access Committee: Virginia M. reported that the committee discussed the lack of wheelchair accessibility information on event postings, and asked that all events listed in *The Point* or on the website be required to contain the information. A representative of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission will be attending the committee meeting soon. Call Central Office for that information if interested.

Archives Committee: Bruce K. explained the purpose of the committee which is to preserve the history of A.A.

Special Events Committee: There was no formal report. Brian C. has stepped down from the position. A report on The Prom was given by Rebecca D. A total net loss of \$388 was reported.

Orientation Committee: Andy T. reported on the orientations done prior to every IFB meeting. The committee consists of Andy T., Ron M. and Steve N.

The Point Editorial Committee: Maury P. gave the report for Victor V. The committee is seeking an Associate Editor.

Trusted Servants Workshop Committee: Patty M. was absent, but a written report was submitted about the workshop in Marin on August 25th, and on the upcoming Group Secretary Workshop on Saturday, September 29th from 2 to 3 PM. For more information contact Central Office or tsw@aaaf.org.

Website Committee: Chair Michael P. reported on the committee's need for people to assist with website content.

Outreach Committee: Jaime G. reported that the committee still needs more members. The committee goes out to groups to educate them about the IFB and how it fits within the A.A. structure.

Special Committee Reports:

Teleservice: Judi C. reported on a continued need to recruit people to work the overnight and weekend shifts. She also reported on the upcoming Third Annual Teleservice Volunteer Appreciation Day on Saturday, October 27th.

PI/CPC: Bruce K. gave the report outlining the recent activities of the committee, including DUI classes and the 115th Annual American Psychological Association at the Moscone Center in August.

IFB Liaison Reports:

SF General Service: Mary R. reported for Karen S. on the Summer Assembly on August 11th in Petaluma. The next meeting will be September 11th at 7 pm. The subject will be Concept 9, on Leadership.

H & I - Marin: Don H. reported on the upcoming Unity Day, September 15th.

Living Sober: Alejandro D. reported that the committee has met and started planning for next year's conference.

Group Rep Reports: None

The 7th Tradition was observed. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Unanimously passed, and the meeting ended at 8:55PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken J., Recording Secretary



The next IFB meeting is on Wednesday, October 3rd, 2007 at 1187 Franklin Street in San Francisco at 7:00 p.m. Orientation starts at 6:00 p.m. and is required for all new members.

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

The IFB is the policy-making group for you Central Office and a good resource for questions or problems related to groups in San Francisco and Marin. It serves as the Board of Directors for the Central Office, a legal requirement for any California non-profit corporation.



A.A. AND OUTSIDE ISSUES

by Carlin H.

In 2001, I had been living near New York City for a few months, adjusting to a new set of meetings, when the twin towers fell. While meetings continued as usual for the most part, there were a few people who shared about this outside issue. One morning there was an American flag tacked in a prominent place on the bulletin board in the front of our morning meeting room. As someone who remembered the "Love It or Leave It Patriotism" of the 60's, I became concerned that this prominent placement of a political symbol could be interpreted as representing an additional requirement for membership besides my alcoholism.


I knew that the Tenth Tradition intends to reinforce the message of the First, Third and Fifth Traditions. Personal recovery depends upon our unity, we have only one requirement for membership and we have only one primary purpose. As long as we can unite in the common desire to stop drinking, who or whatever else we are or believe is irrelevant. As a newcomer, I needed to feel safe and welcome in meetings in order to be there and hear the message. I needed to identify with others no matter what seeming external differences there were; our drinking, our fears, our insecurities were the same. Had meetings involved discussion of is-

As someone who remembered the "Love It or Leave It Patriotism" of the 60's, I became concerned that this prominent placement of a political symbol could be interpreted as representing an additional requirement for membership besides my alcoholism.

suues or beliefs that were not mine, I would have been in conflict about the rest of the message. Had members been able to critique my beliefs or emotions I would not have felt safe to be myself and would have shut down, or run away.

Now, as a member of some years standing, I have a responsibility for the hand of A.A. always being there for the person who reaches out for help. This means to me that I need to speak and behave in such a way as to a) maximize the feeling of safety for

all members – especially new ones; b) strengthen the unity of the group on which my sobriety depends; and c) foster an understanding of and adherence to the Traditions which were written from earlier members experience to safeguard the continued existence of A.A.. So for the first time I agreed to be the Group Service Representative to the District Committee.

I had always avoided any service focused on A.A. "business" or "politics", justifying my behavior with the statement that "business meetings make me thirsty and you all told me to avoid slippery places." As the GSR, I represented the group at the District level and I communicated from the district, area and general service structures of A.A. back to the local group. I became much more thoroughly schooled in the Traditions and brought that to the group I served. I also had the opportunity to become acquainted with quite a few new people who are committed to A.A. as a whole and to their own sobriety at a deeper level than I had previously experienced. This sort of service also helped me to learn the difference between elder statesmen and bleeding deacons. I can't say I always liked the business meetings but they didn't make me thirsty and I grew in the practice of patience and tolerance. 

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Point is published monthly to inform A.A. members about business and meeting affairs of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Francisco and Marin counties.

In addition, *The Point* publishes original feature articles submitted by local

A.A. members that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates its pages, and in determining the editorial con-

tent, the editors rely on the principles of the Twelve Traditions.

(This is a brief summary of the editorial policy of *The Point*.) For the Long Form, please go to the Central Office website—www.aasf.org.

Financial Statement

July 2007

	Jul 07	Jan - Jul 07		Jun 07	Jan - Jun 07
Ordinary Income/Expense					
Income					
Contributions from Groups					
Group Contributions	15,180.17	85,348.05	Paper Purchased	242.04	1492.86
Honors	0.00	328.00	Software Purchased	0	100.75
Total Contributions from Groups	15,180.17	85,676.05	Shipping	227.8	446.5
Contributions from Individuals			Printing	0	840.88
Individual - Unrestricted	512.86	17,082.06	Equipment Lease	0	3575.12
Faithful Fiver	530.00	5,359.00	Repair & Maintenance	203.46	1531.92
Honorary Contributions	852.00	1,651.00	Security System	33.5	299.5
Total Contributions from Individuals	1,894.86	24,092.06	Special Events	1000	1892.96
Gratitude Month			Telephone	266.06	1854.43
Gratitude Month - Groups	0.00	3,284.98	Phone Book Listings	79	553
Total Gratitude Month	0.00	3,284.98	Utilities	202.93	1190.49
Sales - Bookstore	9,400.82	67,232.95	Travel	408.1	408.1
Special Event Income	0.00	923.64	Training	0	58.2
Newsletter Subscript.	110.60	847.93	Bad Checks	418.92	418.92
Total Income	26,586.45	182,057.61	Miscellaneous Expense	0	149.91
Cost of Goods Sold			Total Expense	19418.88	124627.12
Cost of Books Sold	5,989.58	43,887.78	Net Ordinary Income	975.52	12220.33
Credit Card Processing Fees	202.47	1,322.38	Other Income/Expense		
Total COGS	6,192.05	45,210.16	Other Income		
Gross Profit	20,394.40	136,847.45	Interest Income	52	3893.84
Expense			Total Other Income	52	3893.84
Employee Expenses			Other Expense		
Wages & Salaries	8,715.84	60,769.14	Depreciation Expense	75.67	529.69
Employer Tax Expenses	709.47	5,933.49	Amortization Expense	45.91	321.37
Health Benefits	1,211.22	7,272.66	Total Other Expense	121.58	851.06
Total Employee Expenses	10,636.53	73,975.29	Net Other Income	-69.58	3042.78
Professional Fees			Net Income	905.94	15263.11
Computer Consulting	1,106.25	1,450.00			
Total Professional Fees	1,106.25	1,450.00			
Bank Charges	12.50	12.50			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	200.00	400.00			
Postage - Other	0.00	335.00			
Total Postage	200.00	735.00			
Rent - Office	3,987.10	27,909.70			
Rent - Other	0.00	600.00			
Access Expenses	0.00	1,050.00			
IFB Literature	0.00	39.79			
PI/CPC	0.00	46.40			
Filing/Fees	0.00	80.00			
Insurance	0.00	1,932.00			
Internet Expense	278.39	808.13			
Office Supplies	116.30	1,174.77			

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