

THE LAMP STORY

by Leslie and Bree

Once upon a time there was an alcoholic lamp, totally on its own and completely powerless. It was on Step One.

The lamp searched for a plug, a source of power. A sponsor came along and asked the lamp if it was willing to believe there was such a source beyond the lamp's brain and willpower? The sponsor said, "You can call it God or Goddess or Tao or Higher Power (HP). It does not matter. Are you willing to believe in a Power greater than yourself?"

"I do not want to actually believe in anything but I am willing to act as if," said the lamp.

"Good," said the sponsor, "you've done Step Two."

"Step Three," the sponsor continued,

"says we make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of that Higher Power or God as we understand Him."

That sounded pretty impossible but the sponsor continued, "Step Three is merely a decision to do step four through twelve. That is how you turn your will and your life over to the care of a Higher Power. So are you ready to give Step Four a shot?"

"Sure," the lamp replied and they said the Third Step prayer together.

Surprisingly the lamp began to feel a bit of juice from that mysterious HP outlet and a little bit of light began to glow in its life.

"Now we've made it to Step Four," the sponsor said. "I want you to look carefully around this room where you've been living for these many years. Step Four is simply making a list on paper of everything you find

(Continued on page 6)



monthly calendar

Events, Highlights and Happenings

december 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3 <u>FIRST MON</u> Access Committee, Central Office; 5:30pm	4	5 <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)	6	7	8
9 Living Sober General Planning Meeting 1668 Bush, SF, 5 pm	10 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/ Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office, 7 pm	11 <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	12 <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, 7 pm	13 <u>SECOND THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office, 6:00 pm	14	15
16 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee, Central Office, 2 pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	17 <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael, District Meeting: 8 pm	18 <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee, Central Office; 6pm Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 7:30 pm San Mateo General Service, St. Andrews Church, 7:30 pm	19 <u>THIRD WED</u> Website Committee, Central Office; 6:30pm	20	21	22 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma; Business Meeting: 12:30 pm
23 30	<p>Central Office will be closed on Dec. 24 & 25, 2007, and Dec. 31, 2007 & Jan. 1, 2008 Happy Holidays!</p>		26	27 <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Committee Meeting: 8 pm	28	29

From the Editor

Welcome to the December issue of *The Point* and Happy Holidays! May they be joyous and free, too! We offer a couple of very nice "stories" this month and hope to encourage widespread sugar plums dancing in your head! Anything's better than those ol' chipmunks carrying on like a committee of one.

The Lamp, our cover story, is a beautiful piece full of light and warmth; just perfect for the holiday season. We also bring you a tawdry tale of woe of our good friend, Rudolph, who finally made it into rehab after all these years of walking around with a very red nose. Let's give him a rousing round of applause next time we see him at a meeting. I'm sure he'll be introducing himself as a newcomer - much to the joy of Santa and Mrs. Claus (not to mention the other reindeer).

Thanks to all who contributed during Gratitude Month and helped support

our hard working Central Office. Your generosity is very much appreciated.

We've also published a Central Office Wish List insert to be distributed at meetings. These are things that Central Office needs to continue to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic and to bring you quality service, as well. We hope you will remember them for the holidays and remember too.... it's your Central Office!

Look for new features and new fun for 2008 in upcoming issues of *The Point*. We also welcome contributions in the form of letters and feature articles. Thanks to all who have been so generous with their time over the past year. Thanks too, to all the committee members who make this publication possible.

Happy, Joyous and Free Holidays everyone!

The Editor 



SAGITTARIUS: NOV. 23-DEC.22

It's the fourth year in a row you've been selected to be in charge of the office holiday party. Your foresight, good judgment, strong will and organization is as asset to all who come into contact with you this month. But remember - just because you've thought it through 1000 times, doesn't mean that your way is *the* way. And, strange as it may seem, sometimes the best thing to say is... absolutely nothing.

It's that time of year again, my crafty centaur. Your motor is going at full throttle and you're pushing harder for

those changes you've been telling your sponsor you were going to make all year. Step back and look with objectivity, let go, and you'll be in for a much gentler ride. Your best friend from rehab doesn't care that you have five sponsees when she has only four.

It's not an easy month for clumsy Sagittarius. Between holiday parties, shopping and the many new faces at meetings, carrying the message can also pose some difficulties. Sober Sagittarius can't bear to see suffering and will not begrudge time or money


the
Point

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in trying to help relieve it in others. Your labor is always one of the heart, but remember – sometimes you're rewarded with ingratitude.

Get to the gym to relieve some holiday tension but stay clear of the contact sports. You're an accident waiting to happen. Watch the demands, keep the anger in check, and you'll fare just fine. Your Mom doesn't need to know that her new sweater is hideous and looking a little snug. Tact is your friend. Remember, God is in the details, not the trifles. 



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 (WAY) OFF 24TH ST. Church, 100 Diamond St./ 18th St. (Remove WH, was Miracles Off 24th St.)
 Fri 3:30pm Cathedral Hill FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT 1111 O'Farrell St./ Franklin (was 3pm)

No Longer Meeting:

Sun 7:30pm Hayes Valley PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES SF Alano Club, 1748 Market 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— OCTOBER 2007

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

San Francisco

8:30PM Smokeless Thu. 8:30pm; **A is for Alcohol** Tue. 6pm; **Bernal Big Book** Sat. 5pm; **Big Book Basics** Fri. 8pm; **Big Book Study** Sun. 11:30am; **Birthday Meeting** Sat. 7:30pm; **Cow Hollow Men's Group** Wed. 8pm; **How it Works** Sat. 2pm; **Huntington Square** Wed. 6:30pm; **K.I.S.S.** Mon. 6pm; **Lush Lounge** Sat. 2pm; **Monday at a Time** Mon. 1pm; **Monday Monday** Mon. 12:15pm; **Red Road Healing Circle** Thu. 5:45pm; **Spiritually Founded Program of Action (S.F.P.O.A.)** Thu. 7pm; **Stepping Up** Tue. 6:30pm; **Valencia Smokefree** Fri. 6pm; **Washington Square** Mon. 7pm

Marin

Experience, Strength & Hope Sat. 6pm; **Fairfax 12 & 12** Tue. 7:30pm; **Fairfax Friday Night** Fri. 8:30pm; **More Will Be Revealed** Fri. 12pm; **Quitting Time** Wed. 5:30pm; **Serendipity** Sat. 11am; **Sunday Express** Sun. 6pm; **Tiburon Haven** Sun. 12noon; **Tuesday Twelve Step** Tue. 6:30pm

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Silas P.
Ken M.

ANNIVERSARIES

Island Group: Frances L. 45 years, Jane H. 30 years, Ocala, FL: Barbara W. 27 years, Artists & Writers: Peg L. 26 years, Too Early: Jodie S. 25 years, Marin: Terry H. 28 years, Jack W. 25 years, High Noon: Tobey 16 years, Wayne 13 years, Ignacio 12 years, Diane 10 years, Diann 10 years, Randy 7 years, Karen M. 5 years, Bernie 5 years, Dahlia 5 years, Eric P. 4 years, Kevin 2 years, Dan 2 years, Boris 1 year, Greg 1 year

COMING UP

mark your calendar



AA ALCOTHON

2900 24th Street @ Florida, San Francisco

Holiday Alcolthon & New Years 2007 Alcolthon

Dates to be announced

Flyers will be available at Central Office
For more information or to do service contact
2007alcolthon@sbcglobal.net

**AA Meetings on the even hour from
6am until Midnight** (Door closes at midnight)

*Special New Years Eve Meeting midnight until
2am (Door closes @ 2am)*

BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

12/02 Speaker: Kathleen C. From: Mon. Mt. Hilldwellers
12/09 Speaker: Jerry M. From: Saturday Easy Does It
12/16 Meeting Cancelled
12/23 Speaker: Clayton B. From: After Work Group
12/30 Speaker: Kathy P. From: Too Early

TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

12/04 Speaker: Melanie J. From: S.F.P.O.A.
12/11 Speaker: Lord H. From: Wednesday High Noon
12/18 Speaker: Tonus A. From: S.F.P.O.A.
12/25 Speaker: No Meeting!! From: Happy Holidays!!!!

FRIDAY NIGHT ALL GROUPS

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

12/07 Host Group: TBA Speaker: Jim M. From: Stepping Up
12/14 Host Group: Park Presidio Speaker: Francisco A. From: Spanish Speaking, Santa Cruz
12/21 Host Group: TBA Speaker: Yvonne D. From: Big Book Basics
12/28 Host Group: Keep Coming Back Speaker: Ben W. From: Edmond, Oregon

**Celebrate the Holiday Season
and support Living Sober!**

New Years Eve Dance!

Monday, December 31st
7:30 PM - AA ALANON MEETING
9:00 PM - DANCE
Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy
4235 19th Street @ Collingwood
\$15 Suggested Donation
or give what you can.

and don't miss the
Holiday

Rummage Sale

Most Holy Redeemer
Diamond & 18th Streets
December 1, 2007
10 AM - 3 PM

Proceeds support the
conference held in
San Francisco
July 4 - 6 2008

To arrange ASL or special needs, contact us directly
at least 72 hours in advance.
www.livingsober.org / 415.978.2478

Ring In The New Year Roaring 20's Style

The Spirit of San Francisco

Presents

Annual NYE Dance and AA Speaker Meeting

Monday, December 31, 2007

Speaker Debbie D. from Concord

8:00 - 9:00 pm AA Speaker Meeting

9:30 pm Dance with Hosted Appetizers

Tickets:

\$15.00 In Advance, \$20.00 at the Door

FOR TICKET INFORMATION CALL 415-515-9637

or email info@spirit-sf.org

The Janet Pomeroy Center

207 Skyline Blvd

Between the SF Zoo and Lake Merced

The Spirit of San Francisco 16th Annual

AA Convention with Al-Anon Participation

October 10 - 12, 2008

Holiday Inn Golden Gateway ~ 1500 Van Ness

Stay tuned for more Info at www.spirit-sf.org

(The Lamp Story: continued from page 1)

in your dirty room, all the resentments, all the fears, all the shames.” The sponsor added, “This room is in your heart,” and tapped her chest.

With the small bit of light that came through in Step Three, the lamp began looking around the house of its heart using that little sliver of light. It saw heaps of resentment in one corner, dust piles of fear under an enormously bulging carpet and laundry loads of shame and guilt in another corner. This all went down on paper. The lamp saw how it was responsible for most of the mess. That was Step Four.

Now, the sponsor instructed, we are going to sit together for a time and I want you to tell me what is on that list. This is Step Five. Then we’ll talk about it utilizing our Higher Power’s knowledge. The lamp read the list and the sponsor listened, sometimes sharing insights that offered clarity to the lamp. When they were done the light inside the lamp felt brighter than ever. The sponsor then asked, “Are you now willing to clean up your house where you live?”

“You bet!” the lamp said.

“Then you’ve completed Step Six,” the sponsor answered. “Let’s ask your HP to help. We don’t have all that power ourselves, remember? But that’s okay, because we are built to plug into that power.”

“Now that you’ve been lit from within as a result of working the steps, you need to go out and let others know how you gained this light and what turned it on.”

So the lamp and its sponsor said the Seventh Step prayer together, and the light came on brighter.

“Now you are on Step Eight,” the sponsor said. “Here we return to your Step Four list and look specifically for the people you hurt or wronged and make another list of their names.” The lamp completed the list and brought it to the sponsor.

“Good,” she said, “let’s move forward to Step Nine.”

“Now you go to those on your Fourth Step list and have an honest, heartfelt talk with them, admit your wrongs, apologize to them from your heart and where necessary pay back money you might owe.”

One by one the lamp began to set matters right. The light was also starting to get really bright and warm,


The sponsor said, “Now that your house is clean, you will want to keep it that way. So, with God’s help and my listening ear you can keep what you have with a daily Tenth Step. It is now time for Step Eleven, where you learn to stay plugged into the mysterious Higher Power outlet through prayer and meditation. Have you ever seen a lamp that’s flickering, because the electrical cord is half plugged in and half falling out of the outlet?”

“Sure,” the lamp said.

“In Step Eleven, we learn to stay firmly plugged in. The power can never flicker or go out, for that might put you in danger of going out.”

The lamp began meditating and praying daily and soon was on Step Twelve, where it was asked to speak at meetings and sponsor other lamps. The light became brighter and brighter.

The sponsor continued, “Now that you’ve been lit from within as a result of working the steps, you need to go out and let others know how you gained this light and what turned it on.”

Every day the lamp shines a bit more. It is surrounded by many other lamps and they are all shining happily ever after. 

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 content, 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.

Dear Alky...



Dearest Fellow Alcoholics,

Welcome to December, the month when even the most well-adjusted alcoholic might find herself just a teeny bit wistful for a drop of eggnog or a flute of champagne. . . Some of us want to drink when we're lonely or depressed, and we get lonely or depressed around "The Holidays." Some of us want to drink when we go to parties, and we go to parties during "The Holidays." Some of us want a nice glass of wine with our big holiday feasts. And some of us just want to drink. After all, we are alcoholics.

Alky wanted to share a few tips gathered over the years that might help get you through the extra little challenges to sobriety that this month can bring. As with all "advice" in AA, consider these friendly suggestions based on the experience of others. Take what you want and leave the rest!

ALKY'S HOLIDAY "DO'S & DON'TS"

- **DO** keep up – or increase -- meeting attendance; there are usually "alco-thons" around the clock at Christmas and New Year's time at 2900 24th Street. There are also meetings all day long at the Alano Club and the Marina Dock.
- **DON'T** believe the hype: no matter how glamorous, delicious or enticing the holiday advertising makes a particular cocktail look, just remember that for alcoholics poison is poison, no matter how pretty. "Think through the drink!"
- **DO** make plans with other sober people. Lots of people in the fellowship host holiday meals, open houses and other events
- and would be happy to include you at their table. Try to ask a newcomer if they need company! There are all sorts of fun things to do, from ice skating in the Embarcadero to window shopping, to cookie-baking marathons. Many people in the fellowship volunteer at agencies that provide meals or services to the poor. There are lots of opportunities to be of service this month, and they can really help generate your own sense of gratitude.
- **DON'T** get too hungry, angry, lonely or tired. Or sick! It's cold and flu season –try to stay healthy! Being sick at the holidays can be a recipe for self-pity; if you are sick, be sure not to isolate too much—use that phone!
- **DO** check your expectations—if you spend holidays with family members that have made you feel crazy year after year, expect to feel crazy and have a contingency plan in place. Check in with your sponsor or other sober friends and be sure to have your Big Book or some other AA literature around if you will be away from home. Attending meetings in new places is also a fun way to see how other alkyies are handling the holidays!
- **DON'T** forget the eleventh step! Prayer and meditation can really help to center us in the midst of holiday chaos and remind us of what is truly important in our lives.
- **DO** remember that staying sober is always just a "one day at a time" thing. And you can take heart knowing that for most of this month, those days are getting shorter and shorter!

Alky wishes you all a glorious December . . . and a Happy New Year!

Dear Alky,

Thank you so much for your October column. It is exactly what I am going through as a sponsor. My sponsees have all been newcomers when I started working with them. Some have over twenty years sober now. After twenty-three years, this is the first time I have been asked to take on someone with twenty-one years.

Your column was right to the point and following your advice has worked out beautifully.

Thanks again. Keep it coming!

JC 

WRITE TO ALKY!!

Alky loves to answer any and all questions from the Fellowship. Drop Alky a line!

Central Office
1821 Sacramento
Street, San Francisco, CA
94109

or e-mail Alky at:
alky@aaaf.org.

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 TWELVE

by Nkechi E.

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

It was difficult to begin writing this article as my brain churned with the reality of my experience. I am one of those who came back to A.A. from such a low spiritual bottom, my fellows thought I would not make it. My thoughts were obsessed with suicide. The idea of living without the alcohol and high powered sedatives that had become my "best friends" horrified me. And yet, as the result of the Twelve Steps, I stand here today sane, sober, and totally free from alcohol.

My permanent sobriety date is March 26, 2002 and being relatively new to the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, it is a delight to share my experience strength and hope on Step Twelve which, Bill W says, works when other activities fail. It did for me. It has been my tried and tested experience that intensive work with other alcoholics has been the only way I have been insured from drinking to date.

At my first meeting back in the fellowship, a young woman named Amber who was simply following the instructions of her sponsor to reach out to newcomers, gave me her number and took me out for coffee and oatmeal. She listened to me describe the hell I had just come from. She offered to read the Big Book with me and walk me through the steps of A.A.

I knew that everything would be okay if I listened to her. Due to the severity of my condition, she suggested to me on that first day to begin to help other

newcomers by giving them my number, like she had done with me, and calling these newcomers simply to let them know the meetings to which I was going. She suggested I go to meetings like I drank which was every day and that I hangout with other newcomers in and around the rooms of A.A.. She promised that, as I worked the steps of A.A., the right fellowship to support my sobriety would grow up around me. She asked me to look towards the spiritual awakening promised in Step Twelve.

Step Twelve, when practiced fully, embodies all the rest of the steps and moves A.A.'s twelve suggestions from a mere way to escape the bondage of alcohol into a spiritually practical way for alcoholics to live free of the bondage of self in the world.

Amber was right. I didn't recognize myself or my life by the time I was on Step Twelve even though I started working with others and taking on service commitments well before I was on Step Twelve formally. Intensive work with others jump-started me into the desire to stay sober and learn how to practice these principles in all my affairs. Principles I have received through the understanding and practice of each step. Actively working the Twelfth Step keeps me on the firing line of life and remembering why I must treat the disease of alcoholism in my life on a daily basis to live free and prosperous in the world. **P**

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

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TRADITION TWELVE

by Molly D.

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”


I was at a tradition study meeting this week, and heard something interesting: "The steps keep me from killing myself, and the traditions keep me from killing everyone else." Although that may seem a long way from the path of the Divine, in keeping with the principle of 'progress, not perfection', it seems that attempting **not** to commit double shotgun murder while at a business meeting (or anywhere else, for that matter!) is a good thing.

'Principles before personality' reminds me that everyone in a room of Alcoholics Anonymous is attempting to change themselves and their lives for the better. This is a massive undertaking, certainly not to be done alone. For me, it has been with the help, support, and unconditional love of the people around me that I have been able to walk through the trying times in my sobriety. If my fellowship had not been able to accept me, flaws and assets (some that I myself could not accept), I may have not continued on my own path toward progress, so strong was the power of their care to carry me through. Their ability to put the principles of responsibility, integrity, and service ahead of whatever exasperation they may have been feeling, is what "principles before personalities" means to me.

Having learned from and been carried by those already in the program of A.A., I can now, on occasion, turn to those coming in (and indeed, some who came in before me) and show them the same love and tolerance that was shown to me. When shares run

longer than the "allotted" time or when business meetings become a free-for-all, I can now (after an alcoholic thought or two) remind myself that the person or persons involved are here to *save their lives*. Who am I to gripe about sitting through a few more "motions," or listening to a person bare their sordid past? These are the same people who allow me my dalliances in ego as well.

'Principles before personalities' to me, means that for today, I am responsible. Even though, sure, maybe I don't want to go out to the meeting when it's raining, but I put the group principles before my personality and suit up and show up for the other people in the room, newcomers and not-so-newcomers alike. They do it for me. Daily.

As to anonymity being the spiritual foundation? That seems a whole other column. But I am reminded of a recent t.v. episode where the character makes a donation to a save-the-world fund, and his name is put on a scientific wing. A rival of his donates anonymously, but lets a few people know that he is indeed "Anonymous," as it reads on his wing. To be anonymous, but to ask for recognition anyway may be partially what Bill and his gang had in mind when they wrote the tradition, "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." 



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

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



CONCEPT XII

by Patrick B.

Concept XII: General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Concept Twelve encapsulates the core principles of good spiritual fitness for General Service and all service in Alcoholics Anonymous. It comprises the Six Warranties that authorize "... the General Service Conference to act for Alcoholics Anonymous and to become the successor to its co-founders." (A.A. *Service Manual*, 2007-2008, p. S95)

Bill W. points out in the A.A. *Service Manual* that Concept Twelve is unique because it doubles as Article Twelve of the Conference Charter. Furthermore, while the first eleven articles of the Charter can be changed by the Conference at any time, this is not so with Article Twelve. Any change in Article Twelve would require three-fourths approval from ALL the registered A.A. groups worldwide. As Bill stresses, the Six Warranties have a "high and permanent importance to A.A.'s general welfare" (*Twelve Concepts for World Service*, 2007, p. 63). The Warranties bind the General Service Conference and its delegates to the same Twelve Traditions that all of us follow as group members. Bill also stresses that the Warranties are a sort of two-way lens;

we learn from looking at the past and looking forward to future challenges.

The First Warranty guards against the conference becoming "...the seat of perilous wealth or power." (ibid. p. 62.) This is firmly grounded in the Seventh Tradition which makes us self-supporting, declining outside contributions. Bill W. wryly observes that it's unlikely that General Service will become too wealthy from group contributions. And individual contributions are limited in size to \$3000 per year. As I've heard in many Conference Reports, the chief concern is making sure that groups understand what their contributions go toward so they feel confident in supporting World Services.

The Second Warranty ensures a prudent reserve. As extravagant as it may sound, our reserve fund of \$10,357,100 would keep the General Service office in New York, World Service's publication of literature, and the Grapevine solvent for about nine months. It's a prudent reserve which is much larger than the average A.A. group's but still adheres to the spiritual principle of prudence.

(Continued on page 15)

WHEN THERE'S SNOW ON THE ROOF: *KEEPING SOBRIETY FRESH*

by James M.

Keeping sobriety fresh can be as simple as going to a meeting, saying the serenity prayer when stuck in traffic (God, grant me the serenity to accept the bridge I cannot change..."), or doing a spot check inventory - what is it about this person or situation makes me scared, self-seeking, or selfish? It can be more complicated - being the treasurer for your group yet again, when you need to confront your own insecurities about money, or seeing someone in the hospital when that call comes in from when you put yourself on the Twelfth Step list at Tele-service so long ago you'd almost forgotten about it.

It can be structured, as when you go to your home group even in the rain because it's your home group and people expect you there. Being a familiar face at a meeting is Twelfth Stepping, you know! It can be more structured, as when you sit down with a sponsee to go over progress on the Fourth Step, meeting weekly over a period of time to keep that friendly bit of pressure on.

Keeping sobriety fresh can involve doing something as outlandish as General Service - how does a Third Legacy election work, really? And why in heaven's name did they ever come up with such a way of running an organization?

Prayer always seems to have something to do with it, whether you cross yourself and invoke a triune God or pay attention to your breath in order to let your inner Buddha nature emerge, or you decide to have a Seder at your house this year - or

perhaps if you just decide to walk on the beach and wonder at the beauty of creation instead of going home to watch more TV news about our cruelty to each other.

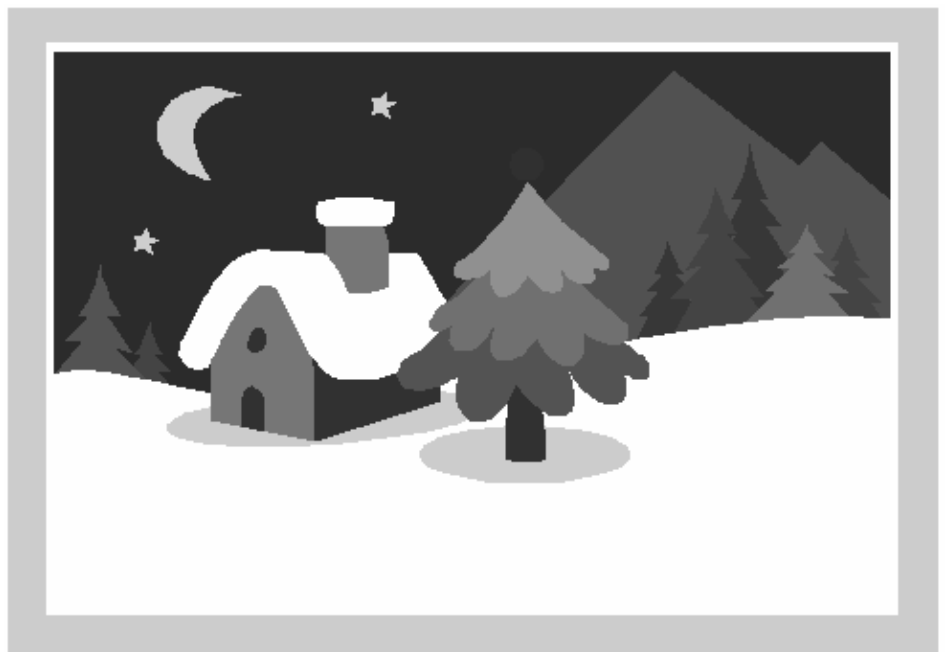
Keeping sobriety fresh always seems to have something to do with that "one day at a time" thing. For me, it always involves making sure I'm not too hungry, angry, lonely, tired (or thirsty! I'm an alcoholic!) and keeping up the H.A.L.T. inventory. It involves saying "please" and "thank you" both to the people I meet in my life and to my Higher Power.

If I came to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity once, I may need to renew that belief again and again, including the recognition that there are many powers greater than me - a doctor if I'm sick, a CPA if my finances are a mess, or a child - my child, the one

who wouldn't be in my life if I wasn't sober - asking for help with his homework when my self-centered, frightened mind wants to worry about how well I'm doing at work or with bills or something else that's not here now and doesn't involve the most important thing in the universe - Love.

Keeping sobriety fresh always seems to have something to do with gratitude. And if I'm sober today that's a huge cause for gratitude!

Not only am I sober today, but I know how to stay sober today - no matter how hard it may get. If my cause for gratitude starts to get a little stale, I can always find a newcomer who will remind me why I'm grateful - because not only have I escaped from a living hell of my own making, but I can show others the way out. **JP**



GROUP

CONTRIBUTIONS

SEPTEMBER

2007

Name	Sep07	YTD	Name	Sep07	YTD	Name	Sep07	YTD
Fellowship			M Blues M 630pm		511	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	66	264
2900 Alcolthon		389	M Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		792	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		58
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	42	270	M Night Women's M 8pm	150	259	830am Smokeless Th		285
Contribution Box	50	530	M Nooners M 12pm		420	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm		192
Deer Park Discovery Group		35	More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		214	A New Start F 830pm		617
Fellowship Contribution	35	248	Nativity M Night Big Book M 8pm		200	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		80
Gay Newcomers Group		95	Newcomers Step M 730pm		484	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		205
IFB	82	580	Noon Discussion Th 12pm		1132	AA Step Study Su 6pm	165	426
Marin Teleservice		947	Noon Hope F 12pm	45	333	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		129
Novato Fellowship Events Committee		149	Noon Tu 12pm		528	Afro American F 8pm	60	113
Unidentified Group		1004	Primary Purpose W 830pm		85	All Together Now Th 8pm	179	364
Western Roundup (Living Sober)		2249	Quitting Time		250	Alumni W 830pm	49	49
Total Fellowship	\$209	\$6,497	Refugee Th 12pm		260	Amazing Grace M 7pm		16
			Reveille 7D 7pm		690	Any Lengths Sat 930am	61	945
Honors			Rise N Shine Sun 10am	173	323	Artists & Writers F 630pm	263	515
High Noon Friday 1215pm		80	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		95	As Bill Sees It Sat 11am		84
Total Honors		80	Serendipity Sa 11am	135	361	As Bill Sees It Sat 8pm		151
			Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)		462	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		649
Marin Group Contributions			Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm	89	369	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		12
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am		800	Sober & Serene F 7pm		375	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		147
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm		80	Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag 830a		764	As We Understood Him Mon. 7pm		107
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		3033	Step Sisters (M.V.) Sun 7pm		100	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		248
Awakenings Sa 830am		35	Steps To The Solution W 715pm		176	Back to Basics W 8pm		62
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		785	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm		300	Be Still AA Su 1215pm	274	430
Beginner's Help Th 8pm		200	Sun. Express Sun 6pm	100	300	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm		70
Beginners W 7pm		350	Sun. Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm		176	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	253	253
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		733	Survivors M 12pm		72	Bernal New Day 7D		1386
Bolinas M. Nioght & Step Study		50	T. G. I. Tues. 6pm		131	Big Book Basics F 8pm		272
Candlelight Sun 830pm	50	50	T.G.I.F. F 6pm		223	Big Book Beginners		60
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		293	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		1164	Big Book Study Su 1130am		343
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		309	Terra Linda Th. Men's Stag Th 8pm		227	Birthday Meeting Sa 8pm		250
Crossroads Sun 12pm	500	852	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		83	Blue Book Special Su 11am		30
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	122	1204	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm		147	Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		34
Early Birds Sa 6am	50	50	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		1059	Bushwackers Sa 9am		55
Fireside F 8pm Bolinas	50	126	Th. Night Speaker Th 830pm		1177	Came To Believe Su 830am		143
Freedom Finders F 830pm		1200	Tiburon Beginners Tu 7pm & 830pm		590	Candlelight Meeting Th 10pm		63
Friday Night Book F 830pm		250	Tiburon Big Book Group W 730pm		155	Castro Discussion W 8pm		1371
Girls Night Out W 815pm		75	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		445	Castro M. Big Book M 8pm		115
Gratitude Tu 8pm		762	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		42	Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm		15
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		485	Twice Blessed W 730pm		33	Code Blue Big Book Study		256
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		1500	We, Us and Ours M 650pm	60	110	Common Welfare Th 8pm		115
High & Dry W 12pm		900	Wed. Mid-Week W 6pm		182	Courtside Tu 1215pm		221
Hillside Candlelight F 830pm		80	What's It All About F 12pm		273	Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	250	719
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		112	Women For Women W 12pm		97	Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		61
Inverness Sun. Serenity Su 10am		105	Women on M. M 7pm		54	Design for Living Sat 8am		329
Island Group Th 8pm		357	<u>Women's Big Book Tu 1030am</u>		303	Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		940
Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		108	Marin Contributions	\$1,573	\$33,154	Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		183
Kids Welcome Group M 1130am		111				Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		821
Living in the Solution F 6pm		761	SF Group Contributions			Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		306
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		250	515pm Smokeless W		332	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		418
Mill Valley 7D 7am		576	7am Grab Bag M 7am		55	Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		259
Mill Valley Gay/Lesbian W 8pm	50	50	7am Marina Dock		154	Early Start F 6pm		713

GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS, CON'T...

Name	Sep07	YTD	Name	Sep07	YTD	Name	Sep07	YTD
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		361	Marina Discussion F 830pm		1045	Sun. Morning Gay Men's Stag 930am		1315
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	120	1115	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		174	Sun. Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	77	334
Epiphany Group Th 8pm		60	Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		233	Su. Night Castro Speaker Disc 8pm		368
Eureka Step Tu 6pm		257	Men's Gentle Touch M 7pm		154	Sun. Rap Sun 8pm		150
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		1684	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am		1694	Sundown W 7pm		666
Excelsior Free for All Sa 8pm		147	Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm		666	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 6pm		131
Federal Speaker Su 12pm	374	626	M Beginners M 8pm		700	Sunset 11'ers F	55	100
Fell Street F 830pm		197	M M M 1215pm		213	Sunset 11'ers M		100
Fell Street Step Su 8pm		127	New Clay M 2pm		27	Sunset 11'ers Su		148
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		35	New Hope Big Book M 630pm		106	Sunset 11'ers - Th	50	50
Fireside Chat Tu 8pm		546	New Life W 7pm		369	Sunset 11'ers W	60	132
First Place		45	Newcomers Tu 8pm		385	Sunset 9'ers F	100	322
Fogwatch Tu 7pm		23	No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm		32	Sunset 9'ers M		194
Founders' Group Sa 5pm		20	No Reservation M 12pm		605	Sunset 9'ers Sa		297
Friday All Groups F 830pm		1564	No Whiners F 7pm		60	Sunset 9'ers Su		432
Friday Knights Th 730am		36	Noon Smokeless F 12pm	61	179	Sunset 9'ers Th		129
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		140	Noon Smokeless M 12pm		15	Sunset 9'ers W	100	228
Friday Night Special F 8pm		20	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		10	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		360
Friday Noon F 12pm		68	One Liners Th 830pm		484	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		441
Friday Reflections	10	30	Park Presidio M 830pm		120	Surf Tu 8pm	51	51
Friday Smokeless F 830pm		294	Parkside Th 830pm	100	100	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm		84
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm		912	Pax West M 12pm		359	Ten Years After Su 6pm		1162
Getting Fit at One O'Clock Tu 1pm		29	Pax West Th 12pm		1124	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am		42
Gold Mine Group M 8pm		38	Progress Not Perfec Tu 830pm		81	The Drive Thru W 1215pm		588
Goodlands Su 2pm		168	Pure & Simple Su 6pm		274	The Parent Trap M 1230pm		451
Greenhouse Meditation		82	Queers, Crackpots &...	95	121	The Pepper Group F 12pm	60	120
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm	89	974	Reality Farm Th 830pm		128	Thought For The Day F 730am		36
Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm		80	Rebound W 830pm		275	Th. Night Women's Th 630pm	194	346
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm		11	Red Road Healing Circle Th 6pm		70	Too Early Sat 8am		2370
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm		338	Rodeo Drive Birthday Cake F 10pm		31	Transrecovery F 630pm		18
High Noon Friday 1215pm	273	791	Room to Grow F 8pm		114	Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm		180
High Noon M. 1215pm		537	Rose Garden Big Book Th 1205pm		84	Tues. Big Book Study Tu 6pm	60	60
High Noon Saturday 1215pm		366	Rule 62 W 10pm		888	Tues. Downtown Tu 8pm	172	550
High Noon Th. 1215pm		731	S.F. Bermuda Tri. Birthday F 10pm		167	Tues. Step Meeting Tu 130pm		2
High Noon Tues. 1215pm	95	861	Sat. Afternoon Meditation 5pm	90	238	Tues.'s Daily Reflections Tu 7am		205
High Noon Wed. 1215pm	185	625	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		392	12 Steps to Happiness F 730pm		195
High Sobriety M 8pm		892	Saturday Night Regroup 730pm		794	Unidentified Group		171
High Steppers W 7pm		135	Seacliff Th 830pm		197	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	243	1220
Hilldwellers M 8pm	151	548	Second Chance Th 215pm		105	Walk of Shame W 8pm		409
Home Group Sat 830pm		127	Serenity House		600	Washington Square M 7pm	189	360
How It Works Sat 2pm		37	Serenity House Sat 830pm		600	Waterfront Sun 8pm		783
Huntington Square W 630pm	342	1093	Serenity Seekers M 730pm		57	We Care Tu 12pm	162	286
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		1100	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		414	Wed. Women's Big Book W 615pm		180
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		86	SFPOA Th 7pm		275	West Portal W 830pm		234
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am	546	1094	Sinbar Su 830pm		78	Wharfrats Th 815pm	242	242
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm	224	341	Sisters Circle Su 6pm		215	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm		175
Last Call Su 10pm		241	Sisters In Sobriety M 7pm (SF)		4	Women Living Sober Sa 10am		60
Let It Be Now F 6pm		155	Sober Acro. the Board M-Sa 830am		275	Wo. Who Drank Too Much Tu 615pm		25
Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm		79	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		332	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	135	779
Like A Prayer Su 4pm		98	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am	180	270	Wo. Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm	53	201
Lincoln Park Sat 830pm		174	Sought to Improve Th 730pm		72	Women's Promises F 7pm		50
Live and Let Live Su 8pm		172	Step Talk Su 830am	417	1029	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		107
Living Sober W 8pm		160	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		197	YAHOO Step Sa 11am		142
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	165	424	Stepping Out Sat 6pm		24	Total SF Group Contributions	\$7,168	\$73,211
Luke's Group W 8pm		227	Stonestown M 8pm		255			
Lush Lounge Sa 2pm		88	Straight Jackets Th 9am	29	220	Total Group Contributions	\$8,951	\$112,942

RULDOLPH THE RED NOSED REINDEER: THE UNTOLD STORY

by Greg W.

The morning of December 25 was not a pleasant one for Rudolph. Technically, it was not even morning, but very late in the afternoon. The Christmas Eve deliveries had been difficult and Santa was in a foul mood. The annual post-delivery North Pole Holiday Bash was not its usual festive occasion. Rudolph was full of anger toward the boss man, his fellow reindeer, and the elves. While the other reindeer passed the time at the party playing their usual reindeer games, Rudolph sat huddled alone at the bar, knocking back drinks as fast as he could order them. By the end of the affair, he had made a clumsy pass at Mrs. Claus, challenged Blitzen to a fight, and told Santa where he could put his job. He awakened in a strange haystack, covered in an unrecognizable substance that might have been partially-digested fruitcake, with a headache so bad it seemed that a thousand Little Drummer Boys and a million jingling bells were giving him a private concerto. Although this morning was particularly unpleasant, it was not the first time Rudolph had demonstrated an inability to control his drinking. In fact, several months ago, noticing that his nose was regularly redder than usual, Santa had placed him on a performance review program and told him he needed to cut down on the booze.

The next day, Santa and the elves did an intervention on Rudolph. They horrified him with stories of some of his jags over the prior six months, including an especially troubling night when Rudolph had attempted to relieve himself on Frosty the Snowman. "This is it," said Santa. "If you don't get some help for your problem, you're out on the ice. I could replace you with a GPS device tomorrow and not miss a beat, but we go way back together and I want to see


you get your life in order. But if you don't, you're history."

Grudgingly, Rudolph enrolled himself in the *Twelve Steps of Christmas* treatment facility. "I don't really think I am an alcoholic," he said at his intake interview, "but I need to keep my job." Although his counselors tried very hard to help him, Rudolph was not ready for recovery. He still believed that after a few weeks drying out at the treatment center, he would be able to drink like a gentlebuck. "I'll just drink natural wines, maybe get some more exercise, take a trip – or not take a trip - and everything will be OK."

As to working the steps of A.A., Rudolph was defiant. "No way in the world am I going to believe in a Higher Power. I am the Higher Power after all. If not for me, that fat old fart and those eight glorified sled dogs would have never found their way out of Norway." "Resentments? If you were me you'd have them too, and they're all justified. That incessant 'ho-ho-hoing' is enough to drive anyone to drink. Sure I may need to cut back on the drinking, but I can't see any reason why I could not smoke a little medicinal mistletoe now and then, I never had a problem with that."

Upon graduating from the program, Rudolph put his "plan" into action. He tried some controlled drinking, and obtained the exact results that the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* said would happen. His bottom finally came when he woke up in jail, being evaluated for possible use as jerky meat and hoof glue, not remembering a thing about the last five days, nor knowing how in the world he got to Las Vegas. Two well-dressed, smiling alcoholics came to visit him and told them how they had recovered. For the first time,

Rudolph prayed to a God he did not understand or even completely believe in for one more chance. He realized that while treatment programs may help an alcoholic dry out, they are no substitute for continued and rigorous Twelve Step work. In short, he had the "moment of clarity" described in the Big Book.

Today, Rudolph is happy, joyous and free. He regularly attends A.A. meetings, prays and meditates daily, and does service work in the fellowship and at the Nome, Alaska Central Office. He is currently on his Ninth Step, and thanks to an honest amends, Santa has given him his old job back. He has a roof over his head, a little money in the bank, and food to eat. Not much by material standards, but everything he needs. He is even able to laugh at himself when his friends in the program tell him "We knew you'd be back again some day." In fact, he responds by saying, "And I plan to keep coming back – one day at a time... Ho-ho-ho!" 



THE SEVEN T'S: TAKE THE TIME TO THINK THINGS THROUGH

by Peter S.

I was greedy and speedy when I was drinking. I just couldn't take the time. So when I came upon this idea of the *Seven T's*, it was with mixed feelings. I'd not heard of them before but it makes sense and today I certainly think things through more than when I was drinking. When I was drinking I did things without a thought of the consequences or whether they were hurtful or self-centered or greedy.

A lot of my work is with computers, power point presentations and such but instead of taking time to explain something to someone less savvy than I, I'd be sarcastic or put them down. When I had the expertise and someone didn't know how to do something, I'd sooner ridicule them or point out their lack of knowledge. Today I take the time to explain. I see the *Seven T's* as a way of being careful.

It's easy to confuse prudence with procrastination as Bill W. talks about in Step Nine. We can't use being prudent as an excuse. For example, when talking with children in my family I really wanted to wait until


"I work hard to remain mindful of what my intentions are when I'm interacting with others"

they understood what I was talking about. Putting it off was more for my comfort than theirs.

It's good to take time, even if it is a short time. For me, I want to check out my intentions, ask if it's helpful and if I want to help rather than hurt. Taking that extra time gives me the power and the opportunity to minimize any unintended consequences. I believe in planning, so as to minimize compromise and decrease the number of undesired results. There's also less manipulation. For example, if I'm working on someone else's project and encounter unforeseen problems, I can take the time to bring that other person around to my way of thinking, communicate my concerns. When working on most projects, planning is

essential. I've been known to say that I've done the whole project on the back of my eyelids, which means I've really thought it through. Then when someone offers a left field suggestion, I can truly evaluate it without blowing them off.

There can be dangers. One is to squelch spontaneity and another is to be so thorough, looking at so many angles that I miss another's point of view. There's always room to incorporate new information and make adjustments with cooperation and flexibility. At times my picture of a situation is far from reality and I just have to readjust.

I work hard to remain mindful of what my intentions are when I'm interacting with others. I want to practice with the tools I've learned about in this program and work to have them ingrained, so they are part of my everyday life. I strive to be honest, willing and authentic while leaving room for new thought. Then, there's also that other rule that says, "Don't take yourself too seriously." 

(Concept XII :continued from page 10)


Warranty Three comprises the Right of Participation and makes it inviolate. Voting rights cannot be taken away from a delegate without the three-fourths approval of all groups, mentioned above.

The Fourth Warranty insures that all Conference decisions are the product of extensive discussion with special attention paid to the opinion of the nu-

merical minority. Substantial unanimity is the goal of this warranty.

Warranty Five relies on self-restraint to stay out of public controversy. As Bill W. puts it, self-restraint for A.A. members is not too hard to argue with publicly: "There is no really good reason for anyone to object if a good number of drunks get sober" (ibid. p. 70). So staying out of controversy should not pose too great a problem for the General Service Conference. The Confer-

ence can still educate the public about proper uses of the A.A. name and gently discourage members from breaking personal anonymity in accordance with the Twelfth Tradition.

Warranty Six holds the Conference to always act in a spirit of mutual respect and love. No authority is granted the Conference to punish members or restrict their rights or freedoms. "Live and Let Live" is enshrined for generations to come. 

IFB MEETING SUMMARY — NOVEMBER '07

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 Jaime G.	Sesame Step	P Patti M.	Bernal New Day R
Andy T.	Waterfront	A Jenifer W.	Like A Prayer	A Patty M.	Huntington Square P
Anil K.	Tiburon M. Mens Stag	P Joan T.	They Stopped In Time	R Pete R.	Artists and Writers P
Anthony J.	Serenity Seekers	A** John G.	Each Day A New Beg.	A Rebecca D.	Valencia Smokefree P
Armando R.	Home Group	P Joshua C.	Goodlands	A Rich D.	Eureka Step A
Bertell N.	Marina Discussion	A Judy S.	Diamond Heights Group	A Richard C.	Surf Group A
Brad P.	Code Blue	P Julio B.	Blue Book Special	P Richard P.	Friendly Circle A
Brian C.	Hit It & Quit It	P Karen A.	West Portal	P Richard R.	We Care P
Bruce K.	Sunset Speaker Step	P Karin K.	24 Hour Plan	A Rick K.	Join the Tribe A
Carol E.	Happy Hour	A Kate E.	7AM Attitude Adjustment	P Roger C.	Early Start A**
Casey L.	Sunday Corte Madera	P Ken J.	High Sobriety	P Ron M.	Live & Let Live A
Christopher R.	7AM Mill Valley Cabin	P Larry B.	Castro Discussion	P Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sat. A
Chuck K.	Let It Be Now	P Liz C.	Mill Valley Speaker	P Shawn M.	Regroup P
Dan S.	Tuesday Chip	A Mark W.	Living Sober with Hep. C	R Steve N.	Terra Linda Group A
Dana R.	Saturday Sunset 9'ers	P Matthew D.	Too Early	P Stu S.	Tuesday Newcomers P
David A.	Goldmine Group	P Matt T.	Sunday Night Friendship	P Tedra M.	Come N Get It P
David D.	Keep it Simple	P Maury P.	Central Office Manager	P Thomas H.	Any Lengths P
Derek D.	Reality Farm	P Michael P.	Sunset 9'ers Su 8am	P Tom K.	High Noon (Monday) A
Edward H.	High Noon (Tu.)	P Nathan M.	Saturday Easy Does It	P Tracy F.	Keep Coming Back P
Elizabeth B.	Sober 5150's	P Nicholas L.	Some Are Sicker Than...	P Tracy G.	Wits End P
Erica R.	Miracles on 24th St.	P Olive G.	Steppin Up	P Victor V.	Creative Alcoholics P
Jamie G.	Fireside Chat	A Patrick M.	Treasurer	A Virginia M.	Women Who Drank 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	Visitors	Liaisons Present
Dwayne T. Ten Years After	Paul T., SF	Kevin S. Marin Teleservice
Allyn J. Fireside Chat	Bill C., SF	Ray M. District 05
Peter G. Sunday Night Castro		Karen S. District 06
Faye K. Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women		

Following in an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the November 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 the report. He encouraged the Reps to

attend the up-coming SF Unity Day and volunteer to staff the IFB table. The Spirit of SF was a success, but the IFB could have been more involved. If anyone is interested in being a liaison to District 06, SF General Service, please see Chuck or Maury. A sample IFB Rep report will be given later in the meeting to demonstrate how a Rep might give their report at their home group.

Treasurer's Report: Patrick M. was absent. The report was presented by

Maury P. For the month of September, the Net Loss was \$3,926 which was \$1,569 better than the budgeted loss of \$5,495. For YTD thru September, Net Income was \$17,011 which was \$25,292 higher than budget. The improvement vs budget for the month of September was due to lower expenses than budgeted; improvement in YTD net income is due to higher contributions and lower expenses. Total checking and savings account balances were \$188,309 as of the end of

September, of which \$54,478 is unrestricted cash and \$133,831 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. During Gratitude Month, please ask groups to specify in their contributions the amount that was collected specifically for Gratitude Month.

Central Office Manager's Report: Maury P. presented the report. As usual, there are phone/volunteer shifts available at CO. A request was received to amplify the IFB meetings. The church in SF has the ability for that, but our NADY system will be used in Sausalito. Julio volunteered to be responsible to set-up the speaker system in February and May. She also distributed a report on the recent CO Managers' seminar in OKC. Anyone interested in what was presented and discussed at that event can speak to her.

Central Office Committee Report: Tedra M. gave the report. In October the COC discussed the reports submitted by the CO Manager and the IFB Treasurer. The preliminary budget for 2008 was presented and discussed. Plans were made for SF Unity Day.

Committee Reports:

12th Step Committee: Shawn M. gave the report. Volunteers are always needed for the Twelve Step List and the Sunshine Club. The committee will have a table at the SF Unity Day. Please refer to *The Point* for committee meeting dates/times.

Access Committee: Virginia M. gave the report. This motion was made: "All IFB sponsored events published events in *The Point* indicate on their announcement the event's location, accessibility and near-by public transit stops." Discussion focused on the issue of the public transit spots. The motion was reread, seconded and a vote was taken. Initial vote: For – 21, against – 11, abstention – 8. The minority opinions offered concerned the issue of public transportation information being included on the flyers. After considerable discussion, a revote was held: For – 7, against –

22, abstention – 7. Motion failed to pass. The Access Committee presented a brochure created by the committee.

Archives Committee: Bruce K. gave the report. Recently some older issues of *The Point* were found damaged with mold. A motion was made to provide the committee with the requested \$100 to purchase materials necessary to preserve literature; seconded and passed unanimously.

Orientation Committee: Andy T. is unable to fulfill his commitment to as Orientation Chair; Patti M. volunteered to take over.

The Point Editorial Committee: Victor V. gave the report. The committee is actively pursuing new ideas for *The Point*. All members are encouraged to submit articles on any topic they choose.

Trusted Servants Workshop Committee: Patti M. gave the report. No events are currently planned.

Website Committee: Michael P. gave the report. The committee's main projects are developing the ability for meetings to and Trusted Servants to register online, the creation of activity summaries for all meetings, and the ability to create dynamic Google maps for all meetings.

Outreach Committee: Karen A. gave the report. The committee is working on changing the way they are attempting to locate/contact all active meetings.

Sample Intergroup Rep. Report:

Derek D. gave an example of what his report to his home group consists of. Focus on upcoming IFB events, committees/positions available with various service entities and CO.

Special Committee Reports:

Teleservice: Dana R. gave the report for Judi C. The committee is always in need of volunteers. The 3rd Annual Teleservice Event was held with good turnout.

PI/CPC: Bruce K. gave the report. A speaker workshop and a "Conversations On Sponsorship" workshop will be held at Unity Day.

IFB Liaison Reports:

SF General Service: Karen S. gave the report. There were 333 attendees at the last Area meeting for their inventory. The Panel 57 Delegate gave her report and announced that the Bay Area will be putting in a bid for the 2020 International Convention. The next two Month's meetings will be concerned with their inventory.

Teleservice, Marin: Kevin S. gave the report. All committee commitments will end at the end of the year, so volunteers are needed.

Living Sober: Alejandro D. gave the report. Fundraising events are being developed. The 2008 conference will not be at the Bill Graham auditorium due to renovation. It will be held at a downtown hotel.

The 7th Tradition was observed. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Unanimously passed, and the meeting ended at 8:46PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken J.
IFB Recording Secretary

The next IFB meeting is on Wednesday, December 5th, 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.



SERVICE ANIMALS AT A.A. MEETINGS: *FURTHER THOUGHTS AND A CALL FOR DIALOGUE*

The August, 2007 issue of *The Point* contained two articles that touched on the issue of service animals in A.A. meetings. In response, a reader submitted a letter to the Central Office taking issue with the opinions stated in the articles, and suggesting that the positions set forth in the articles might subject A.A., and the landlords who host A.A. meetings, to legal liability. *The Point* Committee hereby responds to that letter "in a general way", referring to relevant portions of the letter rather than reprinting its lengthy contents in full. This response is not intended to constitute a legal opinion, nor should it be read as the "final word" from *The Point*, the IFB, or Alcoholics Anonymous on this issue. Rather, as the author of the letter urges, the intent of this response is to encourage and stimulate further dialogue of this issue within the A.A. community. It is the intention of the Intercounty Fellowship Board to comply fully with all applicable federal, state and local laws, to work toward making available the broadest access to A.A. possible, and to encourage reasoned discussion and resolution of matters that are of concern to individual members.


It is first worth noting that the author's allegations are difficult to respond to because, for the most part, they do not refer to specific instances, examples, places, dates, times, and individuals involved in such alleged denials of access. Indeed, the author essentially admits that he has "yet to encounter a church or hall that does not enthusiastically welcome an assistance dog." His criticism is pointed in two directions - first, at unnamed and unspecified so-called "bitter, usually older alcoholics", and second, at a private club that holds

itself open to A.A. meetings but is not owned, operated, organized by, or affiliated with A.A.. In the first case, the author's attack is on individual persons, not A.A. or its landlords. Consistent with the principles of A.A., such difficulties are encouraged to be resolved on an individual and/or group basis, as well as through the IFB and, in particular, the Access Committee. In the second case, while A.A. is not responsible for the actions of unaffiliated entities, dialogue rather than confrontation is, again, encouraged, and resolution of such matters attempted through the traditional and time-tested methods that have served A.A. well for many years.

The author of the letter further suggests that statements made in the "Dear Alky" column and in an article by Tommy D., entitled "Four Legged Friends", incorrectly state the law regarding disability access and the obligation to accommodate service animals. The author states that religious organizations or private clubs, which are generally exempt from laws addressing service animals, may nevertheless be obligated to accommodate service animals when they make their space available to organizations such as A.A.. While this assertion is basically true, the law is not as clear in cases where the religious organization or private club does not hold itself open as a place of general public accommodation. Additional complicating issues might, for example, arise where the A.A. meeting in question is a "Closed" meeting rather than an "Open" one. It is also the case that the law allows a facility owner to exclude any animal, including a service animal, from its facility when that animal's behavior poses a

direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, any service animal that displays vicious behavior towards other guests or customers may be excluded. Moreover, there may be a few circumstances when even a place of public accommodation is not required to accommodate a service animal—that is, when doing so would result in a fundamental alteration to the nature of the business. Again, this is not meant to suggest that such exclusions are taking place in A.A. meetings, or would necessarily be lawful or unlawful in a particular case; instead, the goal of this article is to encourage reasoned, frank, and inclusive discussion at the individual, group and facility level, based on specific facts and circumstances.

The author correctly states that individuals or organizations may not inquire as to the nature of the disability that necessitates an owner's use of a service animal. Again, the letter cites no specific examples of this having occurred at A.A. meetings. It should also be noted that many owners of service animals have special collars or identifying tags or other documentation that their animal is a certified service animal. Such materials could and should go a long way to amicably and legally resolving any on-the-Spot (so to speak) questions about the legitimacy of the request for service animal access.

In closing, *The Point* and the IFB reaffirm their commitment to as open and complete access to A.A. meetings as possible and both legally required, and welcome constructive inquiries, suggestions and criticisms, directed to appropriate channels, on any subject of concern to members and the Fellowship as a whole. 

Intercounty Fellowship of AA

Financial Statement

September 2007

	Sep 07	Jan - Sep 07
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Contributions from Groups		
Group Contributions	8,695	111,993
Honors	0	391
Contributions from Groups - Other	255	255
Total Contributions from Groups	\$8,951	\$112,639
Contributions from Individuals		
Individual - Unrestricted	288	17,890
Faithful Fiver	450	6,489
Honorary Contributions	46	1,769
Total Contributions from Individuals	\$784	\$26,148
Gratitude Month		
Gratitude Month - Groups	0	3,285
Total Gratitude Month	0	3,285
Sales - Bookstore	6,696	85,336
Special Event Income	0	1,536
Newsletter Subscript.	55	970
Total Income	\$16,486	\$229,913
Cost of Goods Sold		
Cost of Books Sold	4,338	55,703
Credit Card Processing Fees	168	1,731
Total COGS	\$4,507	\$57,435
Gross Profit	11,979	172,479
Expense		
Reconciliation Discrepancies	0	0
Employee Expenses		
Wages & Salaries	8,716	78,201
Employer Tax Expenses	594	7,237
Health Benefits	1,211	9,695
Total Employee Expenses	\$10,521	\$95,133
Professional Fees		
Computer Consulting	0	1,863
Total Professional Fees	\$0	\$1,863
Bank Charges	20	53
Postage		
Bulk Mail	0	400
Postage - Other	0	463
Total Postage	\$0	\$863
Rent - Office	3,987	35,884
Rent - Other	0	600
Access Expenses	0	1,050
IFB Literature	0	40
PI/CPC	0	46
Filing/Fees	0	80
Insurance	0	1,932

	Sep 07	Jan - Sep 07
Internet Expense	75	958
Office Supplies	83	1300
Paper Purchased	260	1753
Software Purchased	0	101
Shipping	76	574
Printing	0	841
Equipment Lease	0	5506
Repair & Maintenance	195	2001
Security System	34	367
Special Events	143	2036
Telephone	287	2408
Phone Book Listings	0	632
Utilities	185	1560
Travel	0	408
Training	0	58
Bad Checks	-7	252
Miscellaneous Expense	0	150
Total Expense	\$15,859	\$158,448
Net Ordinary Income	-\$3,880	\$14,031
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Interest Income	75	4075
Total Other Income	\$75	\$4,075
Other Expense		
Depreciation Expense	76	681
Amortization Expense	46	413
Total Other Expense	\$122	\$1,094
Net Other Income	-\$46	\$2,980
Net Income	-\$3,926	\$17,011

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