

# the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

FEBRUARY  
2008  
2

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

## A BETTER WAY: GROUP DECISION MAKING IN A.A.

By Patty M.

A.A. groups are faced with all kinds of decisions, large and small, complicated and easy. From dealing with a treasurer who made off with the group's cash to how much we should spend on a new coffee pot, nobody's boss swoops in to make the call. Many of us in A.A. believe the strength of our fellowship rests on our traditions and how they protect us from some of the forces that can take institutions down. A.A. was the last resort for us, and we can't afford to have it go the way of banks, auto companies, and energy giants whose leaders do themselves in and leave their employees hanging. But we do have to operate with enough organization to run things and it's finding the right balance that presents a challenge.

I've known Andy B. for nearly twenty years. We both consult to organizations to help people think and work together to solve their business problems. He didn't know it at the time, and neither did I, but he was one of the first people who

"twelve-stepped" me when I was a couple years away from my bottom. I noticed he just seemed to handle things with a little more grace than most people, and I figured it had something to do with A.A..

Andy also happens to be a master at helping groups come to decisions. He has applied some of his skill in his many secretary and other service positions in several fellowships. I thought a few of his ideas might be interesting and helpful for those who might find themselves with a roomful of people looking to them for guidance. The XIIth Concept states that we should "observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care...(to) reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity." Here's what one member has to say about how we might do that.

PM: Tell us about your experience helping groups come to agreement.

(Continued on page 6)

A publication of the  
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of Alcoholics Anonymous

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The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of AA, nor does publication constitute endorsement of AA as a whole, the Intercounty Fellowship Board, the Central Office, or The Point Editorial Committee. Letters and articles to help carry the AA message are welcomed, subject to editorial review by The Point Committee.

# monthly calendar

Events, Highlights and Happenings

february 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4 <u>FIRST MON</u> Access Committee, Central Office; 5:30pm	5	6 <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)	7	8	9 Trusted Servants Workshop, 10am to 11:30am, Central Office, S.F.  See Flyer Page 5!
10	11	12 <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	13 <u>SECOND WED</u> Sunshine Club Workshop Central Office, 6:30 pm See Flyer Page 5!  Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, 7 pm	14 <u>SECOND THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office, 6:00 pm  	15	16
17 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee, Central Office, 2 pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day  Living Sober General Planning Meeting, Trinity Church, Bush & Gough, S.F., 5pm	18 <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm  Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael, District Meeting: 8 pm  Presidents' Day - Central Office Closed	19 <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee, Central Office; 6pm  San Mateo General Service, St. Andrews Church, 7:30 pm	20 <u>THIRD WED</u> Website Committee, Central Office; 6:30pm	21	22	23 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma; Business Meeting: 12:30 pm
24	25	26 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 7:30 pm	27	28 <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15 pm Committee Meeting: 8 pm	29	

## From the Editor


Ladies and gentlemen, we now return to our regular programming...

For those who, like me, were not too excited about our last issue devoted primarily to lists of groups and their level of contact with Central Office, you will be glad to know that we are now back to our usual exciting, innovative and ground-breaking publication.

Our cover article, "A Better Way...", looks at what "group conscience" means and why "majority rules" has never been the end-all of A.A. discussions. This is an excellent look at why A.A. works and how it might work better for all of us.

Another new feature especially dear to my heart is our "Conversations

with Long-timers" feature that will be appearing monthly. As the title states, these are interviews with elder-statespersons in our fellowship and shed light on the past and present in Alcoholics Anonymous. And that, my friends, brings us to the theme of another story, the idea of *cross-talk* and it's history and practice in A.A.. As our long-timer interviewee in last month's issue indicated, cross-talk has not always been an anathema in A.A..

*Meet the Meeting* is back with a look at everybody's favorite, High Noon! And let's not forget the ever estimable *Dear Alky* and *Madame Salami*, also back to share with you their ever apropos founts of wisdom and clarity. 



## Aquarius: Jan. 21- Feb. 19

by Madame Salami

You've been stubborn. You've been standoffish. But the great thing about you, affable Aquarius, is that you finally became teachable. . .and now you're willing to learn from anyone. But you're still a puzzle. I don't know if you are living in your own world, or if you are transforming the world wherever you may roam.

Aquarius is the sign of the future and, as the water bearer, you reflect the idealism of a new life in Alcoholics Anonymous and those promises you hear read at every meeting. But you also like to do your own thing and

love being different. Yes, you can have an open mind, but still be quite stuck in your ways. You're not ruled by your emotions anymore, but, as your sponsor says, you can't always think your way into right action, no matter how thoughtful you might be.


Relationships are the theme of the month. And, as one of the friendliest signs of the zodiac, you are the "people" person that always draws a crowd. Those in a bind know that you are always there to help. You don't hesitate to be there for others, but still must keep a distance. Just re-



## February 2008

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member – independence is one thing and isolation is another.

Careful this month – sometimes your own high personal ideals cause you to demand more of others than is reasonable. Don't condemn others for those things you secretly do yourself. The air around you can be like the winds after a January Bay Area storm. Fortunately, those who survive your intensity get to enjoy the calm and sunshine that follows...but don't be surprised if they don't appreciate the scratches from all the flying branches. 



### New Meeting:

Sun	7:30pm	San Rafael	FIRESIDE 3RD STEP MEETING, 424 Mission Ave./ Mary St. (DI)
Tue	12 Noon	Financial	TUESDAY MEN'S PAX, 660 California St./ Grant Ave. (CL, ME, DI)
Tue	5:30pm	South of Market	THE MISSION CREEK MEETING, 225 Berry St/ 4th St. (SD)
Tue	7:30pm	San Rafael	MARIN PACIFIC GROUP, 10 Bayview Dr./ San Pedro Rd. (SD)

### Meeting Changes:

Thu	7:00pm	Ingleside	THURSDAY THUMPERS Church, 1345 Ocean Ave./ Granada Ave. (was 6:45pm at Byxbee St. )
Sat	6:00pm	Pacific Heights	BEGINNER'S MEETING (OLD SUTTER ST.) 2333 Buchanan St./ Clay St. (was Sutter St. Beginners, Macedonia Church, 2135 Sutter St.)

### No Longer Meeting:

Tue	5:45pm	Hayes Valley	SICK & SEEKING GROWTH, SF Alamo Club, 1748 Market St./ Octavia
Thu	7:00am	Castro	STEP WORKSHOP-BB, 12 X 12, 152 Church St. (Back Room)
Sat	12 Midnight	Inner Richmond	MIDNIGHT MEDITATION, 493 2nd Ave./ Anza.

**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— DECEMBER 2007

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

### San Francisco

**7AM Living Sober** Wed. 7am; **Alamo Square** Sun. 7pm, **Back To Basics** Wed. 8 pm; **Came To Believe** Sun. 8:30 am; **Experience, Strength & Hope** Wed. 7:15pm; **Friday All Groups** Fri. 8:30pm; **Haight St. Blues** Tue 6:15pm; **High Noon Monday** Mon. 12:15pm; **High Noon Friday** Fri. 12:15pm; **High Noon Monday** Tue. 12:15pm; **How It Works** Sat. 2 pm; **One Liners** Thu. 8:30pm; **Marina Discussion** Fri. 8:30pm; **Serenity Seekers** Mon. 7:30pm; **Spiritually Founded Program of Action (SFPOA)** Thu. 7pm; **Sunset 9'ers** Wed. 9 am; **Sunset 9'ers** Fri. 9am; **Sunset Speaker Step** Sun. 7:30pm; **They Stopped In Time** Mon. 8pm; **Too Early** Sat. 8am; **Tuesday's Daily Reflections** Tue. 7am, **Tuesday Downtown** Tue. 8pm

### Marin

**Awakenings** Sat. 8:30am; **Beginners Help** Thu. 8pm; **Bounce Back** Mon. 6pm; **Closed Women's Step Study** Tue. 3:30pm; **East San Rafael Big Book** Mon. 7:30pm; **Mill Valley 7am** Wed. 7am; **Terra Linda** Thu 8:30pm

## CONTRIBUTIONS

to Central Office were made through January 15, 2008 honoring the following members:

### ONGOING MEMORIALS

Mary W. , Silas P.,  
Ken M.

### ANNIVERSARIES

Paul M. 25 years  
Anonymous 29 years  
Jeff S. 12 years  
High Noon:  
Luis M. 4 years,  
Carmen M. 3 years  
Boston Gabe 7 years, Anonymous  
Primary Purpose:  
Eileen M. 8 years

# COMING UP

mark your calendar

*Don't Forget Secretaries & Treasurers may Now Register with Central Office at our website: [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org)! Receive *The Point* every month during your commitment and share important information with your group!*

## DRAG BINGO Living Sober Fundraiser

Saturday, Feb 9, 2008  
AA/ALANON Meeting at 6 PM

Games begin at 7:30 PM  
Ellard Hall / 100 Diamond Street,  
San Francisco  
Sliding Scale: \$15

## Drunks on Display Talent Show

Hosted by

**Artists and Writers  
group of AA**

Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:30  
At All Saints Episcopal Church  
1350 Waller@Masonic

## BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

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

02/03 Speaker: Orlando E.	From: Foster City
02/10 Speaker: Diana G.	From: Oakland
02/17 Speaker: Wayne W.	From: Half Moon Bay
02/24 Speaker: Will H.	From: San Mateo

## TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

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

02/05 Speaker: Kathleen S.	From: Valencia Smoke Free
02/12 Speaker: Luther B.	From: Heavy Hitters
02/19 Speaker: Joe H.	From: A is for Alcohol
02/26 Speaker: Kathy K.	From: Monday Beginners

## FRIDAY NIGHT ALL GROUPS

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

02/01 Host Group: Monday Beginners	Speaker: Bob M.	From: Wed. Old and New
02/08 Host Group: Redwood City Thumpers	Speaker: Eric M.	From: Pax West
02/15 Host Group: Back to Basics	Speaker: Henry T.	From: Benicia Straits
02/22 Host Group: 24 Hour Plan	Speaker: Rachel T.	From: Wise Women's Lafayette
02/29 Host Group: Each Day a New Beginning	Speaker: Rod H.	From: Benicia Hilltop Men's Stag



## Join the Sunshine Club!

Take Meetings to Members who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness or injury. Attend the Sunshine Club Workshop at 6:30pm on Wednesday, February 13, 2008 or at 1:00pm on Saturday, March 1, 2008 at Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St./ Van Ness Ave. Please call 415-674-1821 for more information.



## The Trusted Servants Workshop Committee of the



Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous  
serving San Francisco and Marin Counties

is pleased to present a

## GROUP TREASURER WORKSHOP

Two experienced group treasurers will share their experience, strength and hope. Learn how money and spirituality CAN mix in carrying out this important trusted servant position.

**Where: Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St, SF**

Muni buses 1, 49 and 47 stop nearby

**When: Saturday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008 10 to 11:30 AM**

For more information contact Central Office at 415-674-1821 or [tsw@aasf.org](mailto:tsw@aasf.org).

Coffee and doughnuts will be provided.



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.



(A Better Way: Continued from page 1)

AB: My experience is that the default in A.A. tends to be Robert's Rules of Order and I often don't find this a very effective methodology for making decisions.

PM: Could you say more about Robert's Rules of Order and what you find it lacks?

AB: It's a system for decision-making established over a hundred years ago. It's governed by parliamentary procedure. It's complicated, involving points of order, points of procedure.

PM: Well, it seems A.A. has been using this method, however imperfect, for a long time. If it's so lame, why are people still doing it?

AB: People don't really know what else to do. It's custom, probably because it was the prevailing model used when A.A. was founded. The problem is, only a fraction of people in the world know how to use it, even passably. So, of course, in A.A. meetings, we stumble around, and make it up as we go. It's just a fact when people don't know the rules, they get anxious, especially when something is important. And one thing I know — you don't want a group of alcoholics getting anxious! (laughs)

PM: Andy, Central Office will get letters about this. Let's redeem ourselves now. I think you're saying just because we have a custom doesn't mean it can't change. So, if it's merely custom, and doesn't work that well, tell us about the alternative you have used in A.A. instead.

AB: It's called the *consensus model of decision-making*. Here's what that means. Consensus is reached when everyone (not just a majority) can support a decision in good conscience, even if it's not 100%. It's

driven by proposals from the group. A proposal is similar to a motion, just not as rigid. If you don't get agreement, you can ask for an alternative that could address the concerns of the people opposed.

PM: How about an example?

AB: OK. I secretary a meeting where there was a disagreement about whether dogs should be allowed in our meetings. The people who were objecting thought the dogs made too much noise and were distracting. It could have gone to a yes/no vote. But we came up with a proposal instead to make a script change that dog owners had to control their animals and take them from the room if they got noisy. We got to something that met everyone's needs and no one had to "lose."

PM: Sounds better than voting, but harder.

AB: At a point in time, you may need to vote. But often an effort at reaching consensus works before you have to.

PM: Any final advice for secretaries or anyone running a meeting in A.A.

AB: The key is the neutrality of the chair. You have to stay out of the fray to find out what people are thinking. And it's easy enough, when there's a disagreement, to say, "Why don't we go around the room to hear what people are thinking so we can try to come up with something that people can agree on."

**TP**





# Dear Alky...

Dear Alky,

I have been sober for nine months. I recently struck up an acquaintance on the internet with a woman who lives in Seattle, and we have communicated on line and the phone off and on for several weeks. There seems to be a possible romantic spark between us, and she wants me to come visit her on Valentine's Day. She knows I am in recovery and says she supports me, but she does call herself a "moderate social drinker." I really want to give this relationship a try but I know it might be risky. My sponsor told me to take it to God and see what He says. I did, and I think He said "go for it" - or maybe that's just what I wanted Him to say. What is your advice?

Signed,

Confused in Cyberspace

Dear C in C,

*(Disclaimer: Alky is an alcoholic and therefore has NO BUSINESS giving advice in the areas of romance or finance. That said, of course I do have an opinion.)*

Early sobriety (and by that I mean the first year or so) is a time of so much inner change for most alcoholics, particularly those who are really digging into themselves with the steps. Many of us experience a lot of anxiety when we first peek our heads out of the alcoholic fog in which we've been living in, and realize that we probably have a lot of mess to clean up. It's very tempting to find something else to do, something yummy like a brand new relationship. But there is a very good reason that the "conventional wisdom" is to wait for a while before launching into a hot new romance.

Like new restaurants, new relationships have a high failure rate, and someone with tender new sobriety probably should avoid looking for new things with high potential for creating grief or disappointment. On the other hand, a new romance can create a feeling of elation or euphoria much like

intoxication. That, too, is not especially promising in early sobriety. The scenario you describe is especially fraught with peril as you would be going outside your safety zone, literally (as in away from your A.A. group, sponsor and support network) as well as figuratively (to spend time with someone you've never met but whom you know drinks). Not to mention that Valentine's Day is the most "loaded" day of the year in terms of high expectations in romance. (In case you haven't yet done a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> step, expectations are simply resentments waiting to happen.)

That's a lot of potential for trouble, as far as Alky is concerned. Since you asked, my advice to you is to suggest to your new lady friend that you two take it a little slower. In the meantime, do your first set of steps. Keep talking and writing. Let her make the first visit. One day at a time, one step at a time. You will be putting your sobriety first, which is the best recipe for a relationship that works. Happy Valentine's Day!

--Alky 



## 12TH STEP SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

"You people are awesome!!!" I've heard that twice recently, referring to members of the Sunshine Club. It's a very nice compliment, don't you think? The Sunshine Club is part of the 12 step committee consisting of volunteers who bring a meeting to a member who is temporarily unable to attend regular meetings due to an accident, illness, operation or hospitalization. Some of these are at member's homes and some are at

a hospital or rehab center. Many of those we serve are from out of town and far away from their usual support network.

We ask that members have at least one year of sobriety, and attend a workshop. The workshops are held at Central Office and last about 45 minutes. Two are coming up soon, one on Wednesday, February 13, 2008 at 6:30 PM, and another on Saturday, March 1, 2008 at 1 PM.

We say that whenever someone reaches out, we want the hand of AA to always be there. The Sunshine Club needs more volunteers to participate in this wonderful service.

Can we count on YOU to attend one of the workshops? AWESOME!!!



## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

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

### INTERGROUP OFFICERS:

#### **CHAIR**

Chuck K. chair@aasf.org

#### **VICE CHAIR**

Steve N. vicechair@aasf.org

#### **TREASURER**

Patrick M. treasurer@aasf.org

#### **RECORDING SECRETARY**

Ken J. secretary@aasf.org

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### **CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE**

Victor V. coc@aasf.org

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

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#### **ARCHIVES COMMITTEE**

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#### **ORIENTATION COMMITTEE**

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#### **THE POINT**

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#### **ACCESS COMMITTEE**

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#### **TRUSTED SERVANTS**

#### **WORKSHOP COMMITTEE**

Patty M. tsw@aasf.org

#### **WEBSITE COMMITTEE**

Michael P. website@aasf.org

#### **SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE**

Judi C. sfteservice@aasf.org

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

Jill H. picpc@aasf.org

## SOME OBSERVATIONS


by Bree L.

There's always the reality or the rumor of cliquishness at A.A. meetings. Those of us who never felt like we fit in finally find a home in A.A. and it is easier to hang out and talk with our friends. It can also be uncomfortable to seek out strangers, even in A.A..

There are those popular meetings where the seats are saved for "special friends." Newcomers arrive to find the first ten or so rows saved with keys or mementoes, even chips for sobriety. One such meeting had 90% of the seats saved while the "in" group practiced their own brand of fellowship, going out to dinner and returning just before the meeting started. After the meeting this "special group" gathered once again with their "special group" for fellowship. The newly sober were more like outcasts than newcomers.

Saving seats can extend to meetings where "special friends" are the only ones elected to office. Elections

are locked in by prior arrangement with offices passed between this "special" pre-selected group. This leaves little room for those with qualifying sobriety to get a foot in the door. Opportunities for service are abundant, but there are instances where the same people occupy the same positions, or pass them among the same people. There have been meetings where the secretary becomes the treasurer and the treasurer takes over literature while the literature person moves to greeter and the greeter moves into the secretary position. This rotation continues without a break every six months and no new qualifying member is brought into the mix.

It might be a good time to ask if we who have settled into a comfortable niche are sharing what we've learned and if we are grooming qualifying members for leadership positions and showing what it is like to carry the message. 

## Recent Deaths

Serenity House: Jack M.  
Sonoma County: Pat T.  
South Dakota: Bill H.

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



# MEET THE MEETING— HIGH NOON

by Bree L.

Good news - there's a stimulating middle of the day meeting called High Noon on 15<sup>th</sup> and Julian Sts. at St. John the Evangelist Church in the Mission. It's easily reached via the #14 or the # 49 Mission bus with a short walk up 15<sup>th</sup> to Julian. Another way is via the #26 Valencia bus, getting off at 16<sup>th</sup> with a walk down to 15<sup>th</sup> and Julian. Or, there's BART at 16<sup>th</sup> and Mission. St. John's is the dark brown shingled, vintage church on the corner with a tree lined courtyard.

There's an ongoing spirit in this meeting fueled by active members who firmly believe in carrying the message through fellowship in their courtyard before and after the meeting. It's a good place to connect with other sober (and not so sober) alcoholics.

Every day offers a different format, Monday is topic-discussion, Tuesday and Thursday are speaker discussion. Wednesday is a Step meeting and Friday has a speaker for the entire meeting followed by chip presentations. Saturday is a Big Book study. On Sunday, the church reverts to its original purpose and there are regular services with no A.A. meetings.

High Noon has been around for a many years. It began in the Industrial

*"There is a surplus of good recovery waiting for the right person six days a week at the High Noon meeting"*

Club, which closed, and the meeting was forced to move to Guerrero and Camp, but as time went on the church was needed so the meeting moved to the Women's Building on 18<sup>th</sup> St. This worked well except that the A.A. meetings were a small part of the many activities in the building and not assigned to one permanent room. They moved from there to 19<sup>th</sup> and Dolores but decided to move once again as earthquake standards became more stringent and it was found that the building was not earthquake proof. They moved a last time to 15<sup>th</sup> and Julian where St. John's met the earthquake standards and a permanent room was available.

There were two Saturday High Noon meetings starting in 1990 when they met in the Women's Building. A second High Noon was started on Fillmore and Fell because of the

limited space. That was the schedule before the move to 19<sup>th</sup> and Dolores where they stayed for the next ten or so years.

This noon meeting starts at 12:15pm, surprisingly enough. Historically, when they met at 19<sup>th</sup> and Dolores, day care was already part of the church's programs. The day care sessions didn't end until noon, so the group conscience delayed the starting time for fifteen minutes. The kids had to be out before the drunks came in, say some regular High Noon attendees. When the meeting moved to 15<sup>th</sup> and Julian they kept the same times.

This is a great meeting to network for other things, such as a sponsor or even a job. There is a designated part of each meeting that asks for available sponsors as well as those seeking sponsors. Job opportunities aren't part of the formal itinerary, but job seekers are encouraged to take on a commitment and it's almost guaranteed a job will magically appear. Of course if that job doesn't come as quickly as planned, you can always get your money back.

There is a surplus of good recovery waiting for the right person six days a week at the High Noon meeting.



## 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).



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.
Andy T.	Jeff B.
Ann & Denise	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.	Marty C.
Caroline A.	Mary F.
Casey L.	Matt S.
Catherine S.	Matt S.
Celia H.	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.	Sheila H.
Elizabeth S.	Steve A.
Esther R.	Steve B.
Frances L.	Steve F.
Giles H.	Stu S.
Greg S.	Sylvia D.
Greg W.	Tim M.
Herman B.	Tom M.
Janet B.	

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



## A LOOK AT THE IDEA OF CROSS-TALK by Anonymous

Everybody told me what I needed to do so that I could put the plug-in-the-jug and get my life together. Mamma, Daddy, cousins, buddies, employers, boyfriends, girlfriends, the law, the doctors... the law. They chewed on my ear 'til it was numb, lecturing me with opinions, judgments, ultimatums and advice, trying to beat me down into sense and submission, boring me and annoying me all the way to my next drink. "Shut the hell up and leave me the hell alone!"

I never leave a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous thinking that way; most members of A.A. know that talking down or presenting a lecture of reform to an alcoholic does not get anyone sober and may interfere with spiritual growth. Giving direct advice to someone at group level, speaking out of turn or interrupting someone's share during a meeting has, within the last twenty five years, become known as "cross-talk". In Bay Area meetings, it is often defined as "directly or indirectly commenting on someone's share." This is an unfortunate definition that can also stymie "tail-gating", the similar but more useful practice of following-up on or expanding on someone else's share.

Past Chicago delegate (Panel 53, 2003-04) Don B. recalls earlier days in A.A., "Interruptions were frequent and sometimes contentious. More than one time I thought for sure we'd have fisticuffs. But, no, things would invariably simmer down, and the one getting scolded would say something like, 'I guess you're right. I do need more meetings.'" In the Chicago area

today, Don added, "We have some very large groups; one draws as many as 500 people. With this type of participation — not to mention the positive fallout from increased sponsorship, which sees most new members led through the Steps in a reasonably short time — there's no room for disruptive cross-talk, nor is it tolerated."

Cross-talk as an idea is not an authentic concern of Alcoholics Anonymous. Generally, the belief is the term crept into the rooms of A.A. during the boom of rehabilitation and treatment centers in the mid-1980s to early '90s. The General Service Office consistently reminds us that A.A. as a whole has no opinion on the subject of cross-talk and is never mentioned in Conference-Approved literature. On the contrary, our literature does state that we listen to one another and provide feedback, encouragement and support in our meetings.

Each group, as established in the Twelve Traditions, is autonomous and free to follow its own customs. From group to group and region to region cross-talk is approached differently. Some groups have no problem with members interrupting a speaker with wise cracks or jokes. (Rule 62). In other meetings, however, interruptions or comments of any kind, positive or negative, are admonished, and "disruptive" persons could be asked to leave the meeting.

*(Continued on page 15)*

# GROUP

# CONTRIBUTIONS

NOVEMBER

2007

Name	Oct./Nov	YTD	Name	Oct./Nov	YTD	Name	Oct./Nov	YTD
<b>Fellowship</b>			Island Group Th 8pm		357	Tiburon Women's W 8pm	106	148
2900 Alcothon		389	Keepin' It Real Th 6pm		108	Twice Blessed W 730pm		33
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	32	302	Kids Welcome Group M 1130am		111	We, Us and Ours M 650pm	50	160
Contribution Box	131	661	Living in the Solution F 6pm		761	Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm		182
Deer Park Discovery Group		35	Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		250	What's It All About F 12pm		273
Fellowship Contribution	84	332	Marin Newcomers M 830pm	421	421	Women For Women W 12pm		97
Gay Newcomers Group		95	Mill Valley 7D 7am	600	1176	Women on Monday M 7pm		54
Harbor Lights Fellowship	62	62	Mill Valley Gay/Lesbian W 8pm		50	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		303
IFB	201	781	Monday Blues M 630pm		511	Women's Meeting Su 430pm	19	19
Marin General Service	118	118	Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		792	<b>Total Marin Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$6,859</b>	<b>\$40,013</b>
Marin Teleservice		947	Monday Night Women's M 8pm		259			
Novato Fellowship Events Committee		149	Monday Nooners M 12pm		420			
Traditions Workshop	127	127	More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		214	<b>SF Group Contributions</b>		
Unidentified Group		1004	Morning After Sa 10am	2000	2000	515pm Smokeless W		332
Western Roundup (Living Sober)		2249	Nativity Night Big Book M 8pm	100	300	6am Marina Dock	2067	2067
<b>Total Fellowship</b>	<b>\$756</b>	<b>\$7,253</b>	Newcomers Step M 730pm	154	638	7am As Bill Sees It Fri	54	54
			Noon Discussion Th 12pm		1132	7am Grab Bag M 7am		55
<b>Honors</b>			Noon Hope F 12pm		333	7am Marina Dock		154
High Noon Friday 1215pm	93	80	Noon Tu 12pm		528	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	73	338
<b>Total Honors</b>	<b>\$93</b>	<b>\$80</b>	Primary Purpose W 830pm		85	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		58
			Quitting Time		250	830am Smokeless Th	235	520
<b>Marin Group Contributions</b>			Refugee Th 12pm	150	410	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	236	428
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am		800	Reveille 5D 7am	100	100	A New Start F 830pm		617
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm	30	110	Reveille 7D 7pm		690	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		80
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	700	3733	Rise N Shine Sun 10am		323	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		205
Awakenings Sa 830am		35	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		95	AA Step Study Su 6pm		426
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am	200	200	Women's Speaker Sa 6pm	165	165	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		129
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		785	Serendipity Sa 11am		361	Afro American F 8pm		113
Beginner's Help Th 8pm		200	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)		462	All Together Now Th 8pm		364
Beginners W 7pm		350	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		369	Alumni W 830pm	51	100
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		733	Sober & Serene F 7pm	450	825	Amazing Grace M 7pm		16
Bolinas Monday Nioght & Step Study		50	Spiritual Testost. Men's Su 830a		764	Any Lengths Sat 930am	252	1197
Candlelight Sun 830pm	100	150	Step Sisters (M.V.) Sun 7pm		100	Artists & Writers F 630pm	247	762
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm	135	428	Steps To The Solution W 715pm	46	222	As Bill Sees It Sat 11am		84
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		309	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm		300	As Bill Sees It Sat 8pm		151
Crossroads Sun 12pm		852	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		300	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		649
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm		1204	Sunday Night Corte M. 8pm		176	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		12
Early Birds Sa 6am		50	Survivors M 12pm	85	157	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		147
Fireside F 8pm Bolinas		126	T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm	45	176	As We Understood Him Mon. 7pm		107
Freedom Finders F 830pm		1200	T.G.I.F. F 6pm		223	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		248
Friday Night Book F 830pm		250	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		1164	Back to Basics W 8pm		62
Girls Night Out W 815pm		75	Terra Linda Thursday Men's 8pm		227	Be Still AA Su 1215pm		430
Gratitude Tu 8pm	93	855	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		83	Beginner's Help Th 8pm	100	100
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		485	The Fearless Searchers F 8pm		147	Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm	360	360
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		1500	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		1059	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm		70
High & Dry W 12pm		900	Thursday Night Speaker 830pm		1177	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	395	648
Hillside Candlelight F 830pm		80	Tiburon Tu 7pm & 830pm	716	1306	Bernal New Day 7D	517	1903
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am	108	220	Tiburon Big Book Group W 730pm	156	311	Big Book Basics F 8pm	347	618
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am	30	135	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm	100	545	Big Book Beginners		60

# GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS, CON'T...

Name	Oct./Nov	YTD	Name	Oct./Nov	YTD	Name	Oct./Nov	YTD
Big Book Study Su 1130am		343	High Noon Friday 1215pm	176	967	Rebound W 830pm		275
Birthday Meeting Sa 8pm		250	High Noon Monday 1215pm		537	Red Road Healing Circle Th 6pm		70
Blue Book Special Su 11am		30	High Noon Saturday 1215pm		366	Rodeo Drive Birthday Cake Style F 10pm		31
Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm	151	185	High Noon Thursday 1215pm		731	Room to Grow F 8pm	170	284
Bushwackers Sa 9am		55	High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	115	977	Rose Garden Big Book Th 1205pm		84
BYOL W 1pm	59	59	High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	164	789	Rule 62 W 10pm		888
Came To Believe Su 830am		143	High Sobriety M 8pm		892	S.F. Bermuda Tri. Birthday Cake F 10pm		167
Candlelight Meeting Th 10pm		63	High Steppers W 7pm	58	193	Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm		238
Castro Disc (Show Of Shows) W 8pm		1371	Hilldwellers M 8pm		548	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		392
Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm		115	Home Group Sat 830pm		127	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		794
Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm		15	How It Works Sat 2pm	33	69	Seacliff Th 830pm		197
Code Blue Big Book Study	181	437	Huntington Square W 630pm		1093	Second Chance Th 215pm		105
Common Welfare Th 8pm		115	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		1100	Serenity House		600
Courtside Tu 1215pm		221	Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		86	Serenity House Sat 830pm	300	900
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm		719	K.I.S.S. M 6pm	30	30	Serenity Seekers M 730pm	208	265
Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		61	Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		1094	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		414
Design for Living Sat 8am		329	Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		341	SFPOA Th 7pm	202	477
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		940	Last Call Su 10pm	48	289	Sinbar Su 830pm		78
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am	183	367	Let It Be Now F 6pm	300	455	Sisters Circle Su 6pm	170	385
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		821	Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm		79	Sisters In Sobriety M 7pm (SF)		4
Each Day a New Th 7am	95	401	Like A Prayer Su 4pm	77	175	Sober Across M-Sa 830am	45	320
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	241	659	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm		174	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		332
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am	191	449	Live and Let Live Su 8pm		172	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		270
Early Start F 6pm	1329	2042	Living Sober W 8pm		160	Sought to Improve Th 730pm		72
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		361	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		424	Step Talk Su 830am		1029
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	198	1313	Luke's Group W 8pm	81	308	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	103	299
Epiphany Group Th 8pm		60	Lush Lounge Sa 2pm		88	Stepping Out Sat 6pm	30	54
Eureka Step Tu 6pm	200	457	Marina Discussion F 830pm		1045	Stonestown M 8pm		255
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		1684	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		174	Straight Jackets Th 9am	22	242
Excelsior Free for All Sa 8pm	60	207	Meeting Place Noon W 12pm	143	375	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 930am		1315
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		626	Men's Gentle Touch M 7pm	255	409	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	152	485
Fell Street F 830pm		197	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	303	1997	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc Su 8pm		368
Fell Street Step Su 8pm		127	Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm		666	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		150
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		35	Monday Beginners M 8pm		700	Sundown W 7pm		666
Fireside Chat Group Th 8pm	95	95	Monday Monday M 1215pm	57	270	Sunrise Women's Step Th 6pm	80	211
Fireside Chat Tu 8pm		546	Moving Toward Serenity W 830pm	404	404	Sunset 11'ers - Th		50
First Place		45	New Clay M 2pm		27	Sunset 11'ers F		100
Fogwatch Tu 7pm		23	New Friday Big Book F 12pm	104	104	Sunset 11'ers M	60	160
Founders' Group Sa 5pm		20	New Hope Big Book M 630pm		106	Sunset 11'ers Su		148
Friday All Groups F 830pm		1564	New Life W 7pm	264	633	Sunset 11'ers W		132
Friday Knights Th 730am	50	86	Newcomers Tu 8pm		385	Sunset 9'ers F	172	494
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm	140	280	No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm	80	111	Sunset 9'ers M		194
Friday Night Special F 8pm		20	No Reservation M 12pm		605	Sunset 9'ers Sa		297
Friday Noon F 12pm		68	No Whiners F 7pm		60	Sunset 9'ers Su		432
Friday Reflections		30	Noon Smokeless F 12pm	79	258	Sunset 9'ers Th		129
Friday Smokeless F 830pm	150	444	Noon Smokeless M 12pm		15	Sunset 9'ers W		228
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm		912	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		10	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm		360
Friendly Circle Group Su	228	228	One Liners Th 830pm		484	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		441
Getting Fit at One O'Clock Tu 1pm		29	Park Presidio M 830pm		120	Surf Tu 8pm	122	173
Gold Mine Group M 8pm	106	144	Parkside Th 830pm		100	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm	49	133
Goodlands Su 2pm		168	Pax West M 12pm		359	Ten Years After Su 6pm	146	1308
Greenhouse Meditation		82	Pax West Th 12pm		1124	The 24 Hour Plan M 7am	20	62
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm		974	Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm		81	The Drive Thru W 1215pm		588
Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm	60	140	Pure & Simple Su 6pm		274	The Parent Trap M 1230pm		451
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm		11	Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women M 5:30pm		121	The Pepper Group F 12pm		120
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm	149	486	Reality Farm Th 830pm	90	218	Thought For The Day F 730am		36

# CONVERSATIONS WITH LONGTIMERS

by Ray C.

*Interviewer's note: It was obvious to me that Ray C. has a lively intelligence and a questioning mind. He is a personification of the maxim, "if you aren't growing, you're relapsing." Ray's still growing.*

Q. Did you get sober in San Francisco?

A. I got sober finally in South San Francisco. I moved to South San Francisco in 1963. I went to A.A. the first time in 1960 when I was living in San Francisco.

Q. Can you tell me a little about your first exposure to A.A. in 1960?

A. Truthfully, my first exposure to A.A. was in 1945 when my father got sober. So I have known about A.A. since I was 15. But the first exposure for myself personally was probably the spring of 1960. I was working downtown on Sansome Street and I telephoned the Central Office, and I told them that I desperately wanted to go to a meeting but that I always got drunk after work first — first things first! And so this man showed up on the steps of the bank at 5:05 and took me to his home. He was 72 years old. His name was Ed R. and he had a bad ticker, a weak heart and his lips were blue but he was solid A.A..

He sat me down in his kitchen and his wife made supper for us and he gave me a lecture that this would be our first meeting and I'll always remember his great words of wisdom, that I should find a home group, adopt a home group and make my home group my highest priority over all others in my life. Whatever else I'd do, don't miss the home group meeting. It's always stuck with me.

Q. Do you have a home group today?

A. I do, it's the original Marin Smokeless group here in Mill Valley, meets on Thursday evenings at the Methodist Church.

Q. What's your date of sobriety?

A. May 31, 1964. I went to meetings and stayed sober about three weeks, worked all the steps, mistakenly believing that reading the steps meant working the steps. So one Saturday night I was going to a meeting, heading north on Franklin Street and I could smell a martini, I could hear a voice saying, "Ray, if you ever want to take a drink, call me first." A man I had met at a meeting had given me his card with his telephone number and a dime — telephone calls then were a dime — and I thought, "If I call him, he'll talk me out of it, sure

as shooting." So I didn't call him. I turned right into the bar and that one lasted for three years. So I didn't get sober until 1964.

Q. So you just drank a while more?

A. Well, I was going to meetings off and on, always with a guilty conscience and never really receiving the grace. Once it took and I stayed sober, I'd go to a meeting at noon somewhere and I'd go to a meeting in the evening somewhere, and that went on for two years until my wife threatened to leave me.

Q. You were doing two meetings a day then?

A. I would say I averaged over seven meetings a week for two years, then the ultimatum came down. Then I began going to six meetings a week and one evening a week for the wife. I had to meet that responsibility, too.

Q. What contact did you have with Central Office?

A. When Paul G. was CO secretary, I knew Paul quite well and I went to him for guidance in 1970 after I'd been sober for six years. I was ready for the Golden Gate Bridge or something, I went into a terrible

(Continued on page 13)

## GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS, CON'T...

Name	Oct./Nov	YTD	Name	Oct./Nov	YTD	Name	Oct./Nov	YTD
Night Women's Th 630pm		346	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm		1220	Women Who Drank Too Much	16	41
Too Early Sat 8am	356	2726	Walk of Shame W 8pm		409	Women's 10 Years Plus	107	886
Transrecovery F 630pm		18	Washington Square M 7pm		360	Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu 630pm		201
Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm	180	360	Waterfront Sun 8pm	360	1143	Women's Promises F 7pm	137	188
Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm		60	We Care Tu 12pm	120	406	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		107
Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm	242	791	Wednesday Women's Big Book W 615pm		180	YAHOO Step Sa 11am		142
Tuesday Step Meeting Tu 130pm		2	West Portal W 830pm	82	315	<b>Total SF Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$15,306</b>	<b>\$88,517</b>
Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am		205	Wharfrats Th 815pm		242			
Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm		195	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm		175	<b>Total Group Contributions</b>	<b>\$23,014</b>	<b>\$112,942</b>
Unidentified Group		171	Women Living Sober Sa 10am		60			

# SOBER MARRIAGE

by Victor V.

**1 a (1):** the state of being united to a person of the opposite sex as husband or wife in a consensual and contractual relationship recognized by law **(2):** the state of being united to a person of the same sex in a relationship like that of a traditional marriage <same-sex marriage> **b:** the mutual relation of **married** persons : **WEDLOCK** **c:** the institution whereby individuals are joined in a marriage **2 :** an intimate or close union <the marriage of painting and poetry — J. T. Shawcross>

Nowhere in the definition of marriage does it state that partners need to be emotionally mature. What a scary thought! Two people can make a commitment to each other, get married, and raise children without fully understanding the implications of what they are doing or how they are affecting each other's lives.

I was married when I was twenty-two years of age. I met my wife in a bar at a time when my drinking was really taking off. Three months later I was married and thought I was well on my way to becoming a mature human being. I raised two children who are now twenty-three and twenty-eight years of age. I was the nice guy who

would do anything for anyone because I wanted to be loved by all. My wife turned out to be a very unhappy, bitter person, full of anger and resentment. I tried to show her for seventeen years that there was a better life. She did not have to go through life being unhappy. After many years of counseling and trying to change my wife, I became very frustrated and proceeded to drown myself in alcohol. After all, I did not have the same problems as she did and I did not need to work on myself. The drinking did not help the situation, but if you were married to an unhappy bitter person you would drink also. My happiness was based on another human's life. My children were raised in a very hostile and volatile environment for which I felt guilty and ashamed. When my daughter was thirteen years old and my son was eighteen years old I decided to leave because I couldn't handle living life in misery.

My drinking really took off at this point and my life became more miserable. I realized that I needed to stop drinking. I turned to Alcoholics Anonymous for help. For five years I was not willing to accept the help that was offered to me. I thought that I

could figure it out on my own, but my own thinking always took me back to the bottle. In the meantime I had met another woman and by this time was living with her. As I continued my old behavior of drinking and lying, I became more and more disgusted with myself.

I continued going to meetings and finally something clicked. I got a sponsor, got a service commitment, worked the steps, and life began to change. I learned that I need to work on myself and change my life. I was always the victim who was unwilling to be accountable for his behavior. As I began to change and mature my relationship also began to change. My new partner began to trust me as my spiritual life grew in A.A. Amazing how our whole attitude and outlook on life will change just as the promises say. My children are back in my life watching me grow to be the man that my Higher Power had intended for me to be. My new wife has seen amazing changes in the last five years. All I had to do was to be honest, open, and willing to reach out to another alcoholic and ask for help. The rooms of A.A. are full of people who are willing to help. All I have to do is ask!



*(Conversations: Continued from page 13)*

depression. To put this in context, this was 1970, the country was in upheaval, women's lib, civil rights, the Vietnam war, social unrest, and also the environmental movement was incipient in those days, and I was very confused about everything.

Q. What did he say that was helpful?

A. He said, "Well, Ray, you should get out of town, go up to Duffy's," which was new then, it was 1970. I went, but

to tell you the truth, I came back and this depression got worse. I had to seek professional help outside of A.A., which I did.

Q. Can you describe something that's changed since you've been in A.A.?

A. There were no 28-day rehab programs, it was one on one, you found someone who really needed help or you made yourself available. You helped them over the shakes, you gave them tomato juice and whatever

solace you could. Something that came from the 28 day programs, sometime between 1964 and 1970, this guy and his girlfriend brought the practice of saying, "My name is such and such and I'm an alcoholic" every time they said something. I had never heard anyone except the speaker repeat, "Hello my name is such and such and I'm an alcoholic." We would say to them, "We know you're an alcoholic, you've already told us for Christ sake."





# ONE MORE DAY AT A TIME: HOW WILL WE USE IT?

by Greg W.

As you surely know, 2008 is a Leap Year. That means our calendars have an extra day, February 29th. Leap years are years with 366 days instead of the usual 365. Leap years are necessary because the actual length of a year is 365.242 days, not 365 days. Basically, leap years occur every 4 years, and years that are evenly divisible by 4 (2008, for example) have 366 days. This extra day is added to the calendar on February 29th. Thus, this calendar year contains an additional day, or, an additional 24 hours, an additional 1400 minutes, an additional 86,400 seconds.

Other than misdating checks as March 1 instead of February 29, procrastinating on our taxes another day, or struggling to synchronize our watches and electronic devices to the correct date, this leap year day may pass unnoticed in most of our lives. But in thinking about our A.A. phrase "One Day at a Time," I considered what I might do for myself and my fellows with this gift of an "extra" day of sobriety.

Maybe I will start the day, as I ought to every day, by giving thanks that I am alive, and that, regardless of my

trials and circumstances, I have another day on which to remind myself of the truly precious, fleeting miracle that is life. I should surely take time during the day to remind myself of the First Step in our program: February 29th is another day that I am powerless over alcohol and that I have a progressive, fatal, incurable disease called alcoholism. That reminder would be enough of a bummer to make me pull the covers over my head and stay in bed until March comes around but I can then quickly give thanks for the program of Alcoholics Anonymous that offers me, as it has millions worldwide, the opportunity to arrest and recover from this disease by maintaining my spiritual condition through practicing twelve simple steps as outlined in the Big Book.


With 24 additional hours at my disposal, I can surely make time to attend my regular meeting, and perhaps even a meeting that I have not attended before. I can even take one of those hours to meet with my sponsor or, if I am so fortunate, a sponsee.

Among those extra 1400 minutes there should be ample time to make a

few phone calls to fellow A.A.'s, both those who are doing well and those who are still struggling. I can read a few extra pages in the Big Book or the Twelve and Twelve. I can get to my meeting a little earlier, stay a little later, and put away a few more chairs.

With the average handshake taking about three seconds, imagine how many more hands I can shake, how many newcomers I can greet with those 86,400 bonus seconds. I could even get a little crazy and hug a few more people – at five seconds a hug, the opportunities are limitless.

At the end of this day that is, like all days, a gift, I can pause to take inventory of my day, giving due credit for things done well and righting any wrongs I may have committed. And I can go to sleep at night after offering a brief "Thank You" to my Higher Power; in fact, with all this extra time, I may even want to expand the conversation with my Higher Power a little further.

What a gift and opportunity this extra day is! But then, isn't that true of every day that we stay sober? Happy Leap Year all! 

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*(Cross Talk: Continued from page 10)*

Most groups ultimately take to the middle road, and accept members sharing about their own experience as it relates directly or indirectly to another's sharing, but are asked not to refer directly to that person's comments. This is what is meant by "tail-gating".

In the founding days of Alcoholics Anonymous, concern over cross-talk

was immaterial. The Big Book recalls the earliest meetings of our Fellowship as "informal" gatherings. And according to "Dr. Bob and the Good Ole Timers" comments, feedback, open discussion and instruction were necessary and commonplace in those days.

A respectful and helpful open exchange between members has never been discouraged by Alcoholics

Anonymous. Remembering our code of love and tolerance, sharing from our own experiences without judgment or criticism and checking our motives will maintain our primary purpose of staying sober and helping other alcoholics to achieve sobriety and help us shake the  isolation of the disease of alcoholism.

# IFB MEETING SUMMARY — JANUARY '08

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

P = Present; A = Absent; R = Resigned; X = Alternate. The \* above indicates an absence; more than one indicates the number of consecutive absences. A Board

## New IFB Reps Present

Ken M. Sober Across the Board M-S 8:30am  
Michael B. One Liners Thu. 8:30pm

## Visitors

Bill K. First Place  
Paul T. Sober 5150s  
Robert B. SF Bridging the Gap

## Liaisons Present

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

Following in an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the January IFB meeting. It is provided for your convenience and it is not intended to be the completed approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes, contact the Central Office.

## IFB Reports

**Chair's Report:** Chuck K. gave his report. He outlined items to be discussed at this meeting: election of a Liaison from the

IFB to district 6 to attend local and area meetings, the issue of how the IFB handles committee dissolution without any action on the part of the IFB, and the dual purpose name issue.

**Treasurer's Report:** Carol E. gave the report. For the month of November, the Net Loss was \$4,723 which was \$9,986 worse than the budgeted surplus of \$5,263. For year to date through November, Net Income was 11,106 which was higher than budget. Total expenses for the month of October were less within \$100 of budget.

The improvement in YTD net income is primarily due to higher contributions and lower expenses.

The 2008 budget was based on actuals through September 2007 and a forecast for October-December 2007. The 2008 budget assumed a 4% increase, which was based on the average increase over the prior 5 years. It is possible that the 2008 increase should be lower depending on December's results.

*(Continued on page 17)*

(Continued from page 16)

**Central Office Report:** Peter M. gave the report. The January issue of *The Point* features information about our Trusted Servant Registration Drive. The IFB currently has no Special Events Committee, which has coordinated past Founders Day events. Central Office will be closed on January 21<sup>st</sup> for Martin Luther King Day. Central Office needs help with layout for covers of cassette tapes that are being converted to CD; speak with Peter if you have design or graphic arts experience and are interested.

**Central Office Committee Report:** The COC report was given by Chuck K. At the last COC meeting the CO Manager's and Treasurer's reports were heard and discussed. The COC asks for all reps to please let their treasurers know to send in their Gratitude month contributions. The Christmas party at Central Office was a great success, thank you to all who participated.

**Discussion on the process of reinstating committees and chairs:** Scott N. reiterated the motion that passed from last month's meeting, which states, "Regardless of how or why a committee has been disbanded, before it can be reformed, it must be brought to, and discussed by the IFB for approval." Discussion ensued on ways committees have dissolved themselves, including (a) formally stating dissolution, and (b) the Chair resigning without a successor or members, rendering the committee inactive. Scott presented the idea of establishing a Fellowship Committee. A motion was made and seconded for a Fellowship Committee to form to plan and organize Founders' Day, Unity Day in cooperation with SF General Service, and the Central Office Volunteer Holiday party. The motion was passed by greater than a 2/3 majority vote.

**Liaison from IFB to General Service District 6:** Sam S. was nominated and accepted. With no other nominations or volunteers Sam was elected.

**Issue of group names and process of working with new groups:** Chuck K. reported he received several emailed group consciences on the discussion in the IFB of group names. He asked for a show of hands of the Reps who have spoken with their groups about the issue and 15 out of 39 Reps raised their hands. Chuck asked for all Reps to please submit their

group's conscience via email. Reps had been giving their group's conscience on the issue verbally at past IFB meetings, and providing it via email would allow a database of responses to be easily constructed.

**IFB Committee Reports:** Anyone wanting more information on service opportunities may contact Central Office.

**12th step Committee:** Shawn reported that the 12-Step List updates are almost complete. The Sunshine Club desires for funds for books to distribute to members at their meetings when necessary. There will be Sunshine club workshops in February and March.

**Access Committee:** No report.

**Archives Committee:** Bruce K. reported that the committee could use some more members to participate in cataloguing, archiving, and preserving historical documents.

**Orientation Committee:** Patty M. reported on the on-going actions of the committee prior to every IFB meeting at 6PM.

**The Point Editorial Committee:** Victor V. reported for the committee and asked IFB Reps to pay special attention to the registration drive in this month's issue of *The Point*.

**Trusted Servants Workshop Committee:** Patty M. reported at the December meeting the committee discussed the schedule of workshops for 2008.

**Website Committee:** Michael P. reported that the trusted servants registration form is now available online and the group registration form will be available soon.

**Outreach Committee:** No report.

#### **Special Committee Reports**

**Teleservice:** Written report submitted, but no oral report given.

**PI/CPC:** Bruce K. reported for Jill H. The committee will be presenting a Speaker Workshop and its Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> starting at 10:30 AM at the Urban Life Center, 1111 O'Farrell St.

#### **IFB Liaison Reports**

**General Service, SF:** Karen S. reported on the ongoing group inventory. March 7-9, 2008 is PRAASA in Alaska where

Agenda topics are presented and discussed.

**General Service, Marin:** No report.

**Teleservice, Marin:** No report.

**PI/CPC, Marin:** No report

**Bridging the Gap:** Robert B. announced the upcoming orientation Tuesday, Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>.

**H&I:** No report.

**Spirit of San Francisco:** No report.

**Living Sober:** Alejandro D. reported that Living Sober needs extra support this year since the conference expenses are much higher than in previous years.

The 7th Tradition was observed. A motion to adjourn was made seconded, and unanimously passed. The meeting ended at 9:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca D.,

For Ken J., Secretary

The next IFB meeting is on Wednesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Ave., in Sausalito 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 your 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.



*by Carole P.*

We live in an electronic age. Technology now offers us the capability of videotaping A.A. speaker shares in an effective and affordable manner. Yet, some people are wary of videotaped shares because they believe it might be a violation of the A.A. Traditions. In particular, there is concern that a videotaped share might violate Traditions Eleven and Twelve, which state, respectively, that “...*we need always maintain anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.*” and “*Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*”

Dialogues have begun which explore the viability of archiving videotaped shares of A.A. members. Here are some of the points which have been raised thus far:

Q. We already have an archive of audiotapes. Why would we want to videotape A.A. speaker shares?

A. There is a famous saying that "a picture is worth a thousand words." In many ways that is true. There is a closeness, an intimacy, that comes from visually connecting to another person. In watching a videotaped share, there is a power that can be transmitted from watching the speaker that cannot be communicated on an audiotape.

Q. What criteria would be used to determine which old-timers should be videotaped?

A. Another excellent point. What cri-

teria is currently being used to determine who becomes a circuit speaker?

Q. What if some old-timers get resentments because they have not been asked to share their story on videotape?

A. See previous question. We can't all be circuit speakers.

Q. Where would these videotapes be stored?

A. There are several possibilities, including: the old-timer's nearest Central Office, the old-timer's General Service area, or a national archive.

Q. Who would have access to these tapes? How can we prevent illegal

copies from being made? Who would do the filming?

A. These issues can be addressed after the threshold questions have been resolved.

There are surely many areas of concern that need to be examined in addition to the few that have been raised in this article. Your input is most sincerely welcome. The Central Office Archive Committee meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of every month at 2pm at Central Office. Please feel free to contact the Committee members at [archives@aasf.org](mailto:archives@aasf.org) to share your feelings on this topic. Or come down and join the committee and become part of the solution. — These meet-



## Cunning, Baffling, Puzzlefuf

Find each of the following words which are drawn from the Second Step, Tradition and Concept. Each word appears only once, and may appear forward, backward, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

GROUPS  
GOD  
CONFERENCE

AUTHORITY  
SOCIETY  
SERVANTS

CONSCIENCE  
SANITY  
POWER

VOICE  
RESTORE  
BELIEVE

I R G O D S R S T A Y S G S O C I E T Y  
 P E I V O I C E Y Y U T P T I N A S A E  
 O C V L Y H P T H O T T E U G R U O P S  
 W I N E E T I O R S D E H I O E R C O F  
 E O E W I N E G W A A A I O C R E I W T  
 R V I R A L E I T E G A U C R O G E E T  
 C O N S C I E N C E R S U T O I S T R R  
 E T P O W E R B O O N T O T H S T Y S Y  
 E V R A Y T E I C O S N R E H O D Y S S  
 C O N F E R E N C E I A E V E O R O S O  
 N E R O T S E R R O R V S E V E R I G N  
 E B S R T P O P O O O R T I E W C I T L  
 R E T I C I O V O T T E O L I O E D T Y  
 E E N G R O U P S W S S R E L P O Y O Y  
 F V A P O W E R T I E E E B E G N R E T  
 N E V O Y T I N A S R R R B E L I V E  
 O I R Y T I N A S I O E B E L I E V E S  
 C L E E C I O V N S S G R O U P S N I V  
 R E S T O R E A Y T I R O H T U A V O O  
 E B O S G C S T R Y T C E E V I D I V

# Financial Statement

## November 2007

	Nov 07	Jan - Nov 07
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Contributions from Groups		
Group Contributions	10,218	134,929
Honors	93	484
Contributions from Groups - Other	0.25	256
Total Contributions from Groups	10,311.25	135,669
Contributions from Individuals		
Individual - Unrestricted	319	18,550
Faithful Fiver	1,115	8,104
Honorary Contributions	126	2,164
Total Contributions from Individuals	1,560	28,818
Gratitude Month		
Gratitude Month - Groups	1,921	5,205
Gratitude Month - Individual	884	884
Total Gratitude Month	2,805	6,089
Sales - Bookstore	8,649	103,198
Special Event Income	0	1,536
Newsletter Subscript.	100	1,169
Total Income	23,424	276,479
Cost of Goods Sold		
Cost of Books Sold	8,739	69,182
Credit Card Processing Fees	208	2,115
Total COGS	8,947	71,297
Gross Profit	14,447	205,183
Expense		
Reconciliation Discrepancies	0	0
Employee Expenses		
Wages & Salaries	8,716	95,633
Employer Tax Expenses	709	8,656
Health Benefits	1,211	12,118
Workers Comp Ins.	0	1,038
Total Employee Expenses	10,637	117,444
Professional Fees		
Computer Consulting	0	1,863
Total Professional Fees	0	1,863
Bank Charges	20	93
Postage		
Bulk Mail	0	600
Postage - Other	13	604
Total Postage	13	1,204
Rent - Office	4,147	44,018
Rent - Other	75	825
Access Expenses	0	1,050
IFB Literature	83	122
PI/CPC	35	82
Filing/Fees	60	140
Insurance	0	1,932

	Nov 07	Jan - Nov 07
Internet Expense	55	1,166
Office Supplies	90	1,476
Paper Purchased	265	2,177
Software Purchased	0	425
Shipping	106	559
Printing	949	1,790
Equipment Lease	1,804	7,310
Repair & Maintenance	365	2,640
Security System	34	434
Special Events	843	2,879
Telephone	319	3,332
Phone Book Listings	79	948
Utilities	0	1,560
Travel	0	1,046
Training	0	58
Bad Checks	0	262
Miscellaneous Expense	0	150
Total Expense	19,134	196,935
Net Ordinary Income	-4,656	8,248
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Interest Income	55	4,195
Total Other Income	55	4,195
Other Expense		
Depreciation Expense	76	832
Amortization Expense	46	505
Total Other Expense	122	1,337
Net Other Income	-67	2,858
Net Income	-4,723	11,106

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