

# the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

2007 **11**  
NOVEMBER

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

## PRAYER AND MEDITATION— IN THE AM AND PM

by Anonymous

A publication of the

Intercounty Fellowship

of Alcoholics Anonymous

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In A.A., the month of November usually causes one to think about being grateful, or other-

wise giving thanks.

As a child, I was told the story of the "First Thanksgiving" and the true meaning of being thankful for what you've got.

What the Pilgrims did to the Native Americans shortly after that famous

"first" meal is a whole different story, but I won't engage in any controversy here. This is all about being grateful and, most importantly, the Eleventh Step.

The Eleventh Step states that we "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." For such a simple sounding step, it sure has a lot of important information in it. Prayer

and meditation has not been an easy thing for me – especially the prayer part. I was raised with the devout,

fundamentalist type of prayer that always sounded like a different language to me when I heard it in church. All I can remember was that we always seemed to be praying about our sins and asking for our hearts and souls to be washed clean – knowing that we

could never be totally pure, because we were all sinners and were to fear this God person. It was always pretty fearful in the church of my youth and no one ever seemed worthy of anything.

As I got into A.A. and finally took hold of all of the Steps, including Step Eleven, I was told that I could pray and meditate any way I liked. There was no form to follow or particular prayer to chant. My first sponsor suggested that I go to three



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.

(Continued on page 6)

# monthly calendar

Events, Highlights and Happenings

november 2007

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

## From the Editor

Welcome, everyone, to our November issue of *The Point* and to Gratitude Month, an enduring and beloved tradition in Alcoholics Anonymous. When that Gratitude basket comes around, please don't forget the valuable work that Central Office does for us all.

This month we focus on the principles embodied in the Eleventh Step, prayer and meditation, and what they mean to some of our contributors in a practical and concrete way.


We also bring you two letters from *Point* readers regarding the group name issue; as always, we appreciate receiving and welcome contributions from our readers. Additionally, our dearest *Dear Alky* waxes a poetic opinion on the psychoactive quali-



It's hard enough for selfish Scorpio to admit that the world doesn't revolve around him and the power of his sting, much less seek through prayer and meditation to improve his contact with a power he is sure is not as great as he. Yes, Scorpio's life plans rarely include A.A., but their actions and ideas surely bring them to the rooms. And, they're in for a wild ride the day they walk through the doors.

Their proud natures shudder at powerlessness, their willful cores balk at turning it over and their resentment lists last volumes. Their favorite colors are black and white and secrets are their most treasured possessions. Luckily in A.A. they find thirteen

ties of turkey and in our *SoberScope* Madame Salami, once again, provides deep insight; this month on what it's like to be a Scorpio and sober (scary?). Look for her new and expanded column coming in January along with several other new features.

We heartily invite AA's from San Francisco and Marin to consider submitting articles for publication in our newsletter or to consider joining our committee. We are especially seeking individuals of the feminine persuasion and residents of Marin; however, we would welcome anyone who proves a good fit. 

## SCORPIO: OCT. 23-NOV.22

by Madame Salami

trusted friends — Twelve Steps and a very patient sponsor.

Madame Salami has particular insight into our fascinating friends because she is a Scorpion herself. And she is the first to remind you that Scorpions should never be taken lightly. They are dead serious when it comes to learning about others and will not stop their investigations into anything until they get to the absolute bottom of things. Through some patience and prayer, in A.A. they finally learn to quit analyzing others and focus on their own hidden agendas.

Scorpions are rarely found in the center of the activity but will always


the  
**Point**

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know just what is going on around them. My Scorpion brothers and sisters are deeply sensitive, which makes us some of the best and the most loyal friends, but also the most treacherous of enemies.

Scorpions are used to living life on Scorpio's terms and find much frustration with the realization that self-will gets them nowhere. Remember, my mysterious friends, you lead by example, not by your sting, and if your aggressiveness can be controlled, you can accomplish and achieve anything you set your mind to. 



### New Meeting:

Tue 6:00pm Financial FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT MEN Russ Building, 235 Montgomery St./ Pine, Mezz. Conf. Rm.  
2 hr. (CL, DI, ME)

### Meeting Changes:

Sun 6:30pm Richmond AGNOSTICS & FREETHINKERS Neighborhood Center, 741 30th Ave./ Cabrillo  
(was 6555 Geary Blvd. at 6pm)  
Mon 3:30pm Cathedral Hill MONDAY NOONERS 1111 O'Farrell St./ Franklin (was 3pm)  
Wed 3:30pm Cathedral Hill THE DAILY REPRIEVE 1111 O'Farrell St./ Franklin (was 3pm)  
Wed 7:30pm Castro MIRACLES OFF 24TH ST. Church, 100 Diamond St./ 18th St. (was 665 Elizabeth St.)  
Fri 3:30pm Cathedral Hill FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT 1111 O'Farrell St./ Franklin (was 3pm)

### No Longer Meeting:

Sun 1:30pm Laurel Heights FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT 3700 California St./ Maple St.  
Mon 6:00pm Haight Ashbury THE FAMILY AFTERWARDS 1757 Waller St./ Shrader St.  
Sat 9:00pm Outer Sunset CANDLELIGHT VISIONS 1366 48th Ave./ Judah St.

**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— SEPTEMBER 2007

Below are the meetings whose Trusted Servants registered with Central Office during September 2007—nineteen in San Francisco and five in Marin. Thank you for registering!

### San Francisco

**Bernal Big Book** Sat. 5pm; **Big Book Basics** Fri. 8pm; **Castro Monday Big Book** Mon. 8:30pm; **Common Welfare** Thu. 8pm; **The Daily Reprieve** Wed. 3pm; **Friday Reflections** Fri. 12pm; **Hilldwellers** Mon. 8pm; **How It Works** Sat. 2pm; **How It Works Now** Sat. 3:00pm; **Living Sober With HIV** Wed. 6pm; **New Friday Big Book** Fri. 12pm; **The Pepper Group** Fri. 12:00pm; **Saturday Afternoon Meditation** Sat. 5pm; **Saturday Night Regroup** Sat. 7:30pm; **Seacliff** Thu. 8:30pm; **Stonestown** Mon. 8pm; **Valencia Smokefree** Fri. 6pm; **Wits End Step Study** Tue. 8pm; **Women's Kitchen Table Group** Tue. 6:30pm

### Marin

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

## CONTRIBUTIONS

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

### ONGOING MEMORIALS

Silas P.  
Ken M.

### ANNIVERSARIES

Any Lengths: Ed K. 28 years  
Mid-Morning Support:  
Denise H. 22 years  
Sheila H. 26 years



# Annual Traditions Celebration

Saturday,  
November 3rd, 2007  
1pm—3pm

ILWU Clerks Hall  
on Berry St.  
(at the foot of 2nd and King)

Opening Presentation  
on the Importance  
of our Traditions  
followed by twelve speakers  
sharing on the history  
of each

For more information:  
Paul P. —235-6111  
Glen R. —350-8284

"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.

## BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

11/04 Speaker: Matt H.	From: Friday Night Book, San Francisco
11/11 Speaker: Olive G.	From: Steppin' Up, San Francisco
11/18 Speaker: Russell F.	From: Pathfinders, San Bruno
11/25 Speaker: Ernie M.	From: Sunset 11'ers, San Francisco

## FRIDAY NIGHT ALL GROUPS

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

11/02 Host Group: Huntington Square	Speaker: Mary W.	From: Broken Elevator, Livermore
11/09 Host Group: TBA	Speaker: Dave C.	From: Big Book Basics
11/16 Host Group: TBA	Speaker: Tina A.	From: Tres Pinos Wednesday Group
11/23 Host Group: Haight Street Explorers	Speakers: Bruce S.	From: Monday Night Sausalito Group
11/30 Host Group: Friday Night Young Peoples	Speakers: Dan T.	From: Too Early

San Francisco General Service and  
the Intercounty Fellowship Board Present

## Unity Day

### *Are We Going to Any Length?*

Saturday, November 10, 2007 / 10 AM - 5 PM  
St. Mark's Urban Life Center –  
O'Farrell & Franklin, San Francisco

*Featuring:*

**An AA Meeting and Long Timers' Panel**

**WORKSHOPS ON:**  
PI/CPC Training  
Sponsorship  
Bridging the Gap  
Traditions & Concepts

**PRESENTATIONS ON:**  
Sober in Cyberspace  
General Service in Spanish  
(with English Translation)  
Introduction to Service Groups

And announcing the Second Annual "We Are Not Half-Baked, Bake-Off"  
Ask your home group to participate by baking a batch of  
cookies, brownies or cupcakes to win the coveted  
"We Are Not Half-Baked Award."  
Submit your home group's sumptuous baking creations by 11 AM at Unity Day.

***Lunch provided by the IFB with Entertainment!***



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.





# GRATITUDE IN ACTION!

by Rick K.

Attention all A.A.s !

November is Gratitude Month. This is a great way to show appreciation for our sobriety while supporting our local A.A. fellowship. Gratitude month dates back to the 1940s when the General Service Board hosted small “gratitude dinners”. The motivation behind these gatherings was to express personal gratitude for sobriety and appreciation for all the work done by our general service organizations and local Intergroup offices.

Throughout November, many groups pass a second basket sending what is collected directly to Central Office. This money goes into the general fund and helps finance the activities which benefit our fellowship as a whole and which allow us to help the still suffering alcoholic. Central

Office helps carry the message by coordinating the following services:

- Publishes and sells meeting schedules.
- Maintains a telephone service for those seeking help, A.A. members and the general public.
- Provides volunteer opportunities for newcomers.
- Maintains an informative and up to date website: [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org).
- Acts as an information exchange for all San Francisco and Marin A.A. meetings.
- Cooperates closely with other A.A. service entities.
- Orders and sells literature and sobriety medallions.

- Participates in and sponsors some local A.A. events.
- Maintains a Twelfth Step list to help the still suffering alcoholic.
- Publishes *The Point* newsletter.
- Represents the Intercounty Fellowship Board at conferences of other Intergroups/Central Offices and maintains contact with them.

So please remember the Seventh Tradition when the basket comes around a second time. At the risk of sounding overly dramatic, the life you save may be your own! This is a great way of putting gratitude into action. **tP**



*(Prayer and Meditation: continued from page 1)*  
different spiritual or church-like places where I'd never been before. He was setting me up to be able to choose what ultimately made me comfortable and to find what I could really believe and understand. So, I ended up going to Glide and the Unitarian Church for a while, as well as attend a Buddhist meditation on a regular basis. They were all very interesting to me and much different than what I grew up with. Little did I know that I was actually seeking a way in which I could pray and meditate, and, thus build, and improve, a conscious contact with a power greater than myself. What a sly sponsor! I may not attend these churches or meditations anymore, but the principles remain.

This step also says that all I have to do is to pray for the knowledge of my

Higher Power's will for me and to have the power to carry that out. It doesn't say that I am supposed to ask for anything else for me or for anyone else. All I am suggested to do is to ask for the “knowledge” of what God's will is for me and to please give me the strength to be able to carry that will out. It's not my will, but His will. Of course, in my morning and evening prayers I end up asking for a little more of this and that, but I am human and God knows me. The bottom line is that I ask for help in the morning and give thanks at night.

There is also a wonderful and powerful prayer associated with the Eleventh Step – the *Prayer of St. Francis*. This prayer is very dear to me because what it tells me is that if I can simply be mindful of other people, not trying to control them, but just accepting them while trying to be

open and give back at the same time, all will be well – for now and for eternity. It sounds wonderful, doesn't it? I wish it were as simple to do in daily practice, however. That is why this step is an ongoing step and is never really completed. It is a constant step and needs to be practiced and otherwise worked all the time, in my case.

I guess the best part of Step Eleven is the last paragraph in the “*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*” on page 105. The greatest reward of prayer and meditation is the “sense of belonging it brings to us” (me). I am not alone in this and there are others with me. If I can just turn it over, no matter what it is, to the Power of my choosing, greater than myself, all will be OK and I really have nothing to fear. Now, why wasn't I taught *that* when I was young? **tP**

# Dear Alky...



Dear Alky,

**I have been sober a little over six months and this is my first Thanksgiving in sobriety. I am worried about eating turkey this year. I hear that there is a chemical of some sort in it that causes one to fall asleep, like a drug. I feel stupid asking this, but I am too embarrassed to bring it up in a meeting, or even ask my sponsor about it. Is this chemical in turkey something that could constitute a slip?**

--Fearful feaster

Dear Fearful,

On the assumption that you are serious and not just pulling Alky's leg (or is that a drumstick??), I did a little amateur research on

tryptophan, the chemical to which you refer. Turns out that it is an essential amino acid, one the human body does not synthesize for itself, so it must be gotten in our food. The following is taken from the Wikipedia entry on tryptophan:

Tryptophan, found as a component of dietary protein, is particularly plentiful in chocolate, oats, bananas, dried dates, milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, red meat, eggs, fish, poultry, sesame, chickpeas, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, spirulina and peanuts. It is found in turkey at a level typical of poultry in general. . . . One widely held urban myth is that heavy consumption of turkey meat (as for example in a Thanksgiving feast) results in drowsiness and this effect has been attributed to high levels of tryptophan contained in turkey. While turkey does contain high levels of tryptophan, the amount is comparable to that contained

in most other meats. Furthermore post-prandial Thanksgiving sedation may have more to do with what is consumed along with the turkey, and in particular carbohydrates, rather than the turkey itself.

Anyway, while Alky realizes that lots of alcoholics in the Fellowship are very, *very* cautious about the ingredients in the things they eat and drink, I am going to go out on a limb here and tell you to *eat all the turkey you want!!* Really! And go nuts with the mashed potatoes, stuffing and gravy, too! Eat pie! Enjoy the heck out of your Thanksgiving feast. Remember to be grateful for the amazing gift of sobriety you are enjoying, and to pass on generously what is being shared with you.

And let me give you my patented secret for staying sober during holiday meals: *I don't drink.*

--Alky 



## PASSING IT ON, GOD'S WAY

by Tommy D.

After I shared my story at a meeting a few months back, a guy about to graduate from a residential treatment program contacted me and asked me to be his sponsor. He could relate to much of my story and thought I would be a good fit for him. I agreed and told him that we would meet the coming Sunday for a meeting and after for coffee.

After talking periodically on the phone, meeting two weeks at the Sunday meeting and talking after, we were ready to open the Big Book at the first page and walk through it together. At this point I became excited


about the possibility and felt the spirit of A.A. in a way I hadn't before.

The week prior to our first meeting to read the Big Book, it was as if I was studying for a Bar exam (the legal kind!). I read every bit of A.A. literature I could get my hands on. I listened to tapes. I meditated. I wanted to be of maximum service and I was willing to go to any lengths to do it.

Then, Sunday came and the sponsee didn't show. I haven't heard from him since.

A funny thing happened that day. As I waited outside the coffee shop for

the sponsee to show, a woman who was sitting beside me saw my Big Book and said, "Oh, I like that book very much also. I wish I opened it more." We proceeded to have a great talk about A.A.. She was sober but hadn't been to meetings in years. She was about to move and said I was a reminder to her to look for A.A. at her new home.

God put me there that Sunday and maybe not for the reasons I thought. My first sponsee did me and another fellow A.A. a great service that day. I pray for the best for him and hope to see him in the rooms again soon. 

## 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 ELEVEN

by Susie A.


***"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."***

How do we seek our Higher Power's will for us, and how do we know we've found it? This question was simpler to answer the first time I worked the steps than it is for me today. This seems paradoxical but not surprising. I've learned that the more I work the steps, the more my assumptions are challenged and the more my understanding evolves and deepens.

Conscious contact seemed easier in early sobriety when I conceptualized my Higher Power as many commonly do — as a venerable and distinctly paternal spirit, holding the staff of justice and keeping track of the many details of my life. I admit I spent a good deal of time trying to figure out what God must be thinking: "What is God's will for my life? Is this it? Is *this*? Why does God allow suffering? Does suffering mean I'm not living God's will? Does feeling good mean I am?"

Today, after many rounds of step work, I find that "God" is infinitely more mysterious than I had imagined — less bound by my limited concepts, more inclusive of all that is. Perhaps God is the energy and balance that flows through and holds all of existence, including me. Perhaps it is, in fact, a paternal or

maternal spirit. I'm okay with not knowing. Whatever it is, I know I tap into it here, now, in the present moment. By spending time fully present in my body, mind, and surroundings, I begin to see how truly interconnected we are. Acting in the world based on this understanding is as good a working definition of God's will as I can imagine today.

My daily leap of faith in working the Eleventh Step is to ask for God's will, then to live the life in front of me. This is easy to do when wonderful things converge and make life feel just right. It's much harder when awful things happen and life feels wrong. Most of the time the universe does not let us choose what will happen to us, or how we will feel. We lose what we think we need most. We love the wrong people. We get sick or die at the wrong time. These things just happen. We have the choice to let go of our fixed ideas of how things should be. We have the choice to be open to our full human experience as it reveals itself to us, and to not abandon what is sacred in ourselves. Looking back, I realize that this is the choice I made when I came into A.A., and this is the choice I make every time I work the Eleventh Step. 



## 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](mailto:chair@aasf.org)

#### VICE CHAIR

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#### TREASURER

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#### RECORDING SECRETARY

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#### SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

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



## TRADITION ELEVEN

by Nkechi E.

***“Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.”***

At the 49th International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (ICYPAA), I was blown away by young people's dedication to preserving A.A. and its steps and traditions. I loved hearing their ideas and interpretations. They reminded me what it was like to first catch a hold of this glorious program and discover the divine providence that has held it together since 1935.

The more days I put together the more I realize how fragile our individual sobriety is. I have seen A.A.s with long-term sobriety go out, and die. I have seen A.A.s go in and out of insanity while staying sober. I have also seen newcomers work this program through thick and thin as if their lives depend on it, which it does. I sincerely desire that our program stay around for life so that I and others can keep coming back one day at a time.

This thought, wanting A.A. to be around forever, brings me to Tradition Eleven, and the question: “Why have a public relations policy, and why have it based on attraction rather than promotion?” The short answer is to preserve A.A. as a whole. It is my experience that, while our individual sobriety may be fragile, our collective sobriety is not. A.A. goes on long after the individuals who make up A.A. decide to stay or leave. In these past 5 1/2 years I

have witnessed, experienced and finally come to understand how different we really are. Thus, it would be an incredible burden, as well as inaccurate and inappropriate, for any one A.A. to be identified as a representative to the public.

First, there is no way one person can represent the complexity, diversity and depth of the community and the process that we call A.A.. Also, the Eleventh Tradition of anonymity keeps public fascination with personalities from eclipsing the principles that are the heart of A.A.. Being identified in the public mind with A.A., as a kind of A.A. celebrity, could be of no practical or spiritual benefit to any individual A.A., and could be a hindrance in countless ways to him and to others. There are no reasons to make special exceptions regarding the traditions, which are a safeguard for preserving the fellowship as long as it exists, and for all the alcoholics, past, present and future, whose lives have, and will continue to, depend upon it.

Before going to the 49th ICYPAA this year I searched the web and website looking for the list of speakers. Alas, the Eleventh Tradition was being upheld. This information was not posted on the site. This prevented any of the speakers from being advertised as members of A.A. through

*(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.	Jeff B.
Ann & Denise	John T.
Andy T.	Judi C.
Barbara M.	Karen K.
Brent H.	Lisa M.
Brian H.	Liz & Aiden D.
Brian N.	Loran W.
Bruce D.	Mary F.
Callista S.	Marty C.
Caroline A.	Matt S.
Casey L.	Matt S.
Catherine S.	Michael W.
David H.	Nancie G.
David J.	Pat P.
David P.	Paul W.
Dennis & Lucy O.	Peg L.
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.

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## CONCEPT XI

by Bree L.

***“The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.”***

This concept assures that the long-time success of our General Service Board rests not only on the capabilities of the Trustees themselves, but also on the competent leadership and the harmonious association of those non-Trustee committee members, corporate service directors, executives and staff members who must actively carry on A.A.'s world service. Their quality and dedication, or lack of, will make or break our structure of service. Dependency upon them will always be of utmost importance.

It is proof positive that A.A. was conceived, birthed and raised to be a business, even though A.A. was not out to make money. This concept says that A.A. is a business and cannot be a slipshod improvisation pulled together at the whim of whoever's at the wheel. A.A. is in for the long haul, not a shot in the pan, so we need representation that is honorable and professional. The individuals taking these positions need to be competent and qualified because their presence will be continually visible and open to ongoing evaluation from those they represent.

There are five standing General Service Board Committees and two active service corporations—

The Nominating Committee makes sure that all vacancies remain filled and the best possible people are in place.

The Finance and Budgeting Committee insures that A.A. stays solvent and doesn't go broke or accumulate riches beyond its needs. Money and spirituality have to meld together so this calls for individuals with a financial background capable of the group's financial management. This includes budgeting and estimating future income. Neither the spend thrift or the miser are wanted.

The Public Information Committee calls for people that are knowledgeable in public relations. A.A. is traditionally conservative so the people on this committee need to reflect A.A.'s philosophy. A.A. is everywhere in our world today so a person on this committee needs a worldly viewpoint that can deal with many different peoples and cultures.

The Literature Committee is responsible for revising existing books and pamphlets and creating new literature as the need arises. This calls for someone who is not only a writer and editor, but someone creatively able to work within the philosophy of A.A..

(Continued on page 11)

# PRAYER AND MEDITATION

by Carol W.

Prayer and meditation bring the alcoholic closer to a power greater than us. Prayer works because we are communicating directly with the divine who has infinite power and not relying upon or forcing our will to get through. Prayer is useful for letting go of the situations, people, thoughts and things we cannot control.

At first I began praying for the willingness to be willing, to listen and to take suggestions. I prayed to have greater faith. My first prayers as a sober person were usually in the bathroom at my new job at the law firm I still work for.

My prayer life began with saying the *Serenity Prayer* or by praying to be guided to do the next right thing. Sometimes I would ask for assistance to get through the day. At the morning meeting I attended we would say the Third and Seventh Step prayers as a group. I memorized these and still use them when I am feeling hard on myself or without hope.

My prayers have evolved. I now say affirmations and visualize as a part of my prayers. An example is "My life unfolds exactly as it should. God is with me and insures my highest good". I often say "I give this up to

you". I don't always let go but it gets better little by little. "Thy will be done" is also helpful. I pray for the people I love to have their heart's desire and to find their ideal life and for me to allow others to be themselves.

Meditation is a useful tool because it helps us to detach from all of the mind chatter and to be present within our bodies. Meditation helps me to see reality and drop my denial.

Upon getting sober I began going to yoga often. I found it cleared my head and was meditative. I also am a potter and to focus on the clay and the shape of the vase, carving or whatever I was working on would calm my mind down. I call this type of meditation action meditation. The actions and attention on body or on art, as it is in my case, got me outside of my stinking thinking.

Yoga classes have put me in touch with spiritual people. A friend of mine taught me Raja meditation first. This, meditation is with the eyes open. It can be practiced at any time because it is not obvious that is what you are doing. It is focusing on your highest good and divine purpose. We had a lunchtime meditation in the financial district for about a year.

A dear A.A. friend of mine started a meeting where each week a speaker tells of their techniques for their meditation practice. I have learned many styles and it has opened my mind to new ways of seeing. One speaker talked of meditation as if your mind is the island and the thoughts are the ships that are docking on the shores coming and going. I have also heard a similar analogy that your thoughts are trains coming and going from the station.

I personally like to count to ten and focus on my breathing. When I get to ten I start over. I let thoughts pass without judgment. Someone at the morning meeting said that they see meditation as allowing the mind to relax and refresh so that it is more capable of being utilized on a higher plain when it is needed.

Meditation and prayer are a huge part of my life now. I do not miss a day. They are a nice complement to each other and bring about peace and serenity. **TP**



*(Tradition Eleven: continued from page 9)*

the worldwide web. Having a background in search engine optimization I know that this was purposeful. I am so delighted. Leave it to the young people of A.A. to add fresh and new meaning to that which might have been an "old-timer" only discussion. **TP**

*(Concept XI: continued from page 10)*

The General Policy Committee is viewed as the senior committee as it overlooks all the problems or projects which involve A.A. policy, public information or Tradition that arise out of the other committees or service corporations. This committee requires individuals of broad experience with a solid understanding of A.A. values.

The two active service corporations are A.A. World Services, Inc. (including the A.A. publishing division) and A.A. Grapevine Inc.

Concept XI stipulates a skilled foundation to guarantee A.A.'s longevity and continued usefulness in the world. **TP**

# GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS

AUGUST

2007

Name	Aug07	YTD	Name	Aug07	YTD	Name	Aug07	YTD
<b>Fellowship</b>			Monday Blues M 630pm		511	<b>SF Group Contributions</b>		
2900 Alcothon		389	Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm	792	792	515pm Smokeless W		332
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch		228	Monday Night Women's M 8pm		109	7am Grab Bag M 7am		55
Contribution Box	91	480	Monday Nooners M 12pm	240	420	7am Marina Dock		154
Deer Park Discovery Group		35	More Will Be Revealed F 12pm	136	214	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		199
Fellowship Contribution	204	213	Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm		200	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		58
Gay Newcomers Group	84	95	Newcomers Step M 730pm		484	830am Smokeless Th	263	285
IFB		498	Noon Discussion Th 12pm		1132	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	90	192
Marin Teleservice		947	Noon Hope F 12pm		288	A New Start F 830pm		617
Novato Fellowship Events Committee		149	Noon Tu 12pm	89	528	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		80
Unidentified Group		1004	Primary Purpose W 830pm	60	85	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		205
Western Roundup (Living Sober)	2249	2249	Quitting Time	150	250	AA Step Study Su 6pm	152	261
<b>Total Fellowship</b>	<b>\$2,629</b>	<b>\$6,287</b>	Refugee Th 12pm		260	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		129
			Reveille 7D 7pm		690	Afro American F 8pm		53
<b>Honors</b>			Rise N Shine Sun 10am		150	All Together Now Th 8pm		186
High Noon Friday 1215pm		80	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		95	Amazing Grace M 7pm		16
<b>Total Honors</b>		<b>\$80</b>	Serendipity Sa 11am		226	Any Lengths Sat 930am	163	885
			Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)		462	Artists & Writers F 630pm		252
<b>Marin Group Contributions</b>			Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		280	As Bill Sees It Sat 11am		84
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am		800	Sober & Serene F 7pm		375	As Bill Sees It Sat 8pm	85	151
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm		80	Spiritual Sun Men's Stag Su 830a	764	764	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		649
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	375	3033	Step Sisters (M.V.) Sun 7pm		100	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		12
Awakenings Sa 830am		35	Steps To The Solution W 715pm	44	176	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		147
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		785	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm		300	As We Understood Him Mon. 7pm		107
Beginner's Help Th 8pm		200	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		200	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm	97	248
Beginners W 7pm		350	Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm	50	176	Back to Basics W 8pm		62
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm	438	733	Survivors M 12pm		72	Be Still AA Su 1215pm		157
Bolinas Monday Nioght & Step Study		50	T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm	41	131	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm		70
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm	143	293	T.G.I.F. F 6pm	84	223	Bernal New Day 7D	309	1386
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		309	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm	550	1164	Big Book Basics F 8pm		272
Crossroads Sun 12pm		352	Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag Th 8pm		227	Big Book Beginners		60
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm		1083	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		83	Big Book Study Su 1130am	229	343
Fireside F 8pm Bolinas		76	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm		147	Birthday Meeting Sa 8pm		250
Freedom Finders F 830pm		1200	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		1059	Blue Book Special Su 11am		30
Friday Night Book F 830pm		250	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm	622	1177	Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		34
Girls Night Out W 815pm		75	Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		590	Bushwackers Sa 9am	55	55
Gratitude Tu 8pm	185	762	Tiburon Big Book Group W 730pm		155	Came To Believe Su 830am		143
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		485	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		445	Candlelight Meeting Th 10pm		63
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		1500	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		42	Show Of Shows W 8pm	1030	1371
High & Dry W 12pm		900	Twice Blessed W 730pm		33	Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm	31	115
Hillside Candlelight F 830pm		80	We, Us and Ours M 650pm		50	Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm		15
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		112	Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm		182	Code Blue Big Book Study	107	256
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am		105	What's It All About F 12pm		273	Common Welfare Th 8pm		115
Island Group Th 8pm		357	Women For Women W 12pm		97	Courtside Tu 1215pm		221
Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		108	Women on Monday M 7pm		54	Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm		469
Kids Welcome Group M 1130am	66	111	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		303	Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		61
Living in the Solution F 6pm	356	761	<b>Total Marin</b>	<b>\$5,474</b>	<b>\$31,582</b>	Design for Living Sat 8am		329
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		250				Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		940
Mill Valley 7D 7am	290	576				Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		183

# GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS, CON'T...

Name	Aug07	YTD	Name	Aug07	YTD	Name	Aug07	YTD
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		821	Live and Let Live Su 8pm		172	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		197
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		306	Living Sober W 8pm	160	160	Stepping Out Sat 6pm		24
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		418	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		259	Stonestown M 8pm	156	255
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		259	Luke's Group W 8pm	58	227	Straight Jackets Th 9am		191
Early Start F 6pm		713	Lush Lounge Sa 2pm	88	88	Su. Morn. Gay Men Su 930am	561	1315
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		361	Marina Discussion F 830pm		1045	Su. Night 3rd Step Group 5pm		257
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm		995	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		174	Su. Night Castro Spr Disc 8pm		368
Epiphany Group Th 8pm		60	Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		233	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		150
Eureka Step Tu 6pm		257	Men's Gentle Touch M 7pm		154	Sundown W 7pm		666
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm	1004	1684	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	241	1694	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step	131	131
Excelsior Free for All Sa 8pm		147	Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm	144	666	Sunset 11'ers F		45
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		252	Monday Beginners M 8pm		700	Sunset 11'ers M	50	100
Fell Street F 830pm	66	197	Monday Monday M 1215pm		213	Sunset 11'ers Su		148
Fell Street Step Su 8pm		127	New Clay M 2pm		27	Sunset 11'ers W		72
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		35	New Hope Big Book M 630pm		106	Sunset 9'ers F		222
Fireside Chat Tu 8pm	201	546	New Life W 7pm		369	Sunset 9'ers M		194
First Place	45	45	Newcomers Tu 8pm		385	Sunset 9'ers Sa		297
Fogwatch Tu 7pm		23	No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm		32	Sunset 9'ers Su		432
Founders' Group Sa 5pm		20	No Reservation M 12pm		605	Sunset 9'ers Th		129
Friday All Groups F 830pm		1564	No Whiners F 7pm	60	60	Sunset 9'ers W		128
Friday Knights Th 730am		36	Noon Smokeless F 12pm	42	118	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		360
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		140	Noon Smokeless M 12pm	15	15	Sunset Speaker Step		441
Friday Night Special F 8pm		20	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		10	Sutter St. Beginners Sat 6pm		84
Friday Noon F 12pm		68	One Liners Th 830pm		484	Ten Years After Su 6pm	174	1162
Friday Reflections		20	Park Presidio M 830pm	60	120	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am		42
Friday Smokeless F 830pm		294	Pax West M 12pm	359	359	The Drive Thru W 1215pm		588
Friendly Circle Su 715pm		912	Pax West Th 12pm	286	1124	The Parent Trap M 1230pm	108	451
Getting Fit at One O'Clock Tu 1pm	29	29	Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm	81	81	The Pepper Group F 12pm		60
Gold Mine Group M 8pm	38	38	Pure & Simple Su 6pm		274	Thought For The Day F 730am		36
Goodlands Su 2pm	132	168	Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women		26	Th. Night Women's		152
Greenhouse Meditation		82	Reality Farm Th 830pm		128	Too Early Sat 8am	300	2370
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm		884	Rebound W 830pm	90	275	Transrecovery F 630pm		18
Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm		80	Red Road Healing Circle Th 6pm	70	70	Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm		180
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm		11	Rodeo Drive Birthday Cake Style F 10pm		31	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		378
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm		338	Room to Grow F 8pm		114	Tu. Step Meeting 130pm		2
High Noon Friday 1215pm		518	Rose Garden Big Book Th 1205pm		84	Tu. Daily Reflections 7am	205	205
High Noon Monday 1215pm		537	Rule 62 W 10pm	363	888	12Steps to Happiness F 730pm		195
High Noon Saturday 1215pm	163	366	S.F. Bermuda Tri. Birthday Cake F 10pm		167	Unidentified Group		171
High Noon Thursday 1215pm	409	731	Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm		148	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm		977
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	65	767	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		392	Walk of Shame W 8pm		409
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	63	440	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		794	Washington Square M 7pm		171
High Sobriety M 8pm	326	892	Seacliff Th 830pm		197	Waterfront Sun 8pm	433	783
High Steppers W 7pm		135	Second Chance Th 215pm		105	We Care Tu 12pm		124
Hilldwellers M 8pm		397	Serenity House		600	Wednesday Women's Big Book W 615pm		180
Home Group Sat 830pm		127	Serenity House Sat 830pm	300	600	West Portal W 830pm		234
How It Works Sat 2pm		37	Serenity Seekers M 730pm		57	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm		175
Huntington Square W 630pm		751	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		414	Women Living Sober Sa 10am	60	60
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		1100	SFPOA Th 7pm		275	Women Who Drank Too Much Tu 615pm		25
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		86	Sinbar Su 830pm		78	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		644
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		549	Sisters Circle Su 6pm		215	Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm		148
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		118	Sisters In Sober M 7pm (SF)		4	Women's Promises F 7pm		50
Last Call Su 10pm		241	Sober Across Board M-Sa	15	275	Work In Progress Sat 7pm	39	107
Let It Be Now F 6pm		155	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		332	YAHOO Step Sa 11am	36	142
Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm		79	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		90	<b>Total SF Contributions</b>	<b>\$9,910</b>	<b>\$66,042</b>
Like A Prayer Su 4pm		98	Sought to Improve Th 730pm	72	72	<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$18,013</b>	<b>\$85,979</b>
Lincoln Park Sat 830pm		174	Step Talk Su 830am		612			

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

from Lindell B.

Editor:

In support of the “Living Sober with HIV” meeting as well as other meetings that indicate a secondary focus, I am addressing the key questions asked in *The Point’s* article *What’s in a Name?*

I am one of the people who created the “Living Sober with HIV” meeting approximately 20 years ago, so I have first-hand knowledge of the evolution of this meeting and can speak for its validity as an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting of long-standing. I also feel that this meeting can serve as a benchmark for evaluating other meetings that indicate any kind of secondary focus.

“The Living Sober with HIV” meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous passes the test for all the questions asked in *What’s in a Name?*, indicating that it is a full-fledged, undiluted, A.A. meeting open to all those who have a desire to stop drinking – which is the core of the Third Tradition.

*Question:* Does the group accept all alcoholics regardless of focus?

*Answer:* Yes. The secretary’s scripted opening statement says, “This is the “Living Sober with HIV” meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, specially focused for people with AIDS and HIV; however, you need not be HIV positive to participate.”

*Question:* What does the group do when a newcomer shows up not fitting the description?

*Answer:* The issue rarely arises, but no one has ever been turned away. While 80 to 90% of those attending the meeting tend to be HIV positive, some are not. In fact, in past years,

the secretary of the meeting has sometimes not been HIV positive, just an alcoholic with friends and family who are HIV positive. Occasionally, someone new to the meeting will ask other members if it’s ok to come to this meeting even if they are not HIV positive. All members, without hesitation, say “yes” and greet them warmly.

*Question:* Is the primary purpose to carry the message to the alcoholic, regardless of any other designated topic or focus?


*Answer:* Absolutely. The meeting is for all alcoholics. Its primary purpose is to help other alcoholics overcome their alcoholism.

*Question:* Does the group promise or suggest that the Twelve Steps applied to another area will bring recovery in that area?

*Answer:* No. It has never been suggested that the Twelve Steps will cure anyone of HIV.

In summary, it is crucial to remember that the overarching goal of Alcoholics Anonymous is to reach as many alcoholics as possible, not by excluding those who don’t fit a particular secondary focus of a meeting but by including those who might be afraid to attend or speak freely in a “mainstream” meeting. All kinds of meetings have been created to help more people feel welcome in A.A. and to help them feel comfortable sharing in meetings. These meetings, of long-standing, include women’s meetings, men’s meetings, African-American meetings, young people’s meetings, old-timers’ meetings, and Gay meetings.

All that being said, my home meeting is an utterly mainstream, small neighborhood meeting. I think I’m a good example of the power of secondary focus meetings and that they bring more people into the A.A. community as a whole.

Secondary focus meetings are A.A. meetings as long as the primary focus is to help alcoholics with their alcoholism. Any secondary focus should widen the A.A. tent, extending the hand of A.A. as far as possible. 

## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The above letter to the left was submitted by an interested reader in response to an article from a previous issue on the appropriateness of “dual-purpose” group names and themes for A.A. meetings.

This subject has generated quite a bit of discussion in the Fellowship, and has been raised for a group conscience at the Intercounty Fellowship Board.

To help clarify the issue (we hope!) we have reprinted below a message from A.A. World Services in New York regarding this subject. We especially draw your attention to the definitions of “special interest” and “dual purpose” meetings. This has always been the root of the concern regarding meeting names:

*A “group’s request to be listed in your office’s meeting directory is, of course, a matter to be decided by the group conscience of the Central*



# ON SHARING

by Ted R.

"They had changed from A.A. members to A.A. show-offs. Our growth made it plain that we couldn't be a secret society, but it was equally plain that we couldn't be a vaudeville circuit, either." (Vaudeville: a light often comic theatrical piece frequently combining pantomime, dialogue, dancing, and song).

While doing a study of Tradition Twelve, on my own, these lines from the text of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* jumped out at me. Have I become an A.A. show-off? Or am I exaggerating my nuisance value, as—my sponsor points out—I am prone to do. I do not know what the appropriate amount of sharing is. I seem to be sharing at meetings once or twice a week. I have now been asked to speak at a few conventions, which is very difficult. I say yes when asked. (Did I insist I was the pursued and thus absolve myself?)

At times I enjoy the attention and the experience of sharing my story at group level. I have the ability not to take myself too seriously. I laugh at myself and my thinking while drinking and while sober. Sharing places me in a position to be known. As a result, men ask me to sponsor them. I heard the statement somewhere, "the goal is to be well known in an anonymous program." That is a positive result of sharing so much. On the

*"At times I enjoy the attention and the experience of sharing my story at group level"*


down side, I begin to think that it is my job to entertain. Has my sharing become a light comic theatrical dialogue, thus the vaudeville circuit fear? I am my worst critic. An inventory of self can be an exercise in self centeredness.

What does the Step Twelve reading say about speaking at A.A. meetings? "If our turn comes to speak at a meeting, we again try to carry A.A.'s message".

Sharing has been a challenge for me from day one. I attended meetings for years without speaking. It was my sponsor that insisted I share at group level and accept requests to share my story. He even accepted requests on my behalf to get me out in front of groups. Walking through so much fear, at times I thought I would pass out from the experience. Sweating like I had stepped out of a shower, mouth so dry I could not speak, blank spots, and jumbled sentences that made no sense, all a result of incredible fear. I lived through it.

In Step Seven, the *Twelve and Twelve* states: "For us, the process of gaining a new perspective was unbelievably painful. It was only by repeated humiliations that we were forced to learn something about humility". I had to get over the voices in my head, telling me that I had nothing to share. I was coached by my sponsor to tell the truth and not edit my share. We each have a story to tell. The goal was to enable the new person to identify and feel hope that they are not alone. As my friend Ginny P. says, the five most important words the new person can hear, "we know how you feel."

The gifts of sharing are humility, connectedness to A.A. and self esteem. The pitfalls, fear of being ego driven and self obsessed. The danger, becoming an A.A. show-off. This brief reflection ends as they all do. Asking God to take away my fear, directing my attention to what God would have me be. Not do, my sponsor pointed out when I was over "doing" Accepting that even the A.A. show-off, vaudeville comic player has a role to play in God's world.


"The Lord has been so wonderful to me, curing me of this terrible disease that I just want to keep telling people about it". (From the story "Anonymous Number Three", Third edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*). 

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*(Letter to the Editor: continued from page 14)*  
Office. Regarding the directories for the U.S. and Canada, published and maintained by G.S.O., the General Service Conference has asked that in keeping with A.A.'s Fifth Tradition that "dual purpose" or "double trouble" groups not be listed.

*"The question asked at times is 'What's the difference between so-called dual purpose groups and special interest groups?' In our experience, groups for men, women, gays, etc. maintain a primary purpose of carrying A.A.'s message to the still-suffering alcoholic. With dual*

*purpose groups, the focus is on two or more separate and distinct illnesses."*

We are grateful to all who have responded and always welcome letters from interested readers. 

# IFB MEETING SUMMARY — OCTOBER 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	Jenifer W.	Like A Prayer	P	Patti M.	Bernal New Day	A**
Amy B.	Tuesday Chip	R	Jim H.	Friendly Circle Beginners	R	Patty M.	Huntington Square	P
Andy T.	Waterfront	P	Joan T.	They Stopped In Time	A**	Rebecca D.	Valencia Smokefree	A
Anil K.	Tiburon Monday Mens Stag	P	John G.	Each Day A New Beginning	P	Rich D.	Eureka Step	P
Anthony J.	Serenity Seekers	A	Judy S.	Diamond Heights Group	P	Richard C.	Surf Group	A
Armando R.	Home Group	P	Karen A.	West Portal	P	Richard R.	We Care	A
Brad P.	Code Blue	P	Karin K.	24 Hour Plan	P	Rick K.	Join the Tribe	P
Brian C.	Hit It & Quit It	P	Ken J.	High Sobriety	P	Roger C.	Early Start	A
Bruce K.	Sunset Speaker Step	P	Larry B.	Castro Discussion	P	Ron M.	Live & Let Live	P
Carol E.	Happy Hour	P	Liz C.	Mill Valley Speaker	A**	Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sat.	P
Casey L.	Sunday Corte Madera	P	Mark W.	Living Sober with Hepatitis C	A**	Shawn M.	Regroup	A
Chuck K.	Ten Years After	P	Matthew D.	Too Early	P	Steve N.	Terra Linda Group	P
Dana R.	Saturday Sunset 9'ers	P	Matt T.	Fairfax Friday Night	P	Tedra M.	Come N Get It	A
David A.	Goldmine Group	A	Maury P.	Central Office Manager	A	Thomas H.	Any Lengths	P
David D.	Keep it Simple	P	Michael L.	Attitude Adjustment	R	Tom K.	High Noon (Monday)	P
Derek D.	Reality Farm	P	Michael P.	Sunset 9'ers Su 8am	P	Tracy F.	Keep Coming Back	P
Edward H.	High Noon	A	Michael P.	Fri Morning 12 Steppers	A	Tracy G.	Wits End	P
Elizabeth B.	Sober 5150's	A	Nancy I.	First Place	R	Victor V.	Creative Alcoholics	P
Erica R.	Miracles on 24th St.	P	Nicholas L.	Some Are Sicker Than...	P	Virginia M.	Women Who Drank	P
Jamie G.	Fireside Chat	P	Olive G.	Steppin Up	P		Too Much	
Jaime G.	Sesame Step	P	Patrick M.	Treasurer	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

Matt T. Sunday Night Friendship  
 Kate E. 7AM Attitude Adjustment  
 Richard P. Friendly Circle Beginners  
 Bertell N. Marina Discussion  
 Joshua C. Goodlands  
 Julio B. Blue Book Special

Pete R. Artists and Writers  
 Nathan M. Saturday Easy Does It  
 Stu S. Tuesday Newcomers  
 Dan S. Tuesday Chip  
 Christopher R. 7AM Mill Valley Log Cabin

## Liaisons Present

Kevin S. Marin Teleservice  
 Ray M. District 05  
 Karen S. District 06

Following in an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the October 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 about attending Unity Day in Marin, encouraged committee chairpersons to

attend the New Rep Orientation held before every IFB meeting to inform them about service opportunities, discussed the email that was sent out to the Reps about the Traditions and Concepts and the naming of meetings, and reminded the Reps about the Spirit of San Francisco conference on Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> and the SF Unity Day on Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>. He asked that a motion be made to allocate \$400 to assist with costs incurred by the Unity Day committee. A motion was made, seconded and passed with only one abstention. The abstaining Rep

asked for an explanation of the costs. After discussion, there was no motion to revoke on the subject. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Patrick M gave the report. Y-T-D Net Income through August 31, 2007 was \$20,938, which is \$23,724 better than budget. Total checking and savings account balances were \$193,491 as of the end of August, of which \$59,941 is unrestricted cash and \$133,550 is restricted cash. Unrestricted cash is enough to cover just over 3 months of operating

expenses. This is above and beyond the 6 months of operating expenses covered by the Prudent Reserve (part of restricted cash).

**Central Office Manager's Report:** No report. Maury P. is at a seminar for Central Office Managers in Oklahoma City.

**Central Office Committee Report:** The COC report was given by Derek D. He informed the Reps of the highlights of the COC annual retreat, including the ways the COC discussed how to better serve the IFB and of attracting more members to the IFB. Additionally, he reviewed the COC discussion regarding the analysis of literature sales and pricing, how the COC is trying to manage the savings, money market and CD accounts, what the COC goals are for following year, and discussion about the SF Unity Day coming up on Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Report on Group Names:** Further discussion on the subject occurred. Before discussion went too far, a motion was made, seconded and passed with 4 abstentions to amend the Agenda and have the report by the ad hoc committee researching the subject be presented at this point in the meeting. The abstentions expressed were: the discussion shouldn't be rushed in light of the concept of "group conscience, and that "this topic has been beaten to death". There was no motion to revoke on the motion, and the original motion was passed. John gave the committee's report which proposed that Central Office guidelines/policy be established and recorded, and the committee is focusing on what that policy might include. Rep comments included:

- One Rep reported that her group felt that the Living Sober With Hepatitis C was a legitimate "special interest" group. A member of her group had gone to that meeting, and even though she does not have hepatitis C, she felt very comfortable with the group being an AA meeting with sobriety as its primary purpose.

- One Rep asked how long this discussion will go on.

- One Rep reported that her group had expressed its feeling that this is heading toward issues of censorship and control, violating the tradition of group autonomy.

- The current Central Office policy was discussed.

A motion was made to resolve the issue at the December IFB meeting. There was not a second to the motion. A second motion was made, seconded and unanimous to table a vote on this, pending clarification of the issue and clearer ideas as to how to proceed.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**12th Step Committee:** Shawn gave the report on the 12 Step Workshops and the Sunshine Club. They will have a table at Unity Day.

**Access Committee:** Virginia gave the report. Originally \$640 was budgeted for ASL interpreters for SF Unity Day. She asked for that to be increased. A motion was made to double the budget to \$1280 to allow for more than one ASL interpreter. Virginia answered questions asking for clarification of the expense. The motion was seconded. The motion was passed unanimously. No abstentions. The IFB Reps will be asked to vote on the motion that all events advertising in *The Point* or having flyers available at Central Office indicate on their announcement the event location's wheelchair accessibility or lack thereof as a requirement of being announced in *The Point*, the website or in flyers distributed at Central Office.

**Archives Committee:** Bruce K. reported on the committee. They could use help processing and preserving the historical material the committee receives.

**Special Events Committee:** No report.

**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:** The committee would like to include more women to work on the newsletter.

**Trusted Servants Workshop Committee:** Patty M. reported on the workshop held on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>. No workshops are currently scheduled for the fall and winter, but the committee is willing to host more workshops when requested.

**Website Committee:** Michael P. gave the report. The committee is working on making the website more readable for people with limited vision. They are also working to post event information, AA "news", and interesting archive materials on the site.

**Outreach Committee:** Scott N. gave the report for Jaime. There was no meeting this past month. Unity Day will be a great opportunity for the committee to make contact with the various groups in SF.

#### **Special Committee Reports:**

**Teleservice:** Dana gave the report for Judi C. There are many openings on the regular roster for shifts to answer the AA phone line during the hours that Central Office is closed. **PI/CPC:** Bruce K. reported on the work of the committee with the professional community in DUI classes, providing speakers in the schools, outreach to the homeless, and in hosting speaker workshops.

**Open discussion forum with Committee Chairs and Signup:** Committee chairs were asked to stand and 10 minutes was allowed for IFB Reps talk to the chairs about service on their committees.

#### **IFB Liaison Reports:**

**GSO:** Karen S. reported on the final Area Assembly for 2007 in Santa Cruz on Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>.

This will be an area "inventory" assembly. All are welcome. There is information on the [aasf.org](http://aasf.org) website.

**Teleservice, Marin:** Kent S. gave the report. The new website is set-up. They are currently working on some issues of anonymity with it.

**Bridging the Gap:** Robert gave the report. The CNCA 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bridging the Gap forum will be on Saturday, Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> in Rutherford, CA. Contact: [btcgchair@cnca06.org](mailto:btcgchair@cnca06.org) for more information, or call Central Office.

**Spirit of San Francisco:** The conference is Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>. The IFB will have a table at the event.

**Living Sober:** Alejandro D. reported that the dates for the conference in 2008 will be July 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>.

**Group Rep Reports:** None

The 7th Tradition was observed. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Unanimously passed, and the meeting ended at 8:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken J, Secretary 

# A.S.A.P— ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER

by Penelope

At one point in my life I stopped praying. I decided there was no God, other than me. The decision came one day when I was really loaded. I'd read this book about magic that said God is what man has created to explain his own powers. That settled in great with me, so I stopped praying.

I was raised a Christian but that didn't seem to work so I gave that up. I didn't want any part of it. I only prayed in times of desperation for material things. When I got sober I had a real problem with the Steps and the word "God". I explored different religions. I went to a Hindu Hari Krishna temple for a couple years and really loved it. I appreciated the food, the celebrations and the chanting. I didn't get into the teachings, but did hang with the rituals without looking at the meaning of all their prayers. I checked out a Buddhist gathering. That was OK. Then I got into Pagan, Wiccan rituals. That was fun. I enjoyed the rites which were often held in a park or near the water. There was a lot of spiritual dancing and they were very accepting of children. Then I came back to Christianity at Glide church. That was very spiritual and uplifting. Today I don't have any particular belief. I go to meetings and work the steps.

*"My prayers have developed through the years and today I have a set of prayers I say every morning with my morning meditation"*

When I first came into the program I learned the Serenity Prayer. It was new to me. I had to learn it and really didn't understand the meaning, but said it anyways. That was my first prayer. Along with that I read page 449 (*Alcoholics Anonymous* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) on acceptance every day. It helped me get through that long first year of sobriety.


My prayers have developed through the years and today I have a set of prayers I say every morning with my morning meditation. The prayer I begin with is, "God please give me guidance, extra strength, patience, kindness, tolerance, love, acceptance and understanding and willingness. Help me to be helpful and joyful. God bless (here I name my sick friends, family, sponsees, sponsors, and those

I have resentments toward). Please give them health, happiness and prosperity and everything I want for myself."

Then I say the Eleventh Step prayer, the Third Step prayer, and the Seventh Step prayer.

During the day I'll say the Third Step prayer. If I need to turn something over I'll say, "Thy will not mine be done." I'll often say, "God take away my fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be." That's the short version to deal with my fears as my fears seem to come up a lot.

The other thing is that at work my workload is never ending, never complete and I never get caught up. God just helps me focus on what I need to do next. I'd classify myself as a civil servant and sometimes my work can be overwhelming in that I don't know what to do first. I'll ask God to help me prioritize things and keep me from going crazy.

A big part is remembering to pray. I don't have an individual God or a specific religion, but just know that it works and the rest doesn't matter. The thing is to pray and I do get results. 

## 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](http://www.aasf.org).

# Financial Statement

## August 2007

	Aug 07	Jan - Aug 07		Aug 07	Jan - Aug 07
Ordinary Income/Expense					
Income					
Contributions from Groups			Paper Purchased	0.00	1,492.86
Group Contributions	17,949.74	103,297.79	Software Purchased	0.00	100.75
Honors	63.00	391.00	Shipping	52.28	498.78
Total Contributions from Groups	18,012.74	103,688.79	Printing	0.00	840.88
Contributions from Individuals			Equipment Lease	1,930.51	5,505.63
Individual - Unrestricted	520.00	17,602.06	Repair & Maintenance	274.23	1,806.15
Faithful Fiver	680.00	6,039.00	Security System	33.50	333.00
Honorary Contributions	71.87	1,722.87	Special Events	0.00	1,892.96
Total Contributions from Individuals	1,271.87	25,363.93	Telephone	266.70	2,121.13
Gratitude Month			Phone Book Listings	79.00	632.00
Gratitude Month - Groups	0.00	3,284.98	Utilities	184.94	1,375.43
Total Gratitude Month	0.00	3,284.98	Travel	0.00	408.10
Sales - Bookstore	11,406.97	78,639.92	Training	0.00	58.20
Special Event Income	612.00	1,535.64	Bad Checks	-160.32	258.60
Newsletter Subscript.	66.36	914.29	Miscellaneous Expense	0.00	149.91
Total Income	31,369.94	213,427.55	Total Expense	17,961.78	142,588.90
Cost of Goods Sold			Net Ordinary Income	5,690.67	17,911.00
Cost of Books Sold	7,477.28	51,365.06	Other Income/Expense		
Credit Card Processing Fees	240.21	1,562.59	Other Income		
Total COGS	7,717.49	52,927.65	Interest Income	79.95	3,999.50
Gross Profit	23,652.45	160,499.90	Total Other Income	79.95	3,999.50
Expense			Other Expense		
Employee Expenses			Depreciation Expense	75.67	605.36
Wages & Salaries	8,715.84	69,484.98	Amortization Expense	45.91	367.28
Employer Tax Expenses	709.46	6,642.95	Total Other Expense	121.58	972.64
Health Benefits	1,211.22	8,483.88	Net Other Income	-41.63	3,026.86
Total Employee Expenses	10,636.52	84,611.81	Net Income	5,649.04	20,937.86
Professional Fees					
Computer Consulting	412.50	1,862.50			
Total Professional Fees	412.50	1,862.50			
Bank Charges	20.00	32.50			
Postage					
Bulk Mail	0.00	400.00			
Postage - Other	128.10	463.10			
Total Postage	128.10	863.10			
Rent - Office	3,987.10	31,896.80			
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	74.99	883.12			
Office Supplies	41.73	1,216.50			

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