

the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

2009
JULY

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

A publication of the
Intercounty Fellowship

of Alcoholics Anonymous

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

JULY 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
<p><i>Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at meetings of the IFB, COC, IFB committees or service events sponsored by the preceding entities, including ASL interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative formats, should contact Central Office (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event..</i></p> <div>     </div>			<p>1</p> <p><u>FIRST WED</u></p> <p>Intercounty Fellowship Board 1187 Franklin St. SF (First Unitarian Church) IFB Orientation, 6pm, IFB Meeting, 7pm</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Living Sober Conference</p>	<p>6</p> <p><u>FIRST MON</u></p> <p>Access Committee Central Office, 6pm</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p><u>SECOND WED</u></p> <p>12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 6:30pm</p>	<p>9</p> <p><u>SECOND THU</u></p> <p>Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office, 6pm</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p><u>SECOND MON</u></p> <p>Fellowship Committee Central Office, 6pm</p> <p>SF Public Information/ Cooperation with the Profes- sional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office, 7pm</p>	<p>14</p> <p><u>SECOND TUE</u></p> <p>The Point Committee Central Office, 5:30pm</p> <p>Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St. 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael, 7:15pm</p> <p>SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St., 8pm</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>19</p> <p><u>THIRD SUN</u></p> <p>Archives Committee Central Office, 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day</p>	<p>20</p> <p><u>THIRD MON</u></p> <p>SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael, 8pm</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p><u>FOURTH TUE</u></p> <p>The Point Committee Central Office, 5:30pm</p> <p>Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 7:30pm</p>	<p>29</p> <p>S.F. PI/CPC</p> <p>Speaker Workshop Central Office, 7pm</p> <p>See Flyer on p. 4</p>	<p>30</p> <p><u>LAST THU</u></p> <p>SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15pm Committee Meeting: 8pm</p>

FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3 <i>Central Office Closed</i> 4th of JULY HOLIDAY Living Sober Conference	4 Living Sober Conference
10	11 Trusted Servants & The Traditions Central Office, 10am See Flyer on p. 13
17	18
24	25 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma; Business Meeting: 12:30pm
31	

Western Roundup Living Sober 2009



July 3, 2009 through July 5, 2009

Grand Hyatt San Francisco,

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San Francisco, CA

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 Members of Alcoholics Anonymous with Al-Anon
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 Musical, Dance, Raffle, Living Sober
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 or go to www.livingsober.org**



Meeting Changes

New Meetings:

Mon	6:30pm	Potrero Hill	PORTRERO HILL 12 X 12, 953 De Haro/Southern Ave (SS)
Sat	12:30pm	Bayview	FULL FLIGHT FROM REALITY, YMCA, 1601 Lane St./Quesada (BG, SD)

Meeting Changes:

Sun	7:00pm	Noe Valley	NO GURUS MEDITATION, Church, 455 Fair Oaks St./ 26th St. (was 1268 Sanchez, Church)
Tue	7:30pm	Northern Mission	BEACH 547 SPEAKER TAPE, 170 Valencia St./Duboce (was 547 Valencia, Residence)
Wed	7:00pm	Castro	CASTRO DISCUSSION (SHOW OF SHOWS), (was 8:00pm)
Thu	6:30pm	Mission	FREETHINKERS, Hospital, 3555 Cesar Chavez St./Valencia, Solarium (was 1268 Sanchez)
Fri	7:00pm	San Rafael	HAPPY DESTINY, 1115 Pt. San Pedro Rd./Riviera Dr. (was 7:15pm at Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln)

No Longer Meeting:

Fri	8:00pm	Bayview	STAYING SOBER, 1601 McKinnon/ 3rd St.
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Please Note: Central Office occasionally receives reports that meetings listed in our schedules are not there. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken—and sometimes not. The office relies primarily on information that is given to us by A.A. groups, but when a group disbands, informing the Central Office is a common omission. **If you know *anything* about a meeting that has disbanded, please call the Central Office immediately: (415) 674-1821. Thanks for your help in keeping the schedule accurate!**

SPEAKERS WANTED!!

*Carry the AA message to schools, professional organizations,
the medical community, and drunk driving classes.*

PI/ CPC

(Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community)

SPEAKER WORKSHOP 7:00PM

(Speaker requirement: two years of continuous sobriety in AA)

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

Central Office, 1821 Sacramento / Van Ness
For further information, call Central Office: 415-674-1821



Reasonable Accommodations Policy: Persons requiring reasonable accommodations, including sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternate formats should contact Central Office no later than July 22, 2009





From the Editor


...are Entirely Self Supporting

Our theme this month is self-support in Alcoholics Anonymous. We posed the question, "What is self-support?" and got a range of responses. Ask yourself what it means to you and then compare your ideas with the views in these pages.

As I thought about what self-support means, it dawned on me that it is our responsibility to make sure that the hand of A.A. is always there. Further, with that responsibility comes the duty to be accountable. Beyond throwing money in the basket, it's incumbent upon members of A.A. to hold the organization accountable to a sterling standard of fiscal management. One whiff of mismanagement or, heaven forbid, misappropriation, and boom, the reputation borne of years of good stewardship evaporates.

The basic reason for the existence of the newsletter you hold in your hand (or access online) is this aspect of self-support: accountability. Our newsletter's main purpose is (you thought it was the jokes, didn't you?) to make the Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB), our local governing body, accountable to the groups that provide its support. The pages at the end of every issue of *The Point* are

dedicated to providing you with the information you need to oversee where our local Intergroup stands with regard to finances and activities. We publish a summary of the IFB meetings, group contributions—on a monthly and year-to-date basis and our profit and loss statement. Take a look right now and see if your group (or groups) has contributed to the fellowship, and how much. Review whether your group's IFB rep attended the most recent meeting. Use this information to ask informed questions at the group level about your group's income, expenses, and IFB and General Service support. Can your treasurer answer your questions?

It's the job of each of us in A.A. to bring the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. We need the community of support provided by a central phone number to call, our web site and printed meeting schedules to get us to meetings, and literature and pamphlets to explain the program. Without these, we'd have a heck of a time doing our job. The easiest part of self-support may be throwing money in the basket; being responsible and accountable as part of the Seventh Tradition demands even more. 

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 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 summary of the editorial policy of *The Point*. For the full policy, please go to www.aasf.org.)



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"Now that we are sober in A.A., the word 'support' has to do with sharing, people, self-respect, gratitude, and what we are privileged to give—not take—in material terms."

Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix
Reprinted with permission from
A.A. World Services

Filthy Book Profits

Fiscal Reality or Spiritual Nirvana?

by Anonymous

As a greenhorn General Service Representative (GSR), I learned with dismay that A.A. as a whole was not fully self-supporting and that, to meet the costs of providing services to the fellowship, the profits from sales of the Big Book were used to supplement the parsimony of the groups. Armed with this devastating news, I took it to my home group with all the zeal of an Old Testament prophet. An old-timer kindly took my hand and explained, with a glint in his clear blue eyes, that this wasn't news at all and had been a hot topic in the fellowship since the very beginning. He also expressed his opinion that the so-called profits from literature sales were, in fact, contributions from alcoholics. My spiritual crusade came to a grinding halt.

Today, some years later, with all the persistence of an unwelcome inventory item, the topic of self-support has again risen to the surface, and at this year's General Service Conference in New York the delegates were asked to review "the benefits and liabilities, both spiritual and practical, of fully funding General Service Office services to the Fellowship ... by the voluntary contributions of A.A. members and groups." In other words, those filthy book profits were back on the agenda.

A.A. groups (via their GSRs) at the regional General Service Assembly held in Marin in April were passionate: "AA ought to live within its means." "The Seventh Tradition only refers to groups." "The Seventh Tradition is for us all!" "My group likes things the way they are." "Who's counting?" "When voluntary contributions need to be at



"Opinions aside, the brutal reality is that unless GSO expenses are reduced and/or the contributions of the groups increased, A.A. will have to continue using the surplus generated from sales of literature. . . "

a certain level per member, that sounds like dues!" "It's about time A.A. got itself out of kindergarten." "Let's not cut off our nose to spite our face." "We own the literature and sales of it are self-support." "It is unethical to restructure GSO in a way that leads to financial instability." Some even quoted A.A.'s founders who bequeathed us this legacy of ambiguity.

Opinions aside, the brutal reality is that unless GSO expenses are reduced and/or the contributions of the groups increased, A.A. will have to continue using the surplus generated from sales of literature to fund things like the

public service announcements that air on television, new leaflets and other vital services that carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

So what about those liabilities both spiritual and practical? Can there be a spiritual liability to paying our own way? Well, yes there can—perfectionism. Aren't we setting our sights a bit too high for what we are actually capable of, not to mention grandiose, to think that we shall always be able to meet the costs of GSO, come what may? Bill had a word for that and he called it Bigshotism.

So, maybe the lesson to be learned is acceptance. Maybe, just maybe, the universe has been trying to tell A.A. something, ever since the beginning when Bill opined that alcoholics were as tight as the bark on a tree, and we haven't been listening. Maybe Step Six is for A.A., too, and patient improvement might be the best we can expect, as we raise our eyes towards the spiritual nirvana of self-support and walk in that direction.

The issue remains on the A.A. agenda and next year the A.A. groups, in a particularly badly worded conference advisory action, will be asked the question, "if we continue to use literature profits to partially fund services, should there be a limit?" There's that sordid word again, "profits." A more interesting way to pose the question might be, "at what point does a principle that rejects book money as a legitimate form of self-support outweigh our Twelfth Step responsibility to carry the message?"





Passing the Hat

It's very refreshing to hear a secretary announce that group members need to "dig a little deeper" in order to meet the monthly obligations: primarily rent for the meeting room. Refreshing, because it harkens back to the 1940's, when A.A. began meeting outside of members' homes, and a treasurer at the 24th Street Clubhouse asked the group to "go heavier on the hat to-night, will you?"

These days in the Bay Area our costs are going up everywhere, including meeting rents. Many groups have stopped buying sweets and snacks, and many members have stepped up and volunteered to bring something for others to share. I hope that all of our secretaries and treasurers remain responsible by communicating the group's needs to the members and then making do on what's available. Members who might resent this austerity have the perfect option of increasing their own contributions or supplying treats.

Within the San Francisco and Marin fellowships, we maintain a modest Central Office, where schedules are created, books and literature are sold, and numerous service activities (Teleservice, Sunshine Club, Public Information, etc.) are coordinated. The Central Office relies heavily upon donations from A.A. meetings and is a key part of a group's self-support obligation, thereby requiring *more* money in the basket than simply rent and coffee expenses.

A few groups seem never able to even meet rent (for example, late night meetings) and rely on either charity or subsidy from a clubhouse or other facility. Since A.A. as a whole disdains charity on its behalf, it remains the group members' responsibility to make sure their group is self-supporting. In this way, its members may experience the wonderful dignity that arises from becoming responsible persons.



A fellow went into a bar every day for months, and ordered three scotch and sodas all at once. Finally the bartender asked him, "Why do you order three drinks at the same time?" He answered, "They're for my brothers." "Oh, I'm sorry to hear they've passed away," the bartender said.

"Oh, they didn't pass away", the customer said. "They just live far away, one is in New York and another is in Pennsylvania. Each day, we all go to the bar, wherever we are, and have three drinks together."

This went on for a while, the customer ordering three scotch and sodas and drinking them all.

Then one day, he came in and ordered two scotch and sodas. The bartender figured one of the brothers had passed so he didn't say anything but it went on or a while and after a month or so, he said something.

"I noticed you're ordering two drinks now. I'm sorry if one of your brothers passed away," he said.

"Oh, my brother didn't pass away," the customer said.

"Well, you're only ordering two drinks."

"Yes, I know," the customer said. "No one passed away, I just quit drinking."



Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through June 15, 2009 honoring the following members:

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Fred B., Brian D., Linda Rose D.,
Ken M., Pat O'B., Dick O'L.,
Pat T., John T.

ANNIVERSARIES

Jane B. 1 year

John M. 29 years

Just Alkies: Sylvia D. 47 years

Come & Get It!: Joe H. 45 years

Mill Valley Original Smokeless:

Ray C. 45 years

Afro American Beginners:

Herman B. 38 years

San Mateo Fellowship:

Tom M. 27 years

High Steppers: Mary Ann B. 29 years

Rose Garden Big Book:

Curtis V. 24 years

Bernal New Day: Barbara L. 20 years

Big Book Basics:

Peggy H. 21 years, Carole P. 18 years

Sunday 7am Dry Dock: Ted S. 17 years

High Noon: Tess K. 17 years, Mariah 15
years, Tom K. 9 years

Diamond Heights: Karen G. 8 years

Queers, Crackpots & Fallen

Women: Mike M. 2 years

Yet Another Substitute for Alcohol

*"Humbly asked God
to remove our
shortcomings."*

by Rich H.

This was my assignment many years ago: to take my problems to God and ask Him for help. I wasn't very clear about God back then, but one of my shortcomings had me obsessed and suicidal and I hated myself for it.

I had too many girlfriends. From 1980 to 1984 I was engaged twice, and lived with another woman for a year. I also had an affair with the love of my life, for which I remain very grateful. But in my spare time I dated anybody I found cute or interesting, or asked me out or for coffee or to go home with. Some were A.A. newcomers; two were in Alanon. That illustrious group included some incredibly wonderful women and a few nut cases, graduates of prestigious schools, professional women, intellectuals, store clerks, models, and a computer savant.

My problem was that I wasn't having any fun. I had grown to hate myself for my promiscuity and for not being able to commit. My professional life suf-

fered, as did my pocket book after I divorced the newcomer I got involved with the month after my first wife had thrown me out. (What the heck? We both had a few months of sobriety and we *really, really* liked each other, in a very physical way...) I found myself coming home at night after a wonderful evening with some promising gal, crying my eyes out in pain, yelling at God and plotting my early demise. Life wasn't worth it the way I was living, and I knew I'd drink again if I couldn't get help.

I had done the first six steps with my sponsor, who was more than aware of my romantic excess. At the guidance of a very religious counselor, I had begun writing a dialogue with God as a way of communicating my inner fears and unburdening myself. No one saw it, and I'm not sure my sponsor knew about it until I told him how it helped me with Step Seven. It went like this:

Rich: God, why is it that after I'm out with another woman, no matter how wonderful or how rotten she might be, I hate myself for manipulating her, seducing her, or feigning interest in whatever she talked about?


And this was God's response, as written in my hand:

God: Richard, if doing those things makes you feel poorly about yourself, why don't you stop?

Rich: Will you help me?

God: Of course I will!

I was stunned! The problem became crystal clear to me; I had been using women and romance as a substitute for alcohol. Compulsive dating helped me avoid loneliness and to put off the problems I didn't want to deal with, by giving me something "better" to do. All I had to do was ask God for help in stopping my compulsive behavior, exactly as I had done with alcohol. The answer was in me already, and the method helped me find it. God gave me the strength of mind and character to amend my behavior.

All of that happened nearly 25 years ago, and for over 24 of those years I have been married to a wonderful woman, herself sober many years in the fellowship. The compulsion to use (women) was lifted, and hasn't really raised its head again since then. 

Self Support is Spiritual

by Kathleen C.

I have been at meetings where the treasurer proudly gives a report that concludes with, "We've paid our rent and expenses for coffee and refreshments, and so we are self-supporting!" Not true. If a meeting pays its rent and buys coffee and cookies, but can't send anything to Central Office and General Service, then it isn't self-

supporting. This is a spiritual program, and part of our reaching out to the still-suffering alcoholic includes supporting Central Office and General Service.

In the Twelve and Twelve, in the chapter on Tradition Seven, Bill says, "There was a place in A.A. where spiri-

tuality and money would mix, and that was in the hat!" The only way that the hand of A.A. is going to be there when the newcomer reaches out is if every A.A. who can, and every A.A. group that can, supports Central Office and General Service. This is how we make sure that when a drunk on a bed in a seedy hotel reaches for the phone and dials Information and croaks out the

The Big Split: Breaking Up is Hard to Do

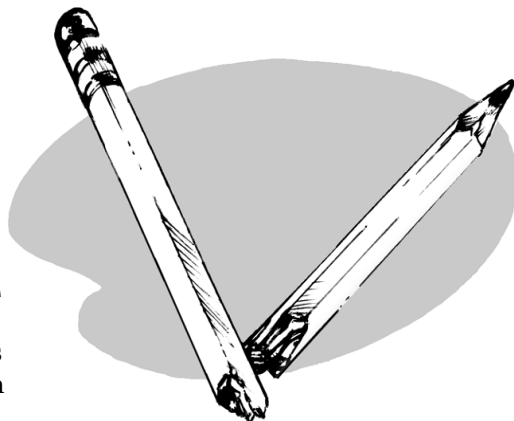
Central Office vs. Clubhouse Split

by Tracy F., Archives
Committee Chair

Doing research for this article has been a bit difficult, trying to sort out and understand the little information that is available from the very early days of A.A. in San Francisco. Here's what we know about the earliest San Francisco groups. "The first of the neighborhood groups was the Mission, followed a few months later by Midtown - Sunset- Parkside - Richmond and Golden Gate. ... From these four pioneers stemmed all the present neighborhood groups. There are now 34 and the Family Group, a group of non-alcoholic wives and husbands, also started in October, 1945." (This confusing passage is taken directly from the February 1952 edition of *The Grapevine*. Our committee tried to sort it out and make sense of it but couldn't, so we left it as is.)

As I discussed in a previous article (March 2009 issue of *The Point*, p. 11), 137 Harlan Place and next, 143 Bush Street, the first locations of A.A. in San Francisco, were considered A.A. office and "clubhouse." Both functions operated out of the same site.

By the time A.A. moved to 143 Bush St., there was an increasing strain each month due to the uncomfortable



overcrowding of meetings, drunks, panhandlers, wolves and Red Riding-hoods upsetting the equilibrium. In the fall of 1946, the membership began to talk of separation between the San Francisco Fellowship of A.A. and the clubhouse. Tempers were lost, relationships strained and general chaos reigned. After months of pyrotechnics and hard feelings, the separation was completed. On January 27, 1947, the A.A. Fellowship moved to the now sole purpose Central Office at 693 Sutter Street. The newly incorporated Alano Club of San Francisco took over the quarters at 143 Bush Street.

At that time, the service area for the San Francisco Central Office was considered to be all of Northern California, with the exception of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties because Oakland had a Central Office. A Central Committee was formed in the spring of 1947. This committee was

the forerunner of our current Inter-county Fellowship Board, and it ran the Central Office, the Central Meeting and the over-all business of the fellowship in Northern California—all in accordance with what was then called the "Twelve Points of Tradition" (now the Twelve Traditions).

San Francisco Central Office moved from the office at 693 Sutter Street to 406 Sutter Street in September 1951, which provided larger quarters and more privacy for newcomers to talk about their problems. Three years later, in 1954, the office moved to 166 Geary Blvd. The lease was cancelled in 1981 and the office moved to 1046 Irving Street in the Inner Sunset. Central Office remained at this location through December 1991. On January 1, 1992 it moved to 1540 Market Street, near Van Ness Ave. After a ten-year stay, it migrated to its current location at 1821 Sacramento Street.

San Francisco Central Office has been serving alcoholics now for over 62 years. Your contributions via your group's Seventh Tradition make this possible. There are many ways to help support your Central Office. Joining the "Faithful Fivers" is an easy way, by donating five dollars a month. Look for the green flyer at the literature table or call Central Office. You will also receive a subscription to *The Point* newsletter if you join.



words "Alcoholics Anonymous," that there is someone on the other end of the phone line. This is how we make sure that when a drunk goes to a meeting there is a Big Book on the literature table, and maybe some pamphlets as well.

Also, if we are self-supporting, we will be less tempted by influence from outside contributions, whether in the

form of free rent or government grants. Being self-supporting is how Alcoholics Anonymous maintains its independence from outside influence. As Bill said in the same chapter, "Whoever pays the piper is apt to call the tune, and if the A.A. Foundation [now General Service] obtained money from outside sources, its trustees might be tempted to run things without reference to the wishes of

A.A. as a whole."

Our fellowship is the ultimate grassroots organization, run from the bottom up, rather than the top down. If we want to fulfill our responsibility to other alcoholics, and keep our independence from outside influence, we will support Central Office and General Service.



"We are all going to need to foot the bill" -Bill W., 1967

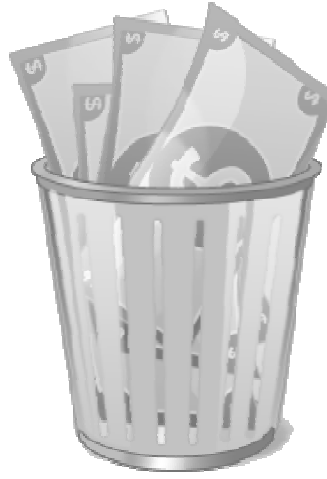
Where Money and Spirituality Mix

by Chris D.

Back in the day, a long time ago, when a buck was worth something, John D. Rockefeller commented regarding money and sobriety, "I'm afraid that money will spoil this thing." Of course, he was referring to large donations and whether or not A.A. should solicit financial support from philanthropists and the like. I think it was a good call then and remains a good credo to live by today. It makes sense what they say, "whoever pays the piper calls the tune."


As long as A.A. has been around, it seems to be growing in a positive fashion. From the outside, I believe that we are viewed generally as a darn good organization. We don't cause a lot of trouble and, whenever I have read anything printed on the outside, it's been quite positive. Oh yeah, there's the occasional crackpot who thinks we're a cult or a bunch of religious zealots, but that's to be expected when you're as good as we are! You know, for a bunch of people with no egos and nothing better to do with our time than go to meetings, we do a heck of a job supporting ourselves. There's nobody but us calling our tune!

It costs each of us something to stay sober, even if we *don't* put a couple of bucks in the basket. It costs us our time, transportation to and from meetings, any literature we might purchase, and whatever else we may spend on helping another alcoholic. For myself, I know that I have spent far less time and money on staying sober for 19 years than I spent on 15 years of drinking and drugs. I will probably die a natural death 30 years from now and still have spent less on staying sober



than I did in those 15 years ... God willing! If I were a wealthy man, and one day I just may be, I would love to give A.A. a whole bunch of money. I'm guessing that may do more harm than good, as large sums of money tend to do, so I will continue being supportive the best way I can, a day at a time. I do like the idea of putting a couple or a few bucks in the basket at the meetings I attend. A dollar doesn't buy what it used to 50 years ago. Sponsorship, being active in groups and supporting Central Office are all much needed to keep the program alive and well. After all, time may be our most precious commodity.

Believing in God does not cost me a thing. Practicing prayer and meditation takes a small amount of time. Giving to another alcoholic that which was freely given to me takes a bit more time, and putting a couple of dollars in a meeting basket costs me that and around an hour of my time. All these things put together has given me a life more precious than anything I could have come up with on my own. I will always be grateful and often feel that I could do more to give back. At the same time, I wouldn't want to deprive the newcomer of the chance to learn how to start giving back.

It's true that A.A. has given me a wonderful way of living. This is exactly why I will continue doing things the way that has worked so far. Our meetings, and A.A. as a whole, cost money to run. My spiritual program and your money I'm sure won't mix well, which is why the Seventh Tradition rocks on! Many of us may believe that we will never be able to repay A.A. But we *can* if we all do our part—some part, any part—to keep A.A. alive and well for all those willing to take the steps. 

Marin July 4th BBQ!

**The Marin Alano Club is holding it's
Annual 4th of July Barbeque!**

-In the backyard at-

1360 Lincoln Ave. , San Rafael.

*A noon speaker meeting will be followed immediately with a
barbeque and live music featuring Dennis Mc. (harmonica man)
and Cole T. and the Serenity Breakers.*

Suggested Donation is \$10 for food for non-members.

Recollections Include Birth of Living Sober

World's First Gay A.A. Group Still Meets in S.F.

*As told to the
Drunk Whisperer*

This is Part II of an interview with George D. who first came to A.A. at age 28 in 1955, in Los Angeles. Part I was published in the June 2009 issue.

DW: So you hit bottom earlier than some?

GD: Yeah, and then I dragged along the bottom for a while. By 1960, I was having trouble staying sober and the international convention was coming up. My sponsor was a delegate and he was a gadfly, a s^ht disturber, but Bill W. liked those kind of people. So he said, "I'm going to introduce you to Bill, maybe that will help." So, naturally, I wasn't going to get sober until I met Bill. It was a great reason to keep drinking. [laughter] So I met Bill, and I thought, "This is it." A month later, I'm in the drunk tank in San Pedro jail, one of the nastiest drunk tanks I'd ever been in, and my sponsor said to me, "I give up on you; even *Bill* can't sober you up!" I finally sobered up in October of 1961.

DW: What can you tell me about local A.A. history?

GD: One thing I want to tell you, until 1967 or maybe 1968, I can't remember exactly, there were no official gay meetings anywhere in Alcoholics Anonymous. The fellowship was very inclusive; there were *lots* of gay people in A.A., and some groups had large proportions of gay people, but no official gay groups. Nobody talked about being gay when they shared. Then some folks wanted to start a gay group. I wasn't part of the cutting edge; in fact, I wasn't sure I thought it was a good idea. So the first gay meeting was on Fell Street on Friday night—that group still exists. I don't think they are aware that they're the oldest gay group in the entire fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. [*Fell Street group, 8:30 pm, 261 Fell St. (enter on Hickory), Church of the Advent*] In San Francisco, unlike Los Angeles that started gay groups a few years afterwards, Paul G. was Central Office Secretary, and he listed us as a

gay group immediately.

DW: Was Paul gay?


GD: Oh, God, no. [laughter] Not even close. But all you needed was for Paul to say it was okay and everything was fine—he got sober in '41 or something. Many parts of the country didn't list gay meetings for a long, long time, but Paul did, no problem. Then in 1974, General Service decided to list a gay group in the world services directory, a moving story in itself. It was 35 years ago at a conference of people from all over, including Bible Belt. It went to a committee that concluded, no, you can't list it. But then the committee's report goes to full conference, which ratified the committee, but not unanimously. And as we do at the conference, once a vote is taken, we say, "Is there anybody who voted on the losing side who wants to speak to their position?" Previously, there had been discussion of listing those "deviants' meetings." One tiny woman from Arkansas or somewhere got up and said, "Where I come from, they call alcoholics deviants." So things started to move the other way, but they ran out of time. There was a night out scheduled, and I don't think this has happened before that, or again since, they cancelled it and came back and talked for another three hours, and then took the vote—to list it.

DW: Tell me more about gay A.A. in San Francisco.

GD: Starting gay meetings kind of split the gay community in A.A. A lot of gay people at the time wouldn't go to a gay meeting. We did not foresee that the gay meetings would get to be so big and so many, that people wouldn't move on into mainstream meetings (whatever that is). I was talking about my concerns to a nonalcoholic board member, a brilliant psychiatrist from Georgetown, and I said, "I wish we had never started them," and he said, "George, do you think more people are

sober now than if you had not started gay meetings?" Then the light went on—it's none of my business. The Traditions say: all I'm interested in is helping people get sober, not how they live their lives.

DW: Were you involved with Living Sober [annual gay conference in San Francisco]?

GD: In 1976 I got a letter from GSO, enclosing a flyer and a letter from these guys in San Francisco, who wanted to put on a gay convention, what became Living Sober. The flyer was outrageous; it was a very political time. And it was upsetting many of the delegates who got it. But it was a very nice letter, said what they wanted to do, they wondered if anybody had ever done it, they wanted to comply with the Traditions, and was there anything that GSO could do to help them. So I met with them, since I was the Delegate [from Northern California]. These were all people with one, two, three years of sobriety, fairly new. They were over in the Haight-Ashbury, so I went over, and we discussed the Traditions, how we don't support or oppose any causes, no political stuff. Let's face it, gay liberation is a political thing. And if we start bringing in political issues into Alcoholics Anonymous, then we can't complain when the Bible Belt guys make it political. So they got it right away, and they brought out a new flyer—it was the most genteel thing you ever saw. Next thing you know, they all became Traditions lawyers. I went over there one night and they spent half the evening on one issue. They wanted to do a little fundraiser, a garage sale, and some kid's mother was going to donate all this stuff, but could they accept it, because she wasn't an alcoholic—would it breach the 7th Tradition? So I said, let's not get too—I mean, she donates it to her son and he donates it to A.A., it's in the family, so I think they finally did accept it. 

What is Self Support?

A Compilation of Responses from our Readers

When I first heard “self-support” in A.A., I figured it meant that I should support myself, now that I had sobered up—get a job, pay the rent, be a grown-up. Little did I know, there is a large and growing bibliography on what self-support means in the context of A.A. But it all boils down to a version of my first impression: each of us taking responsibility and being grown-ups and making sure A.A. sticks around. *Anonymous*

Self-Support=Generosity. If you could buy a bottle every day, you can ensure A.A. remains intact for today and future generations. *mw*

When I came into A.A., I was literally living from hand to mouth, not having a permanent home except for a roach-infested room about the size of a coffin, and I was looking for my next ship down at the union hall. Gradually, I started getting better physically and when I started working the steps and taking on service commitments, I began to grow. I also began to have more money and a better life. It is my responsibility to pass on that growth with material help to the fellowship and group. I am responsible today, not a falling down drunk with no place to call home. *Charlie M.*

A.A. has bills; meetings have expenses. I need to pay my way. Duh. And putting in a buck isn't enough anymore, for me. Here's how I know—I drop two bucks for coffee without even noticing. Hmm, supporting A.A., supporting Peet's coffee. I love Peet's but they can't keep me sober. Two bucks it is. *Patty Mc.*

I believe there are dollar values associated with all activities in and around the rooms, like all of the time



everyone sets aside for sponsorship and other commitments. And we can't forget about all the extra actual money that is spent by A.A. members and their families on organized A.A. events. *L. V.*

Imagine what A.A. would be like if we put as much money into the basket as we put into our bar tabs back when we were drinking. I'm unemployed right now, so I'm keeping an even stricter budget than usual. But there's one thing that's always in my budget: \$2 a day for the A.A. basket. *Patty M.*

A year ago, the IFB called for all who could to increase their donation from \$1 (standard in the 1950s) to a measly \$2. It boils my blood to see doctors and lawyers and other known professionals who still slip only that \$1 in the basket. Group contributions are down and with them, support of our essential Central Office services. This is not good A.A. to me. Who on earth could get drunk or high on \$1 a

day these days? My beer and a shot always cost me \$7 or \$8. I try to give \$5 at every meeting I go to, and I don't go to daily meetings, so even more reason to give extra and help support ourselves on all levels. Come on you cheap drunks! Open those wallets. *Anonymous*

I am treasurer of my small, relatively impoverished home group. When we don't have the rent, I make up the extra. When the weekly take is barely over rent, I add extra from my own pocket so that I know we can later make contributions to Central Office, NY, etc. When our literature was stolen, I funded replacements out of my own pocket. Most group members don't know I do these things, but I'm doing it to support A.A. and my own sobriety and for no other reason. I used to worry about “enabling” the group's existence by doing too much, but my sponsor assured me that people like me would come and go and it all evens out in the greater scheme of things. I no longer worry or feel bad about supporting A.A. in any way I can. *Anonymous*

Self-support to me is being responsible for my own recovery. I remember one of the first meetings I went to where a friend of mine stated she did not have money to participate in the Seventh Tradition. Later that day she told me about buying a new DVD player, and a few days later she relapsed. This is when I realized being part of my own recovery and contributing was essential to me staying sober. *Susie R.*

People frequently think that self-support only involves money. That is not necessarily the case. When we do service in A.A., that is another form of self-support. - *Carole P.* **TP**

Walk of Shame

by Bree L.

This Wednesday night closed women's meeting is a wonderfully supportive place for women who are newly sober, as well as those with years of sobriety. Many who regularly attend are professionals in their twenties and thirties, and more than the usual number are therapists, studying to be therapists or working in a similar therapeutic environment.

Walk of Shame is a Big Book study meeting, alternating readings of the first 164 pages with the personal stories in the back. A group conscience decides how much of the first part is read every other week, while stories from the back are read to the end unless it is really long. The secretary keeps track of what passages are read and everyone participates in the reading. It is also a tag meeting. The secretary picks the first person to share in the meeting and sharing moves along from there. Everyone is included and offered an opportunity to speak.

A huge benefit is the abundance of available social activities. Sarah C. is the current fellowship coordinator. She plans activities that occur about every two weeks. All are invited. Past activities have included going to an A.A. Living Sober drag show, watching the TV cable show *Intervention* and watching the movies *Rachel Getting Married* and *My Name is Bill W.* Last year they had a spa day, as several of the members are masseuses, and ten-minute chair massages were offered.

Sarah C. describes this meeting as the "other side of the Big Book thumpers" in that women have different issues than men and they are encouraged to talk about them. The absence of testosterone is easily perceived and there are many shared common experiences and feelings. Kelly W. said she really appreciates the comfort of being with other women going through many of the same challenges that she experienced or had survived already. Members have been known to tear up without having the meeting fall apart. They all know that sometimes that's all a person can do. There is an abundance

of support and introspection, as women seem to relate to one another more easily. One-on-one contact is encouraged as well as group support. A recent topic was about abusive relationships and many had stories of their own experience and recovery. They shared the changes that have come about as they've navigated the Twelve Steps.

Sponsors frequently recommend this meeting to their sponsees as well as to newcomers. Diane S. who has been sober over four years said it was her first sponsor's home group. The group was meeting on Gough Street when Diane first started attending. Her sponsor moved away, then the group moved, but Diane continues to attend.

Walk of Shame meets at 8 PM on Wednesday at 455 Fair Oaks St. (at 26th St. in Noe Valley) at Holy Innocents Episcopal Church, upstairs in the nave of the church in back of where the congregation sits. Street parking is available and the church is a short walking distance from the J-Church streetcar and Muni bus routes 26, 48, and 67.



The Trusted Servants Workshop Committee of the



Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous
serving San Francisco and Marin Counties

is pleased to present an **ALL NEW** workshop:

TRUSTED SERVANTS AND THE TRADITIONS

Two AA groups will be sending a team of current or former trusted servants to share how they 'do not govern', but rather, serve their groups and uphold the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous!

WHERE: Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St, SF

Muni buses 1, 12, 49 and 47 stop nearby

WHEN: Saturday, July 11th - 10 AM to noon

Coffee and doughnuts will be provided.

For more information contact Central Office at 415-674-1821 or 415-499-0400 from Marin or e-mail tsw@aasf.org.



Persons requiring reasonable accommodations, including sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternate formats should contact the SF/Marin County Central Office (415) 674 - 1821 no later than Monday, July 6th, 2009.



ifb meeting summary – june 2009

The IFB is the Board of Directors for our local AA Central Office (San Francisco and Marin Counties)

The following meetings have registered Intergroup Representatives who attended the last IFB meeting. If your meeting was not represented, consider electing an Intergroup (IFB) Representative and /or an alternate so your meeting is effectively represented

Any Lengths	Friendly Circle Beginners	Keep It Simple	Saturday Easy Does It	Tiburon Men's Stag
Back to Basics	Gold Mine Group	Let It Be Now	Saturday Sunset 9'ers	Too Early
Blackies Pasture	Gratitude Group	Living Sober With HIV	Serenity Seekers	Tuesday Downtown
Blue Book Special	Happy Hour	Lush Lounge	Sisters Circle	Tuesday Newcomers
Came to Park	High Noon (Saturday)	Marina Discussion	Sober 5150's	Walk of Shame
Castro Discussion	High Noon (Tuesday)	Men's Gentle Touch	Some Are Sicker Than...	Waterfront
Cocanuts	High Noon (Wednesday)	Mid-Morning Support	Steppin Up	West Portal Group
Cow Hollow Men's	High Noon Monday	Mill Valley 7am	Sunday Night Speaker Discussion	Women Who Drank. . .
Dark Secrets	High Noon Thursday	Miracles On 24th St	Sunset 9'ers Su 8am	Women's Kitchen Table
Each Day a New Beginning (M-F)	Home Group	One Liners	Sunset Early Morning	Women's Promises
Each Day a New Beginning (Sun)	Huntington Square	Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women	Ten Years After	
Embarcadero Group	Join the Tribe	Reality Farm	Terra Linda	
Fireside Chat	Keep Coming Back	Regroup	They Stopped In Time	

The following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the June 2009 IFB meeting which followed the Annual 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 from either meeting, contact the Central Office or visit our website.

IFB Officer Reports

a. Chair: No report other than Annual Report which is online.

b. Treasurer: Patrick M. reported the net loss of April was \$2,309 which is \$3,115 worse than the budgeted net income of \$806 and due to lower group contributions, timing of payments and how the annual budget for bookstore sales was allocated by month. Things were looking bleak at the end of April, but May contributions from groups were greater than expected. At the end of May we don't have a problem but we will have to take it month to month.

c. Central Office Manager's Report: There are open phone shifts at Central Office. Bookstore prices are going up because our costs are going up on July 1st. Although May contributions are better, we need to stress the need for contributions from groups so all the service entities (Central Office, the districts, area and GSO) are supported.

d. Central Office Committee: Erica R. gave the report. The following decisions were made at the May 18, 2009 meeting: 1) To prepare a cost benefit analysis of the Point of Sale hardware needed to implement the new bar code system with donated software; 2) To have the IFB treasurer prepare a statement for IFB reps to read to their groups regarding our current fiscal position; 3) To produce laminated versions of some locally produced literature; 4) To provide ASL interpreters upon request for AA meeting and events; 5) We reaffirmed that it is part of the Central Office manager's job responsibilities to interact with vendors in on-going relationships. The committee is continuing to plan and conduct a survey of how the Central Office meets the needs of the fellowship.

IX. Action Items

a. Nominating Committee: The nominating committee is active and prepared to interview candidates for the at-large Central Office Committee positions.

b. Polling of IFB for Availability: Chuck reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Central Office Committee members. IFB members were polled for availability.

X. IFB Committee Reports: Anyone wanting more information on service opportunities may contact Central Office. You don't need to be a member of the IFB to be on a committee—

please let all groups know that the committees can use support.

1. 12th Step Committee: There is a workshop at Central Office on June 27th for anyone interested in joining the Sunshine Club or 12th Step list. The 12th Step Committee creates and maintains a list of AA members who make themselves available to make calls to people who have called Central Office in need.

2. Archives Committee: Tracy F. recommended that members read p. 14 of *The Point*, which explains the work of the Archives Committee in detail. The Archives Committee is responsible for preserving our local AA history. The committee meets on the 3rd Sunday of each month at Central Office from 2-4 p.m.

3. Orientation Committee: Report is online.

4. The Point Editorial Committee: *The Point* is online as is information on when the committee meets. The committee is responsible for publication of the monthly newsletter to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in SF/Marin.

5. Trusted Servants Workshop Committee: Written report submitted. Tracy F. reported the committee has organized a new workshop for handling group issues and following the Traditions.

6. Web Committee: Written report online. The Outreach sub-committee has received help from several IFB members in reach-

ing out to locations that do not have IFB reps or contact with Central Office.

7. Fellowship Committee: No written report. A member asked if there was a suggested donation for the Founders Day event. Another member said it was free. Maury explained that while there is no charge for attending the Founders Day event, it is not "free, but paid for by the IFB.

XI. Special Committee Reports

a. Teleservice, SF: See written report. There is an opening for the Friday Coordinator position. The requirements/responsibilities are as follows: current Teleservice volunteer, contact all shift workers prior to the day's shift, handle no-shows, help fill vacancies, and attend the monthly business meeting.

b. PI/CPC: Written report submitted. The committee meets the second Monday of the month at Central Office at 7 p.m. The committee provides informational presentations about what AA is and what AA is not to non-AA groups.

XII. IFB Liaison Reports

a. General Service, SF: In the interest of time no report presented.

b. General Service, Marin. No report.

c. Teleservice, Marin: No report.

d. PI/CPC, Marin: No report.

e. Bridging the Gap: No report.

f. Marin H&I: No report.

g. Spirit of San Francisco: No report.

h. Living Sober: Alejandro gave the report noting the upcoming Pink Saturday Dance on June 27 at Harvey Milk Academy.

i. IFB Liaison to District 6 San Francisco: No report.

j. District 10 GSR: No report

Pass the Basket/Read Traditions:

The basket was not passed for the Seventh Tradition as we made rent at the Annual Meeting held earlier this evening.

XV. Adjourn with the Serenity Prayer:

Adjourn with the Serenity Prayer.

Andy T.

Acting Secretary

The Spirit of San Francisco



Pancake Breakfast Sunday, July 12, 2009

Pancake Breakfast 10:00 am - 11:00 am

AA Speaker Meeting 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

with Don B. from Pleasant Hill, CA

Tickets \$10 advance/door

(kids under 12 eat free)

Purchase tickets online at

www.spirit-sf.org

Additional Info email info@spirit-sf.org

or call 415-218-7609

Located at

The Janet Pomeroy Center
207 Skyline Blvd - San Francisco

Between the SF Zoo and Lake Merced



Registration Coming Soon for

The 17th Annual Spirit of SF Convention

October 2 - 4, 2009

aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions	Apr. 09	YTD	Marin Group Contributions, cont.	Apr. 09	YTD	SF Contributions, cont.	Apr. 09	YTD
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	42	118	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		58	As Bill Sees It - Keep It Simple Tu 7am		210
Contribution Box	184	340	Sausalito 12 Step Study Group		107	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		142
Gay & Lesbian Newcomers		22	Serendipity Sa 11am		126	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		203
Gay Newcomers Group	13	13	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)		100	Be Still AA Su 12pm	131	586
Harbor Lights Fellowship		25	Six O'Clock Step Th 6pm	59	59	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm		269
IFB	121	422	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		95	Bernal New Day 7D	193	719
Serenity House	150	600	Sober & Serene F 7pm		621	Big Book Basics F 8pm	103	236
Total Fellowship Contributions	\$511	\$1,539	Steps to Freedom M 730pm		141	Big Book Study Su 1130am		155
			Steps To The Solution W 715pm		71	Blue Book Special Su 11am	32	113
Marin Group Contributions	Apr. 09	YTD	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		100	Came to Park Sat 7pm		113
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		900	Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm		50	Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) W 8pm		752
Awakenings Sa 830am		36	Survivors M 12pm		111	Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm		167
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		47	T.G.I.F. F 6pm	167	247	Cocoanuts Su 9am		72
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		50	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		650	Code Blue Big Book Study W 7pm	60	139
Bounce Back M 6pm		400	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		335	Crossroads Sun 12pm		318
Candlelight Sun 830pm		170	The Novato Group Fri. Night Disc. F 830pm		83	Design for Living Sat 8am		345
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm	167	318	Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu		528	Diamond Heights Tu 830pm		93
Cover to Cover W 800pm		113	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm	100	100	Doin' the Deal Sun 10pm		81
Design For Living (Marin) W 7pm		61	Twice Blessed W 730pm	187	187	Each Day a New Beginning F 7am	369	827
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	371	444	We, Us and Ours M 650pm		150	Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am	350	673
Early Birds Sa 6am		36	What's It All About F 12pm	200	200	Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	213	213
Freedom Finders F 830pm	590	590	Women on Wednesday W 7pm		50	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		599
Friday Night Book F 830pm		175	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		100	Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		174
Friday Night Gay Men's Stag F 830pm	65	65	Working Dogs W 1205pm		343	Early Start F 6pm		757
Gratitude Tu 8pm		389	Marin Total	\$4,779	\$15,209	Easy Does It Tu 6pm		120
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	1,250	1,250	San Francisco Contributions	Apr. 09	YTD	Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	137	220
High & Dry W 12pm		308	6am Marina Dock Sa		91	Epiphany Group Th 8pm		63
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am	125	181	7am As Bill Sees It Fri		117	Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		806
Island Group Th 8pm		63	7am As Bill Sees It Fri		117	Excelsior Free for All Sa 8pm	88	88
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm	75	211	7am Grab Bag M 7am		30	Federal Speaker Su 12pm	412	412
Mill Valley 7D 7am		600	7am Living Sober W 7am		50	Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		235
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		290	7am Smokeless Su 7am		85	Fireside Chat Group Th 8pm		232
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm	400	1,347	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		106	Franciscan Noon Discussion M 12pm		60
Monday Night Women's M 8pm	145	238	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		22	Friday All Groups F 830pm		1,926
Monday Nooners M 12pm		356	A Coffee Pot & A Resentment M 8pm		42	Friday at Five F 5pm		80
Morning After Sa 10am	750	750	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm		132	Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		100
Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm	100	100	A New Start F 830pm		262	Friday Smokeless F 830pm		166
Newcomers Step M 730pm		424	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm	65	65	Girls Night Out W 815pm		97
Noon Tu 12pm		110	AA Step Study Su 6pm		121	Gold Mine Group M 8pm	266	266
North Bay Discussion Group Su 8pm		100	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	80	147	Golden Gate Seniors Tu 130pm		68
Novato Monday Stag M 8pm		62	After Work M 6PM	95	95	Goodlands Su 2pm	150	150
Primary Purpose W 830pm		65	Alumni W 830pm		43	Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm		228
Quitting Time MWF 530pm		198	Amazing Grace M 7pm		162	Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm		84
Refugee Th 12pm	30	30	Any Lengths Sat 930am		490	High Noon Friday 1215pm	91	166
Rise N Shine Sun 10am		122	Artists & Writers F 630pm		96	High Noon Monday 1215pm		165

SF Contributions, cont.	Apr. 09	YTD	SF Contributions, cont.	Apr. 09	YTD
High Noon Saturday 1215pm	150	209	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		45
High Noon Thursday 1215pm		192	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		234
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm		185	SFPOA Th 7pm	440	440
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm		115	St. Francis Men's F 830pm		296
Hilldwellers M 8pm	105	326	Step Talk Su 830am		490
Home Group Sat 830pm		191	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	124	267
How Was Your Week? Sa 10am	71	123	Stepping Out Sat 6pm		50
Huntington Square W 630pm		340	Stepping Stone Step Study M 7pm		201
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		264	Stonestown M 8pm		246
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		71	Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm		139
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am	1,244	1,244	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag		826
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		399	Sunday Night Castro SD Su 8pm		913
Light Steppers Su 7pm		120	Sunset 11'ers Su		35
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		364	Sunset 9'ers F		36
Luke's Group W 8pm	50	175	Sunset 9'ers M	67	88
Lush Lounge Sa 2pm	168	168	Sunset 9'ers Sa		302
Marina Discussion F 830pm		745	Sunset 9'ers W	44	78
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	331	331	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm	147	147
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am		20	Surf Tu 8pm		72
Mission Creek Meeting		95	Sutter Street Beginners Sat 6pm		318
Mission Creek Meeting Tu 6pm		5	Ten Years After Su 6pm		257
Mission Terrace W 8pm		251	The Drive Thru W 1215pm		458
Monday Beginners M 8pm		295	The Parent Trap M 1230pm	223	223
Monday Monday M 1215pm	88	185	They Stopped In Time M 8pm	193	193
New Hope Big Book M 630pm		78	Thursday Morning Men's BB Study	51	51
New Life W 7pm		121	Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm		208
No Reservation M 12pm		438	Too Early Sat 8am	179	952
Noon Smokeless F 12pm	30	190	Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm		60
Noon Smokeless M 12pm		23	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm	120	283
Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		168	Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm		120
Noon Smokeless W 12pm		60	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm		124
One, Two, Three, Go! W 1pm		30	Walk of Shame W 8pm		84
Park Presidio M 830pm	54	54	Waterfront Sun 8pm	20	20
Parkside Th 830pm		94	We Care Tu 12pm		238
Pax West M 12pm		784	West Portal W 830pm		140
Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm		380	Wharfrats Th 815pm		298
Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women		89	Women Living Sober Sa 10am		120
Rebound W 830pm		60	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		325
Relapse, Rebounds, Retreads...		60	Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm		321
Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm		120	Women's Meeting There is a Solution	146	146
Room to Grow F 8pm		375	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		477
Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm		135			
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		244			
Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm	400	400			
Sisters Circle Su 6pm		247			
			San Francisco Total	\$7,280	\$36,727
			Total Group Contributions	\$12,570	\$53,476



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:

Alejandro D.	Kevin S.
Ann & Denise	Lauren H.
Barbara K.	Leigh B.
Barbara L.	Lelan & Rich H.
Barbara M.	Leo H.
Brent H.	Lisa M.
Bruce D.	Liz & Aiden D.
Caroline A.	Lyle W.
Casey L.	Margarite S.
Catherine S.	Marit L.
Charles D.	Martha S.
Dan & Sherry T.	Michael W.
David H.	Michael Z.
David J.	Nancie G.
David P.	Patrick M.
Dennis & Lucy O.	Paul M.
Dick F.	Peg L.
Donald Ray N.	Peggy T.
Doug C.	Pene P.
Flossie N.	Penelope & Robert
Fay K.	Phyllis S.
Frances L.	Robert C.
George S.	Robert W.
Giles H.	Sara D.
James M.	Scott C.
James W.	Sheila H.
Jeanne C.	Steve F.
Joanne K.	Stu S.
John G.	Sylvia D.
John M.	Tim M.
Karen K.	Tom M.
Kathleen C.	Tracy F.

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!

profit and loss statement: april 2009

	Apr 09	Budget	Jan - Apr 09	Budget		Apr 09	Budget	Jan - Apr 09	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					Non-Bulk Postage	0	0	84	0
Income					Bulk Mail	0	0	200	577
Contributions from Groups					Postage - Other	0		6	
Group Contributions	12,479	14,538	53,310	57,082	Total Postage	\$0	\$0	\$290	\$577
Honors	91	0	166	0	Rent - Office	4,320	4,283	17,281	17,132
Total Contributions from Groups	\$12,570	\$14,538	\$53,476	\$57,082	Rent - Other	0	0	225	300
Contributions from Individuals					Access Expenses	0	0	160	517
Individual - Unrestricted	250	1,219	2,680	2,512	IFB Literature				
Faithful Fiver	875	546	3,120	1,613	Sunshine Club	0	0	0	0
Honorary Contributions	150	54	1,126	2,685	IFB Literature - Other	0	0	0	0
Total Contributions from Individuals	\$1,275	\$1,819	\$6,926	\$6,810	Total IFB Literature	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Gratitude Month					PI/CPC	33	0	198	0
Gratitude Month - Groups	125	447	3,531	3,659	Filing/Fees	0	0	20	0
Gratitude Month - Individual	0	0	0	699	Insurance	0	0	0	939
Total Gratitude Month	125	447	3,531	4,358	Internet Expense	68	75	287	299
Sales - Bookstore	10,540	7,930	34,989	37,658	Office Supplies	310	0	1,076	1,109
Newsletter Subscript.	66	132	143	354	Paper Purchased	267	0	1,577	0
Total Income	\$24,576	\$24,866	\$99,066	\$106,262	Software Purchased	0	0	0	0
Cost of Goods Sold					Shipping	262	90	117	133
Cost of Books Sold - Shipping	13		49		Printing	0	0	864	0
Cost of Books Sold	7,766	5,027	24,981	23,623	Equipment Lease	0	0	0	1,880
Credit Card Processing Fees	0	226	903	745	Repair & Maintenance	341	255	1,291	1,639
Total COGS	7,778	5,253	25,933	24,368	Security System	0	35	136	140
Gross Profit	\$16,798	\$19,613	\$73,132	\$81,894	Special Events	0	0	0	0
Expense					Payroll Expenses	278		281	
Construction Expense	0	0	734	0	Telephone	256	403	1,127	1,499
IFB Sponsored Events	1,259	513	1,259	513	Phone Book Listings	84	102	252	407
Unreconciled Bank Adj	0	0	0	0	Utilities	0	0	0	0
Budget Contingency	0	262	0	1,048	Travel	0	0	0	0
Special Events Expense	0	0	0	0	Training	0	0	20	0
Reconciliation Discrepancies	0	0	0	0	Bad Checks	0	124	12	138
Employee Expenses					Miscellaneous Expense	76	0	76	0
Wages & Salaries	9,911	8,864	37,230	35,456	Total Expense	\$19,176	\$17,943	\$72,988	\$71,952
Employer Tax Expenses	800	778	3,886	3,112	Net Ordinary Income	-\$2,378	\$1,670	\$144	\$9,942
Health Benefits	910	1,402	4,462	4,170	Other Income/Expense				
Retirement/Annuity Expense	0	0	0	0	Other Income				
Workers Comp Ins.	0	0	0	0	Other Income	0	0	0	0
Total Employee Expenses	\$11,621	\$11,044	\$45,579	\$42,738	Interest Income	69	19	376	139
Professional Fees					Total Other Income	69	\$19	\$376	\$139
Accounting	0	0	0	0	Other Expense				
Computer Consulting	0	750	113	919	Depreciation Expense	0	91	0	364
Legal Fees	0	0	0	0	Amortization Expense	0	189	0	756
Outside Services	0	0	0	0	Total Other Expense	\$0	\$280	\$0	\$1,120
Total Professional Fees	\$0	\$750	\$113	\$919	Net Other Income	\$69	-\$261	\$376	-\$981
Bank Charges	0	7	13	25	Net Income	-\$2,309	\$1,409	\$520	\$8,961
Postage									

A Message from the Treasurer

by Patrick M.

As everyone knows, the U.S. is experiencing a recession, and it has affected many members of our fellowship. The Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is also being impacted, as is A.A. World Services (AAWS). During these times, it is more important than ever for members to receive information about our finances, and that is the purpose of this message.

Last year (2008), despite the fact that our income (consisting of contributions and bookstore sales) was \$11,000 lower than budget, we ended the year with a \$19,000 surplus. Throughout the year, we saved \$30,000 on expenses, primarily because of one-time situations. Our bank balances were very healthy. In addition to our prudent reserve (6 months of operating expenses), we also had enough money to cover three months of expenses in our general checking accounts. Thus, we had enough cash in the bank to cover nine months of operating expenses. That's a lot. In fact, in April of 2008, the IFB approved lowering the prices of all English-language formats of the Big Book and Twelve and Twelve to AAWS list prices in order to use some of that excess cash to better serve the fellowship. At the same time, when IFB representatives informed the groups about the changes in literature prices, they were charged with communicating that our ability to sell these particular items at cost is due to contributions, particularly individual contributions, and that we will rely on continued contributions to maintain these prices.

At the end of December we were still in good shape, so the IFB approved a renovation of the Central Office, which was sorely needed. At the end of 2008, we calculated the amount of money needed for the prudent reserve (6 months of expenses) and discov-

ered that, due to the expense savings we realized in 2008, it was over-funded by nearly \$7,000. In May 2009, the IFB voted to leave the prudent reserve as-is instead of lowering it, with the understanding that we could reverse that decision if need be.

Going into 2009, we were in excellent financial condition. We are still in good shape, but I am seeing some trends in contributions and bookstore sales that cause me concern. Through May 2009 (5 months of our fiscal year), group contributions are \$2,100 (or -3%) lower than what we budgeted and bookstore sales are nearly \$2,600 (or -6.6%) below budget. The decline in bookstore sales is across the board among groups. Group contributions are erratic as three out of five months have been lower than budget. If the trend continues we could end the year \$15,000 below our budget, which would be the second consecutive year of a significant shortfall. The Central Office Committee is watching expenses closely. I expect we will spend less than what we budgeted for the year, which will help offset the drop in group contributions and bookstore sales, but I still forecast a deficit for the year.

At the end of May, our unrestricted cash in the bank will be equal to slightly more than two months of expenses (in addition to the prudent reserve). At the end of June, we will likely be less than two months (in addition to the prudent reserve), which is okay, but not great. Once we fall below one month of expense coverage, then we run the risk of paying some bills late. If the trend continues, we may have to increase the price of our literature, particularly the literature that we lowered prices on last year—Big Books and Twelve and Twelve's.

The second option brings up the situation with A.A. World Services. It is having financial issues as well (running below budget), and is raising prices on literature in order to make up that deficit. Our policy is based on AAWS' list price, so the fact that we may end up needing to raise our prices in addition to AAWS' price increase will be challenging. Basic economics says that when prices go up, people buy less.

So, what can all of us do to help? I have three suggestions. First, make sure your groups purchase literature from our bookstore, not another source. Bookstore sales are very important to us because they help make up any shortfalls in contributions. My second suggestion is for members to consider contributing, within their financial means, an extra dollar into the basket. Not only will this help your meeting meet its expenses but also, depending on your group's conscience, the surplus goes to support our General Service districts, area and the General Service Office. Third, consider making a tax-deductible individual contribution to the Central Office of any amount (but again do it within your financial means) or become a Faithful Fiver. I personally do that each year; I still come out ahead of what I used to spend on booze. *Nearly 80 cents of every dollar that is given to Central Office is spent on services to support the groups in San Francisco and Marin.** When you give to Central Office, you give back to yourself, your group, the fellowship and to those alcoholics who are still suffering.

*This far exceeds the more typical 65 cents per dollar of the average nonprofit organization, per a February 2008 study by Ellison Research, a marketing company, as cited in Wikipedia article, "American Institute of Philanthropy" June 10, 2009.



July 2009

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