

# the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

2010 **5**  
**MAY**

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

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Intercounty Fellowship

of Alcoholics Anonymous

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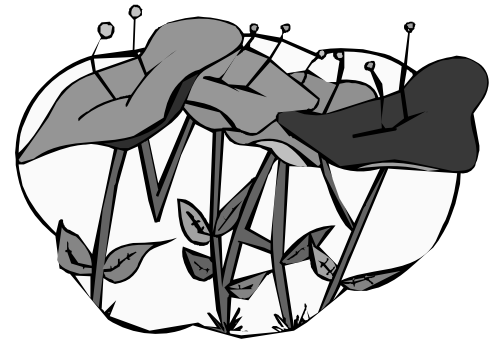
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## *Blooming in Sobriety*

# *Recovery Blossoms*

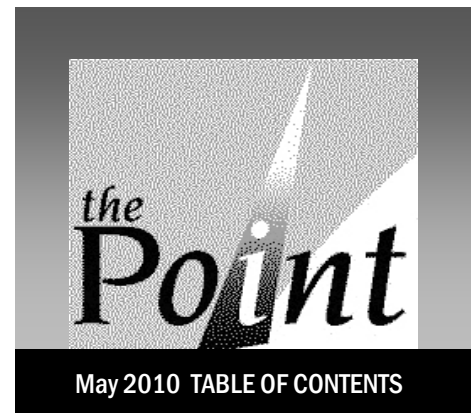
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The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing 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.

# May 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<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 at (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.</i></p> <div>     </div>			
2	3	<b>4</b> <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office, 6pm	<b>5</b> <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board 101 Donahue, Marin City (St. Andrew Presbyterian Church)  Orientation 6pm Meeting 7pm
9	<b>10</b> <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office, 7pm	<b>11</b> <u>SECOND TUE</u> The Point Committee Central Office, 5:30pm  S.F. Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St. 6:30pm  Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael, 6:15pm  SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St., 8pm	<b>12</b> <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30pm  Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 6:30pm
<b>16</b> <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office, 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	<b>17</b> <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30pm  Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael, 8pm	<b>18</b> <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee Central Office, 6:30pm	19
<b>23</b> <div>30</div>	<b>24</b> <div>31</div> <div>Holiday- Central Office Closed</div>	<b>25</b> <u>FOURTH TUE</u> The Point Committee Central Office, 5:30pm  Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club, 7:30pm	<b>26</b>

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1
6	7	8 Post Conference Assembly, Vallejo, CA www.cnca06.org
13	14	15
20 <u>THIRD THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office, 6:30pm Please send any ?'s you have about group service to tsw@aasf.org	21	22 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma; Business Meeting: 12:30pm  Service Workshop Doubleheader See Flyer on page 4!
27 <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. SF Orientation: 7:15pm Committee Meeting: 8pm	28	29



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*Seed has started to sprout  
in a new soil,  
but growth has only begun.*  
*Big Book, p.117*

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## Meeting Changes

### Meeting Changes:

Sun	12:00pm	Castro
Mon	7:30pm	Mission
Sat	6:00pm	Pacific Heights

BE STILL AA, Church, 100 Diamond St./18th St. (was Rec Center, 100 Collingwood St.)  
 EXTREME MAKEOVER: WOMEN'S STEP STUDY, 3555 Cesar Chavez (was 725 Diamond)  
 SATURDAY BEGINNERS, Hospital, 2333 Buchanan St./Clay (was Old Sutter Street Beginners)

### No Longer Meeting:

7D	12:00pm	Bernal Heights
Sun	12:00pm	Hayes Valley
Mon	10:00am	Tenderloin
Mon	7:00pm	Crocker Amazon
Tue	8:15pm	Hayes Valley
Fri	7:30am	Tenderloin
Fri	4:30pm	Hayes Valley

GRUPO RENACER, 650A Andover St./Richland Ave  
 HIT IT & QUIT IT, S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St.  
 FIRST PLACE WOMEN'S GROUP, 410 Ellis St./Jones St.  
 WOMEN WITH HOPE, 1310 Bacon St.  
 OPEN DIALOGUE BIG BOOK STUDY, S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St.  
 THOUGHT FOR THE DAY, 242 Turk St.  
 REBELS & REJECTS, S.F. Alano Club, 1748 Market St.

**Please Note:** Central Office occasionally receives reports that meetings listed in our schedules are not there. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken—and sometimes not. 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!*

## SERVICE WORKSHOP DOUBLEHEADER!



JONAH: "OBEY!" THREW IT IN THE OCEAN! — JUST SIT ON THE FIRST STEP AND WAIT.

### 12<sup>th</sup> – Step Committee – Workshop

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

**Saturday, May 22, 2010 at 10:00 AM**

1821 Sacramento Street near Van Ness Avenue

Both San Francisco and Marin Counties are seeking men and women willing to share their experience, strength and hope through 12-step work. Email [12-step@aasf.org](mailto:12-step@aasf.org) or call Central Office at 415-674-1821.

## Join the Sunshine Club!



Take Meetings to Members who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness or injury. Attend the Sunshine Club Workshop at **11:00 AM, Saturday, May 22, 2010**, following the 12<sup>th</sup> Step Workshop, at Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St.

Please call 415-674-1821 for more information, or e-mail: [sunshine@aasf.org](mailto:sunshine@aasf.org)

**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 April 12, 2010.



## From the Editor

# May Flowers

Before I tell you what's inside this issue, let me tell you about a fun new tool on our website (aasf.org). On the meeting schedule, you can get information about a group's trusted servants and contributions! (Don't worry, not *who* is a trusted servant, simply whether or not there is a registered secretary, treasurer or IFB rep; we're still an anonymous program.) That's right, you don't have to wait for your treasurer's report – you can click on the "location" link (it also has the maps feature) and see all kinds of information, including literature purchases. Check it out! And tell your trusted servants to register if they haven't; they're missing out on a subscription to this august publication (for the group's benefit, not necessarily for the individual, although we trust they would find it worth reading and a nice perk for their service). And they can register online, by phone, or in person at Central Office, so no excuses.

Our May flowers issue has point/counterpoint, letters to the editor, Fifth Step and Tradition, and lots and lots of service information. Repeat

after me: service keeps us sober. And if you've ever wondered about being on the frontlines of service – that "hand of A.A." in the Responsibility Statement – then read all about teleservice in two articles this month: the committee and the individual experience. Kudos to those volunteers on the vanguard.

I wonder which side you come down on after reading the point/counterpoint articles on pages 10 and 11, about identifying solely as alcoholics in the rooms. I've always said people are "lumpers" or "splitters," that is, with a tendency toward generalizing or specificity, and maybe that's what the debate is about, but read the articles and let us know what you think.

The anniversary letter in praise of Central Office (page 12) is a warm tribute that many of us share. We are very fortunate to have such highly functional support for our efforts to stay sober and help others toward sobriety. Blossoms to you, Maury and Peter, from those of us here at *The Point*, too!



## 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; for the full editorial policy, please go to [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org).)



## Faithful FIVERS!

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5.00 each month toward the support of Central Office. Faithful Fiver contributions go a long way in helping make our vital services possible. We thank the following members:

Alejandro D.	Kevin S.
Andrew Z.	Kristina F.
Ann & Denise	Lauren H.
Arthur A.	Laurie L. & Richard L.
Barbara K.	Lelan & Rich H.
Barbara L.	Leo H.
Barbara M.	Lisa M.
Beverly C.	Mabel T.
Brian O.	Marit L.
Bruce D.	Mark A.
Bruce S.	Mark O.
C.J. H.	Martha S.
Carole K.	Mary C.
Caroline A.	Matt S.
Casey L.	Michael W.
Charles D.	Michael Z.
Charlie O.	Milly T.
Christopher H.	Mitsi H.
Craig G.	Molly G.
Dan & Sherry T.	Nancy W.
David J.	Pat P.
David P.	Patrick M.
David S.	Paul M.
Dennis & Lucy O.	Peg L.
Don N.	Pene P.
Ed H.	Penelope & Robert
Eileen M.	Phil M.
Evan K.	Phyllis S.
Fay K.	Ralph P.
Flossie N.	Rich M.
Frances L.	Robert C.
Herman B.	Robert W..
James M.	Sara D.
Jane K.	Scott C.
Janet B.	Sheila H.
Jeanne C.	Stephen O.
Jeff B.	Steve A.
Jodie S.	Steve F.
John G.	Susan G.
John M.	Sylvia D.
John V.	Terry H.
Karen K.	Thomas H.
Kate R.	Tim M.
Kathryn M.	Tom M.
Kathy M.	Tracy F.

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

# How To Be “Another Human Being”

## Step Five: The Mother of All Spring Cleanings

by Suzan C.

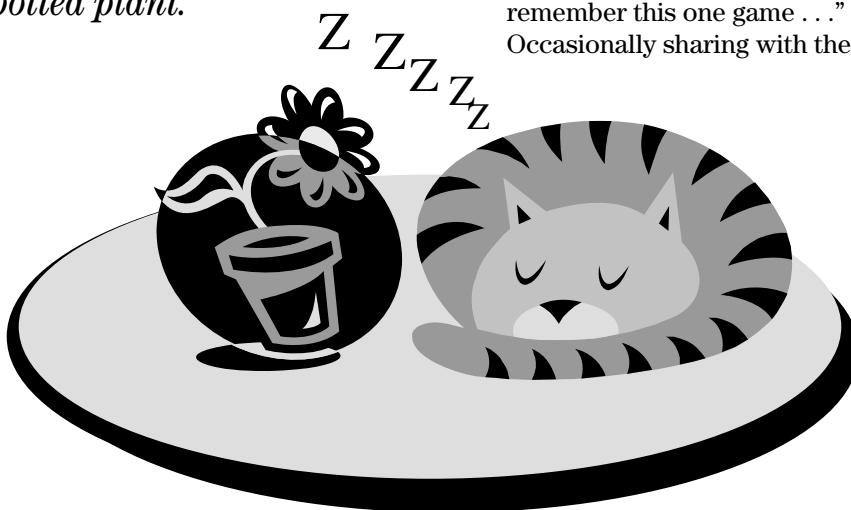
“We admitted to God, to ourselves and to *another human being*, the exact nature of our wrongs.” The greatest faith that one A.A. can place in another is a request to be Another Human Being. The greatest responsibility that an A.A. can have is to *be* Another Human Being. The most obvious aspect of this trust is confidentiality. But that is only a fraction of what is needed from Another Human Being.

Many people struggle to be silent while someone else speaks. They half-listen, while busily formulating the next remark. Some people have become so good at half-listening that they may catch as much as 95% of the content. Surely 95% comprehension is laudable, right? Not really.

There is much more to listening than hearing words and sentences and being able to repeat them. Quality listening calls for concentration and close observation. Sit back, breathe deeply, watch and listen, noting tone of voice, emotion, word choices and facial expressions. These pieces of information may guide me to say things like, “Excuse me, I’m sorry for interrupting, but would you please say that part again? I want to make sure I understand you.” This can lead to a more in-depth discussion of a particular point that seems significant. It can also enable me to challenge the Step Taker when something seems blown out of proportion (“When you say that you ruined her life, what do you mean exactly?”)

Everyone has an opinion on style when it comes to the Fifth Step. I have heard newcomers share that their sponsors fell asleep during their Fifth Steps, and how this enlightened the newcomers as to how uninteresting their misdeeds were, thus deflating their significance. To me, these sponsors should have been jolted awake with glasses of ice water. To fall asleep during someone’s Fifth Step is to be no more Another Human Being than a potted plant. At least the latter gives off oxygen.

*“To fall asleep during someone’s Fifth Step is to be no more Another Human Being than a potted plant.”*



As Another Human Being, it is also important to establish a favorable setting for the experience. A MUNI bus would probably not be a good choice. Nor would a coffee shop where others could overhear. The good old kitchen table of a house where nobody else is likely to enter for a few hours is a great choice. A secluded spot in nature could also work. There must be quiet, freedom

to express grief, remorse and a myriad of other emotions, and plenty of time to go through the entire Step. On rare occasions, the step could be broken up into two sessions, but to me this is not advisable. The gestalt, watershed, epiphany that is often a Fifth Step needs to start, build, and wrap up in a single session.

The Fifth Step is the mother of all spring cleanings. As with garage cleaning, there are roadblocks to purging accumulated crap. The biggest culprit is removing every hoarded item from its box and reminiscing, “Oh gosh, look at this, my baseball glove from when I lived in San Diego – oh too bad I got tar all over it . . . hey, I remember this one game . . .” Occasionally sharing with the Step

Taker a common experience or story is fine. But if I respond that way to everything that is said, our ability to get through the Step is diminished, and we may have to rush through the rest. Finally, it is important that the Fifth Step begin with an invitation to each person’s Higher Power to be present. The sponsor’s Higher Power should be standing by with a glass of ice water.



# The Most Important Job in A.A.

by Dave J.

The current brochure concerning the General Service Representative suggests that it may be the most important job in A.A. (“GSR, General Service Representative: May Be the Most Important Job in A.A.”) Perhaps it is, but this claim got me thinking.

When I was introduced to A.A., I was fifty years old; my marriage, my health, and my job were falling apart due to my drinking. I had been trying to stop drinking on my own for ten years. Through the intervention of friends, I ended up in a small room in a treatment center talking with a member of A.A. for the first time. That talk changed my life. Bill Wilson wrote, “no satisfaction has been deeper and no joy greater than in a Twelfth Step job well done.” (p. 110, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*) I hope the man who talked to me felt that satisfaction and joy.

In treatment I was introduced to the steps. After treatment, I began to go

to meetings in my hometown area. I hadn’t belonged to anything outside of work since the Cub Scouts. I found in meetings people who cared for me; they accepted me and made it possible for me to accept them. I asked someone to be my sponsor, and I joined a group. One attends a meeting; one belongs to a group. For me, for the first time in my life, I felt part of a group.

*“Outreach may be important to the person we reach out to, but it is always important to us.”*

I was taught that the most important person in A.A. is the newcomer and that the most important job is carrying the message directly, face to face, to the newcomer. In many areas outreach is a group activity, while in some areas for local reasons outreach is done by organizations in parallel with the group, for example,

H&I in San Francisco. However outreach is done does not change its importance. Outreach *may* be important to the person we reach out to, but it is *always* important to us.

For me the next most important job in A.A. is being a supportive group member. Some of us are not able to take part in outreach, but we all can be supportive group members.

From the beginning, the groups required the support of various institutions such as the local intergroup offices and General Service. These are important and necessary services. I suppose such

support functions are better organized today than twenty years ago, let alone seventy years ago, but I wonder if the groups are as strong. If Bill Wilson discovered anything, it was that he could only help himself by helping another.



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## Personal Rituals of Recovery and Sponsorship

by Bobby J.

When I get up in the morning, I ask God to direct my thinking, especially asking that my thinking be divorced from self-pity, dishonesty or self-seeking motives. Then I read the thought for the day, out of the *Daily Reflections* book. When I was new, I was taught to get to the meeting early and stay late. Always thank the speaker and welcome a newcomer.

When I approach a new prospect, I ask him two questions: “Are you done?” and “Are you willing to go to any lengths?” If the person answers

yes to both questions, I ask him to read the first sixty pages of the Big Book and then call me. If he calls, we make a date to sit down, and I read the Big Book to him. I explain how Bill writes and what he is saying. I never understood the Big Book until it was explained to me with depth and weight. I make sure that he understands “The Doctor’s Opinion” and I explain that Step One is the only step you have to do 100 percent. You do the rest to the best of your ability.

If he balks on Step Nine (making amends), I remind him that it was agreed at the beginning we would go

to any lengths for victory over alcohol. I really hope that he in turn carries the message of a spiritual awakening. I know that for me, until I did a Fifth Step, and heard someone else’s, I still didn’t belong to the fellowship of the spirit.

I do not have a sponsee call me every day. I don’t see the point. The last thing I need to do is run somebody’s life. I love my sponsor. He does not chase anybody down or try to run someone else’s life. He shows me my part in a written inventory.

And that’s how it works—for me.



## Primary, Secondary and None of the Above

### Interpreting the Fifth Tradition

by Anonymous

*"Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."* There are a number of ways I can interpret the Fifth Tradition. The first way is to see meetings as a collective Twelfth Step effort for the primary benefit of newcomers. Another way is to acknowledge that all alcoholics "still suffer" as do humans in general. The real meaning of the tradition seems to fall somewhere in the middle.

The fact that A.A. groups have a "primary" purpose suggests that they also have secondary ones. It might seem that serving coffee, electing trusted servants and making contributions to Central Office and General Services are the secondary purposes. But there's a lot more to it than that. If working the A.A. program involves step work, fellowship and service, then the purposes of an A.A. group are to present opportunities for each of these. The secondary purposes of A.A. groups include giving people a chance to engage in service, both at the meeting and through entities that make announcements there. Another secondary purpose is to provide access to program literature that helps alcoholics learn more about the steps and sober living. For me, one very important non-primary purpose is offering sanctuary: a place to sit and breathe and release my worries

without having to explain myself — where everyone already understands me.

The Fifth Tradition makes most sense when read in conjunction with concepts such as "attraction not promotion" and "principles before personalities." If the primary purpose of the group is to carry the message to suffering alcoholics, the only way we

*"one very important non-primary purpose is offering sanctuary: a place to sit and breathe"*



can effectively do that is by being attractive, and not letting our personalities obscure the principles of the program. What makes a suffering alcoholic "attracted" to us? Ironically, it is not hearing that our lives are fabulous now and all our dreams have come true. In fact, it is almost the opposite. The alcoholic who still suffers needs to know that A.A. is where he or she belongs. It is the place where things make sense for the first

time ever, where it becomes clear that they are not crazy, that other people do the things they do and have the same obsessive thoughts, fears, and resentments with the same debilitating effects. Honest experience is attractive. Humble strength is attractive. Hope through non-dogmatic faith is attractive.

Meetings can get off track. Most often, it is when a group strays from the Fifth Tradition. Although "principles before personalities" comes from the Twelfth Tradition and speaks

to anonymity, it has direct bearing on the Fifth Tradition as well. Gossip or breach of anonymity is a direct violation of "principles before personalities," but another example that takes a group away from its primary purpose of carrying the message is allowing shares to stray very far from the subject of sobriety. Although sobriety does not exist in a vacuum, and there are many "triggers" in work, love and life that test an alcoholic's spiritual condition, detailed discussion of outside personal encounters, problems and annoyances can point the A.A. compass in the wrong direction. There has to be moderation in the outside world's role when articulating experience, strength and hope in A.A. shares. Those who share need to be mindful of not getting lost in outside details, dramas and play-by-play narratives. These emphasize personality, and the problem. The A.A. principles are the only "message" the Fifth Tradition asks us to carry.







# THE TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

by Kristen E.

Anyone who has spent enough time sitting in the rooms of A.A. will have heard at least one account of a recovery that began with a call to the local A.A. phone number. I heard such a story in one of the first ten meetings I ever attended.

"There was a guy who stayed with me on the

phone, even as I was passing out with a head injury," the speaker said. "If he hadn't answered the phone, if he hadn't called the ambulance, I wouldn't be alive today."

What if, instead of a live person, this person had gotten a voicemail box? The very foundation of A.A.'s success is made up of one alcoholic helping another – and at no time is that communication as important as the first moment an alcoholic reaches out for help. In San Francisco, the Teleservice Committee is responsible for providing such a lifeline. (Marin County has its own Teleservice Committee.)

The Teleservice Committee is made up of 205 people at any given time and is responsible for manning the phones when Central Office is not open: that's 128 off-hours a week. I spoke with Steve R., the chair of the Teleservice Committee, who said, "Our mission is ultimately to be there for the alcoholic who's ready to get sober. We also provide service to out-of-towners who need to get to a meeting and don't know the area, and sometimes we end up providing crisis support for

alcoholics who need help getting through the night, too."

The Teleservice Committee is organized in a pyramid structure designed to provide a series of safeguards against an unanswered phone. After Steve's position as chair, where he represents the Teleservice Committee at the IFB, interfaces with other committee chairs, and bears the ultimate responsibility for filling the 205-person roster, there is the info

chair, whose responsibility it is to record the names

of all of the volunteers coming on and off their shifts. Next, there are seven daily coordinators — one for each day of the week — who are responsible for making sure that each of the shifts on that day are covered. They call each volunteer the day before with a reminder, and are on call at any time during their assigned day to handle emergencies, no-shows, last-minute cancellations, and anything else that arises. Finally, there are the volunteers who answer the phone: just under 200 people who take calls forwarded to their home or cell phones in roughly four-hour shifts (the exception is the eight-hour 10PM – 6AM shift).

What have the calls been like lately? "Well, we're seeing an increase in calls from people who want to use the phone number as a replacement for a meeting or for doing the Twelve Steps," Steve said. "And we're not there for that." Part of this is a function of needing to keep the line open for the new alcoholic in need. "If you tie the line up talking to someone who used to be a member and wants to debate whether the program really

works or not, you're not available for an alcoholic who really *wants* help."

In a crisis situation that requires a more in-depth conversation, volunteers contact a back-up person — often someone on the Twelve Step list, who has indicated the times he or she is available.

The biggest rush for a teleservice volunteer? "The first time an alkie calls in," Steve said. "There's nothing like it."

**How to volunteer for teleservice:** Call Central Office at 415-674-1821, and attend one of the teleservice orientations on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. There is a one-year sobriety requirement.



## An Old Girlfriend 'Celebrates'

My wife and I were sitting at a table at my school reunion, and I kept staring at a drunken lady swigging her drink as she sat alone at a nearby table.

My wife asked, "Do you know her?"

Yes," I sighed. "She's my old girlfriend. I understand she took to drinking right after we split up those many years ago, and I hear she hasn't been sober since."

"My God!" says my wife, "Who would think a person could go on celebrating that long?"



## POINT — COUNTERPOINT

### Singleness of Purpose: Don't Dilute the Message!

by A Dinosaur

When I came into A.A., I hadn't had a drink for five years. Other twelve step programs kept me dry. I graduated from one

to the other, got a sponsor, did the inventory, but still

felt unsatisfied. I was working as a rehab nurse when one of the patients suggested I try this really terrific A.A. meeting close to where I lived. I'd attended speaker meetings in my work and listened to speaker tapes, so I figured I knew what it was all about. I jumped into the frying pan and started A.A.

There was a real question as to whether I qualified, as my immediate story was not about alcohol but more about an addictive life full of resentments and self-seeking. Maybe it was the meeting or the time (1989),

but it never occurred to me to talk of the other meetings and addictions. Believe me, there were plenty (food, sex, relationships gone wrong, getting into debt, etc, etc.), but I didn't want

*"...I don't see A.A. as the place I want to force my ego-centered uniqueness on others."*

to separate myself away from the benefits of A.A. There certainly was alcoholism in my story, but it was early on in time. However, if I wanted membership in this A.A. club, I'd have to look primarily at my drinking while other things took their place in line. Gradually I began to hear snippets of my story. It was the one I'd denied and repressed for many years. I heard people who valued their past, and I wanted their serenity, what A.A. offered. If that meant saying I was an alcoholic, it was the least I could do.

Today, I want to continue on this path. I'm happy to identify as a plain old, boring, run-of-the-mill alcoholic, with lots of issues. The more similarities I acknowledge, the better off I am.

Nowadays I hear people identify as alcoholics-addicts; to me, that distracts from the messages of the program. Hell, I'm an addict for sure, among other things -- but I don't see A.A. as the place I want to force my ego-centered uniqueness on others. This dilutes a great program that still goes strong after seventy years.

I know I don't want to drink. That's the bottom line. I still fight the chocolate-chip cookies and obsess about past and present relationships, but I seek solutions for these addictions within the framework of A.A. as set down in the Big Book. Considering that the most efficient route to working this program begins with saying, "I'm an *alcoholic*," honey, I'm all over it.



### Tales from the Trenches by a Teleservice Volunteer

by San Francisco Mike

Answering a phone for four hours a month doesn't keep me sober, but it is a vital part of my sobriety that I wouldn't do without. I signed up for teleservice about fifteen years ago and have had the same commitment ever since. My other commitments at meetings have come and gone, but this one seems to keep right on going, like my sobriety.

There have been some hilarious moments, like the guy who regularly

phones up and screams for about a minute, then hangs up. At first I was a little startled, but when he did it a

*"I just hold the phone away from my ear and let him go at it."*

second, then a third time, it became kind of funny, and now, when he calls, it's "Oh, this guy again," and I let him get it all out. Heck, that may be how he stays sober, I don't know. I just hold

the phone away from my ear and let him go at it.

Another time a woman phoned and was having a lot of trouble with how to get sober, and I told her to go to meetings and don't drink in between. She must not have liked that answer, so she phoned back but got me again. I tried to explain that I was the only one available, but she kept phoning and getting angry, and I had to be real calm

*(Continued on page 11)*



## POINT — COUNTERPOINT



### Keeping the Doors of A.A. Open: I Am Responsible . . .

by Duran

*When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.  
And for that: I am responsible.*

#### **Bill W., co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous**

There seems to be some confusion around Tradition Five, “A.A.’s primary purpose is to carry the message to the alcoholic.” How does that get construed into, “You’re only welcome to participate in our fellowship if you identify as solely alcoholic?” WTF?

What the founders were trying to limit was the area over which they claimed authority, i.e., recovery from alcoholism. If you will take a moment to read the foreword of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* you will see that they were clearly not trying to limit who could benefit from or participate in the fellowship of A.A.

It states: “*Many people, nonalcoholics, report that as a result of the practice of A.A.’s Twelve Steps, they*

*have been able to meet other difficulties of life. They think that the Twelve Steps can mean more than sobriety for problem drinkers. They see in them a way to happy and effective living for many, alcoholic or not.*”

I’ve always introduced myself as Duran, addict/alcoholic. Personally, I understand myself to be someone

I’ve stopped drinking many times throughout my life, but I’ve never been able to completely stop using mood and mind-altering substances to escape reality. For me, being true to myself requires me to identify myself as an addict first and foremost.

Bill W. didn’t say, “I only want to help the people who are willing to identify

*“I only add the word ‘alcoholic’  
because it seems to be the secret password  
that allows me to participate in an A.A. meeting.”*

who struggles with the problem of addiction. I only add the word *alcoholic* because it seems to be the secret password that allows me to participate in an A.A. meeting. Alcohol was just one of the substances I abused in an addictive manner throughout my life, but the counselors at my recovery program said I am unquestionably an alcoholic.

and introduce themselves *solely* as ‘alcoholics.’” Actually, nothing in the doctrine or written codex of A.A. gives *anyone* the authority to restrict the participation of *anyone* who wants to quit drinking.

You cannot limit or control the spiritual experience that is the core of the miracle of recovery found in A.A. You can try, but God won’t let you f\*\*k it up.



(Continued from page 10)

and try to talk to her, but it wasn’t getting through. Finally, I guess she had a friend call, and I explained the situation, which relieved me because I don’t want people to phone A.A. and not get help.

I’ve talked with a lot of folks who were hurting and helped them talk through their problems so they could get some clarity, or at least an understanding person to go with them through their turmoil. Sometimes my job is just directing people to the nearest meeting, especially the

folks from out of town. I know the city really well, so I can suggest what bus, or whether it is easier to grab a cab. I never know if these folks stay sober, but I know it gets me into the Twelfth Step and I can feel that I am carrying the message.

One time I swapped shifts with another volunteer and took the overnight phone duty and got a call about 4AM. A woman phoned and was having a bit of trouble with a relationship and I was able to really listen for quite a while, and then I heard a streetcar over her phone, and

then I heard it go by my house just a few seconds later. I realized how close we were, then I realized that I knew her, and that’s when the anonymous part of our program hit home. I could listen, I could share my experience, but remain unknown. I am not a counselor; I am an alcoholic who remains sober through working the A.A. way.

Having a commitment in A.A. is a great way to keep showing up, and teleservice helps me stay close to other alcoholics and our common sobriety.



## Letters to the Editor

### Happy Anniversary, Maury

Dear Editor,

*No society can function well without able leadership at all levels, and A.A. can be no exception. It must be said, though, that we A.A.'s sometimes cherish the thought that we can do without much personal leadership at all. We are apt to warp the traditional idea of "principles before personalities" around to such a point that there would be no "personality" in leadership whatever. This would imply rather faceless automatons trying to please everybody, regardless.*

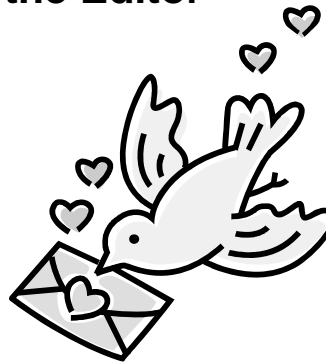
(Excerpt from article by Bill W. in the April 1959 A.A. Grapevine, also reprinted on page 38 of the "The Twelve Concepts for World Service.")

I want to express my gratitude for the work done at Central Office. The Central Office of San Francisco and Marin runs smoothly, evidenced by the limited amount of complaining that

circulates through A.A. Schedules are up to date, phone calls are answered, books and pamphlets are available.

Our office is conveniently located at 1821 Sacramento St. off Van Ness. There is even one parking spot available at the side of the building to allow for quick pick up of literature. When entering the A.A. office, you are immediately greeted and offered assistance. The bookshelves are organized and up to date. Peter can answer questions quickly and without an attitude (not always easy on the front lines of A.A. service). The volunteer staff is welcoming and polite.

Maury P., the office manager, makes every effort to assure that the



principles and traditions of A.A. are put into practice. She makes herself available to the fellowship as a resource for information, connecting groups, overseeing the operations without any authoritarian attitude, open and willing to

make improvements when problems occur. We are blessed. We have a Central Office that puts into practice genuine humility. As stated in Tradition Nine, "Universal respect is the key to their usefulness." Our Central Office is an example of successful efforts to keep the traditions alive and present in all its affairs.

Thank you to our special workers for not being "faceless automatons" and always leading by example. And special congratulations on doing an outstanding job for eight years, Maury.

Ted R.

### Response to Dog "Rant"

Dear Editor:

I just reread "An Open Letter to Local A.A. Groups" from Bruce S. and I can't figure out why you didn't run it in your "Rants" section. I feel bad about Bruce's asthma, but I feel worse about the apparent dry drunk he's on after twenty years of sobriety.

Does he ever speak up at the meetings where these voguish dogs are present? His letter makes it sound like he just abruptly leaves to begin working on his resentments. Does he attend business meetings? These would give him a forum which I would think much more effective in getting dogs banned from meetings. He does take

the "action" of concluding that people bring dogs to meetings out of ignorance. What is he doing to educate them and carry the message? I, too, dislike dogs at meetings. They aren't a threat to my health, but they are a definite distraction. But if they made me physically ill, I would be speaking up loud and clear. I would like to think that the newcomers Bruce is worried about being excluded would also make it known if their health was threatened and ask for a group conscience on the matter. Does he look for other meetings beyond the three he feels safe in?

But it's his last paragraph that I would

classify a full-on "rant." "[L]ess and less respect for our Traditions," he says, followed by a hodgepodge of references to literature and unobserved Traditions which, if all this is meant to relate to his problem with dogs, indicates he's upgraded his conclusion from ignorance to active malevolence on the part of the dog owners – or is it nearly everybody "in today's A.A."

I'm going to say a prayer for you, Bruce. I hope you have a sponsor to work with and can begin to take some positive action to safeguard your place in the program.

A Concerned Reader

# Meet THE MEETING

by Bree L.

This meeting has nothing to do with Bambi or rabbits from Disney, but everything to do with understanding the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"We've moved around a lot," says Jeff D. who started the meeting. "When I moved here from Santa Barbara, my sponsor told me to attend two meetings a week, and one of those had to be a Big Book study. I wanted a mid-week meeting so I started the Thursday meeting. We have gone through a number of revisions since the meeting began."

The Thursday Thumpers started out at the Junipero Serra Children's playground on Stonecrest over five years ago, according to Jeff D. "We sat on small chairs amidst toys and art projects in a rent-free room. That evolved to a location in Merced Heights that was fine until we were locked out a couple times, and then the place developed plumbing problems. Our last move was to the Ingleside Church [current location].

## THURSDAY THUMPERS

Along with this move came the after-meeting discussion that worked out wonderfully. Coffee a block away at Ocean Pizza is an opportunity to meet new members or to clarify hold-over discussion questions."

Along with location transitions, these students of the Big Book also made changes in the meeting's format. They started out reading one sentence at a time followed by discussion. That sentence was increased to a paragraph and then discussion. There was a two-year span to get through the first 164 pages. Now they read until someone wants to comment. There have been instances of a line-by-line discussion covering the Big Book's treasures.

The caliber of discussions is remarkable. Bruce K. looks upon this meeting not only as a place to grow but also an opportunity for deeper understanding. "Those in attendance really want to study the Big Book and they work hard to understand what it offers. There are ways to scoot through the words and never get to important concepts." He points

out the value of not being required to read for a certain time span or a designated amount, as concepts can be forgotten in the process.

"My sponsor told me he was coming to the Thursday Thumpers and I had to be there," Paul H. reports, "and I've been coming ever since." He says it is the quality of shares that make the discussions worthwhile. Paul appreciates the mix of long- and short-term sobriety, historical tidbits mixed with newcomer queries. "The afterwards meetings are where questions get answered, such as the fellow who couldn't sleep at night. I had that same concern early on and an old-timer told me, 'Don't worry. No one ever died from lack of sleep.' That was a huge relief."

The Thursday Thumpers group meets on Thursdays at 7PM at the Ingleside Church (1345 Ocean Avenue/Granada Avenue). There is a big sign on the front door with meeting room directions. The discussions are ongoing and always pertinent to the Big Book.

AP



## Gemini (May 21 - June 21)

Drinking style: Gemini's can drink without changing their behavior much— they're so naturally chatty and short-attention-spanned that it's just hard to tell sometimes. They can amaze you by conversing with finesse and allusion, then doing something unbelievable in an extremely advanced state of intoxication, like puking in your shoe. Gemini's possess the magic

ability to flirt successfully (and uninfuriatingly, which is very tricky) with several people at once. They like to order different cocktails every round — repetition is boring — and may create a theme (like yellow drinks: beer, sauvignon blanc and limoncello) for their own amusement.

# IFB meeting summary – april 2010

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

The following meetings (and *service entities*) 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

A is for Alcoholic	Came to Park	Friendly Circle Beg.	Mid Morning Support	Some Are Sicker Than Others	Tuesday Newcomers
Any Lengths	Code Blue	Gratitude Group	Mill Valley 7am	Steppin Up	Walk of Shame
Artist and Writers	Common Welfare	Haight Street Explorers	Miracles (Way) Off 24th St.	Sunset 9'ers (Sat.)	We Care
Attitude Adjustment	Design for Living	High Noon (Friday)	Mission Terrace	Sunset 9'ers (Sun.)	Women Who Drank Too Much
Back to Basics	Doing the Deal	High Noon (Monday)	Noon Smokeless	Ten Years After	
Back to Basics	Downtown Mill Valley	High Noon (Thursday)	On Awakening	Terra Linda	H&I Marin
Beginner's Meeting (Old Sutter St.)	Each Day a New Beg. (M-F)	High Noon (Saturday)	Parent Trap 2	They Stopped In Time	District 10 General Service
Bernal New Day	Early Start	Join the Tribe	Saturday Easy Does It	Tiburon Haven Group	District 5 General Service
Blackie's Pasture	Embarcadero Group	Live and Let Live	Sesame Step	Tiburon Men's Stag	The Dry Dock
Blue Book Special	Fireside Chat	Lush Lounge	SFPOA	Too Early	

Following is an unofficial summary of the April 2010 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 Central Office or see our website.

The purpose of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is to carry on the movement of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) in keeping with the intent and spirit of the Fellowship as exemplified in the books *Alcoholics Anonymous*, *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*, and *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*.

The Intercounty Fellowship has been organized by, and is responsible to, the member groups of A.A. in San Francisco and Marin for the purpose of coordinating the services which individual groups cannot provide.

The monthly IFB meeting was held Wednesday, April 7, 2010 at the First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin Street in San Francisco. Next month's meeting will be Wednesday May 5, 2010 at Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 101 Donahue Street in Marin City.

## IFB Reports:

**IFB Chair** - Michael S. presented a variety of handouts discussing the organizational structure of the IFB and asked for input. There were some questions from IFB members about whether there was a need for re-organization. Suggestions via e-mail are welcome.

**Treasurer** - February tracked close to budget. Group contributions are slightly below, individual contributions are slightly above. Only major change to balance sheet is a decrease in cash because we paid down payables about \$3,000 in February. Concerns we had from a budgetary standpoint at the end of last year have been offset by contributions in December and in January.

**Central Office Manager** - Maury noted that her report and many of the reports, are posted online. There is a need for phone volunteers at Central Office One year sobriety requirement. The SF meeting schedule is going to print in a few days; please get changes in. Web hosting service has been much better since upgrading plan.

**Central Office Committee** - Reviewed current financials and discussed items related to the operation of Central Office. Group contributions have dropped; not an emergency but it's important to continue to let groups know what is going on with Central Office finances. Also discussed options on how to proceed with the Central Office Mural.

## Committee Reports:

**The Point Committee** - Asked IFB members to share *The Point* with their groups to encourage subscriptions, and Faithful Fiver contributions. Any Service Committees that have not been featured in *The Point* are asked to let the committee

know, in order to be included in an upcoming issue.

**12<sup>th</sup> Step Committee** - Completed updating the SF 12th Step Volunteer list. At Central Office, at 6pm on May 12<sup>th</sup>, there will be an Open House for the 12th Step Committee. Sunshine Club is up and running Marin.

**Archives Committee** - Needs help with their service work with Central Office archives. Please be sure that flyers and group materials include the complete date, so that they may be archived properly.

**Orientation Committee** - Welcome to new IFB members. Anyone with questions regarding the IFB or Central Office is encouraged to attend an orientation. They need help with providing orientation before the IFB meeting. See Ted R. for more information.

**Trusted Servants Workshop Committee** - Held its first workshop of the year in March and it was a success with 22 members in attendance.

**Access Committee** - Completed proposal for policy regarding ASL interpretation requests. A.A. in Cyberspace Workshop will finish in April. Looking for members available to assist with 12th Step requests from deaf newcomers. ASL isn't necessary, written methods may be used to communicate.

**Fellowship Committee** - Continuing to  
(Continued on page 15)

look for volunteers for Founders Day, including those from General Service.

**AA SF and Marin History Mural Committee** – Decided to set up an on-line submission form describing the mural project to help find an artist. Eventually, this committee will be presenting choices to the IFB to decide how the project will be completed.

**Ad Hoc Budget Committee** - Formed to address the projected budget shortfall. Met with and decided to merge with the Outreach Committee because they noticed some overlap in their missions.

**Outreach Committee** - Working on more communication with the group, developing something to send to IFB reps and registered trusted servants. Continuing to track groups we have no contact with. Originally there were a couple of hundred, but now down to 18 groups. The next meeting will be April 20th.

**Website Committee** – David S. is the new committee chair. Developed a new popup on-line when browsing meetings that shows registered Trusted Servants, Group Contribution, and Literature Purchases for each meeting listed on the website schedule. Also, nextmeeting.org is available to view next 20 S.F. meetings, and the mobile website version of aasf.org is updated with larger fonts for easier viewing.

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

**SF Teleservice** – Reported there are some openings and to attend the next orientation at 6pm on the 3rd Monday at Central Office to become an S.F. Teleservice volunteer.

**SF PI/CPC** – In March 2010, two schools and four DUI classes had presentations. Speaker workshop scheduled for April 17, 2010 at Central Office. Looking for younger members to help with school presentations. Service openings are available on the committee.

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

**Marin H & I** – Recently rotated the Committee Chair position. No problems getting volunteers. New meeting format being used at juvenile facilities that includes a panel of speakers.

**International Convention Theater Production** - See Rich R. for information about casting call for production being organized for performance at the Convention in San Antonio in July 2010.

**Living Sober** – Fundraiser this month is Spring Fling on April 17th. Making preparations for the annual Living Sober convention in July 2010. Early registration is available on-line at [www.livingsober.org](http://www.livingsober.org).

**Marin General Service** - Upcoming PI/CPC Speaker Workshop in Marin County on Monday, April 26, 2010. Central Office Service Committees are encouraged to attend the Marin GS meeting.

**San Mateo Fellowship** – Announced upcoming event at the West Bay Alano Club: speaker meeting, dinner, and live music on Saturday, April 17, 2010.

#### **New Business:**

**Access Committee's proposed Policy for ASL Translation Requests for AA Meetings:** The Access Committee proposed an ASL translation policy. Highlights include clarity for procedures, such as cancellations and no-shows, a deaf-member database, and consistent outreach to agencies that serve the deaf community. A motion was made and seconded to table this item to next month's agenda. Call to vote: in favor: 29, opposed: 21; Minority opinion was heard, and another vote was taken: in favor: 26, opposed: 21; Motion to table the item passes.

**STANDING REQUEST:** Let your groups know about IFB membership opportunities - great service - 1 year sobriety recommended. Many committees need members. Orientation precedes the monthly IFB meeting (6 PM on the first Wednesday of each month).



## **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**

Michael S. [chair@aasf.org](mailto:chair@aasf.org)

#### **VICE CHAIR**

Michael P. [vicechair@aasf.org](mailto:vicechair@aasf.org)

#### **TREASURER**

Dashiell T. [treasurer@aasf.org](mailto:treasurer@aasf.org)

#### **RECORDING SECRETARY**

Stephen E. [secretary@aasf.org](mailto:secretary@aasf.org)

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

#### **CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE**

Brad P. [coc@aasf.org](mailto:coc@aasf.org)

#### **I2th STEP COMMITTEE**

Olive G. [I2thstep@aasf.org](mailto:I2thstep@aasf.org)

#### **ARCHIVES COMMITTEE**

Tracy F. [archives@aasf.org](mailto:archives@aasf.org)

#### **ORIENTATION COMMITTEE**

Ted R. [orientation@aasf.org](mailto:orientation@aasf.org)

#### **FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE**

Virginia M. [fellowship@aasf.org](mailto:fellowship@aasf.org)

#### **THE POINT**

Charley D. [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org)

#### **ACCESS COMMITTEE**

Muriel P. [access@aasf.org](mailto:access@aasf.org)

#### **TRUSTED SERVANTS**

#### **WORKSHOP COMMITTEE**

Ted R. [tsw@aasf.org](mailto:tsw@aasf.org)

#### **WEBSITE COMMITTEE**

Michael P. [website@aasf.org](mailto:website@aasf.org)

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

Glen R. [picpc@aasf.org](mailto:picpc@aasf.org)

#### **SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE**

Steve R. [sfteleservice@aasf.org](mailto:sfteleservice@aasf.org)

## **Recent Deaths**

Sam V. — Sober Across the Board

Kevin R.— First Place

# aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions	Feb. 10	YTD
Anonymous		\$ 500
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$ 36	\$ 36
Contribution Box		\$ 131
IFB	\$ 91	\$ 250
MCYPAA		\$ 250
SF Young People in A.A.		\$ 125
Serenity House	\$ 150	\$ 150
<b>Total Fellowship</b>	<b>\$ 277</b>	<b>\$ 1,442</b>

Marin Group Contributions	Feb. 10	YTD
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		\$ 226
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		\$ 450
Awakenings Sa 830am		\$ 33
Be Still AA Su 12pm		\$ 46
Closed Women Step Study Tu		\$ 176
Cover to Cover W 800pm		\$ 197
Crossroads Sun 12pm		\$ 749
Girls Night Out W 815pm		\$ 75
Gratitude Tu 8pm		\$ 424
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm	\$ 569	\$ 569
Happy Destiny F 7pm		\$ 83
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		\$ 1,250
High & Dry W 12pm		\$ 104
Island Group Th 8pm		\$ 167
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		\$ 123
Marin Young People F 830pm		\$ 30
Mill Valley 7D 7am		\$ 750
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		\$ 219
Monday Night Women's M 8pm	\$ 166	\$ 166
Monday Nooners M 12pm		\$ 389
Newcomers Step M 730pm		\$ 307
Noon Hope F 12pm		\$ 189
Novato Monday Stag M 8pm	\$ 300	\$ 300
On Awakening 7D 530am		\$ 525
Pathfinders Tu 12pm		\$ 200
Primary Purpose W 830pm		\$ 140
Refugee Th 12pm	\$ 60	\$ 120
Reveille 5D 7am	\$ 400	\$ 400
Rise N Shine Sun 10am	\$ 447	\$ 447
Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6	\$ 240	\$ 240
Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		\$ 197
Sober & Serene F 7pm	\$ 531	\$ 531
Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag		\$ 175
Steps To The Solution W 715pm		\$ 102
Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8		\$ 100
Sunday Friendship Sun 7pm		\$ 200
Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun		\$ 200
Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm		\$ 100
The Fearless Searchers F 8pm		\$ 38
There is a Solution Tu 6pm		\$ 166
Thursday Night Speaker Th 830		\$ 1,589
Tiburon Women's Candlelight W	\$ 148	\$ 148
Tuesday Twelve Step Tu 630pm	\$ 20	\$ 20
We, Us and Ours M 650pm	\$ 100	\$ 100
Wednesday Night Candlelight W	\$ 120	\$ 296
Women on Monday M 7pm		\$ 85

Fellowship Contributions	Feb. 10	YTD
Working Dogs W 1205pm		\$ 406
<b>Total Marin</b>	<b>\$ 3,101</b>	<b>\$13,543</b>

SF Group Contributions	Feb. 10	YTD
10am Step Study M 10am	\$ 60	\$ 60
6am Dry Dock 7D		\$ 53
6am Dry Dock W		\$ 55
7am As Bill Sees It Fri	\$ 63	\$ 63
7am Living Sober W 7am	\$ 71	\$ 71
7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		\$ 100
830am Smokeless F 830am		\$ 208
A New Start F 830pm		\$ 603
Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	\$ 41	\$ 41
Alumni W 830pm		\$ 41
As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		\$ 73
Beginners Meeting (Old Sutter St)		\$ 432
Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		\$ 220
Bernal New Day 7D		\$ 299
Big Book Basics F 8pm		\$ 127
Blue Book Special Su 11am		\$ 83
Castro Monday Big Book M 830	\$ 115	\$ 115
Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm		\$ 56
Cocoonuts Su 9am		\$ 23
Code Blue Big Book Study W 7		\$ 86
Common Welfare Th 8pm		\$ 151
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm		\$ 218
Dark Secrets F 10pm	\$ 71	\$ 71
Design for Living Sat 8am		\$ 378
Doin' the Deal Sun 10pm	\$ 86	\$ 86
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7		\$ 553
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7		\$ 279
Each Day a New Beginning W 7		\$ 299
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	\$ 459	\$ 459
Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa 8	\$ 60	\$ 60
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		\$ 446
Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm		\$ 176
Friday All Groups F 830pm		\$ 269
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm	\$ 111	\$ 111
Friday Smokeless F 830pm	\$ 195	\$ 195
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715		\$ 103
Full Flight From Reality Sa 12:30	\$ 129	\$ 129
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm		\$ 38
High Noon Friday 1215pm	\$ 218	\$ 364
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	\$ 322	\$ 628
Huntington Square W 630pm		\$ 167
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		\$ 29
Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm		\$ 120
Like A Prayer Su 4pm		\$ 100
Lincoln Park Sat 830pm	\$ 92	\$ 92
Live and Let Live Su 8pm	\$ 426	\$ 574
Living Sober W 8pm		\$ 306
Luke's Group W 8pm		\$ 70
Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	\$ 174	\$ 174
Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		\$ 100
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am		\$ 24
Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730	\$ 96	\$ 96

Marin Group Contributions	Feb. 10	YTD
Mission Terrace W 8pm	\$ 60	\$ 60
Monday Beginners M 8pm	\$ 180	\$ 180
Monday Men's Meeting M 8pm	\$ 280	\$ 280
Monday Monday M 1215pm		\$ 80
New Life W 7pm	\$ 40	\$ 40
Newcomers Tu 8pm	\$ 168	\$ 168
Noon Smokeless F 12pm	\$ 52	\$ 52
Noon Smokeless W 12pm		\$ 105
Off Broadway Book Th 730pm	\$ 18	\$ 18
Parkside Th 830pm		\$ 67
Pax West Th 12pm		\$ 268
Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm		\$ 67
Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm	\$ 35	\$ 35
Room to Grow F 8pm		\$ 135
Rule 62 W 10pm		\$ 85
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730	\$ 148	\$ 148
Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm	\$ 160	\$ 160
Serenity House		\$ 150
Serenity Seekers M 730pm		\$ 226
Sesame Step Tu 730pm	\$ 108	\$ 108
Sinbar Su 830pm	\$ 194	\$ 194
Sober Across the Board M-Sa 830		\$ 100
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		\$ 127
Sp Founded Program Of Action	\$ 425	\$ 425
Step Talk Su 830am	\$ 420	\$ 420
Stepping Out Sat 6pm	\$ 34	\$ 34
Stonestown M 8pm	\$ 45	\$ 45
Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag		\$ 535
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5		\$ 384
Sun Night Castro Speaker Disc		\$ 358
Sunrise Sunset Women's Step	\$ 236	\$ 236
Sunset 11'ers Sa		\$ 57
Sunset 11'ers W	\$ 84	\$ 84
Sunset 9'ers M	\$ 42	\$ 42
Sunset 9'ers Su	\$ 212	\$ 212
Sunset 9'ers Tu		\$ 2
Sunset 9'ers W	\$ 38	\$ 188
Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm	\$ 219	\$ 219
Ten Years After Su 6pm	\$ 449	\$ 656
The 12 Schleppers Th 8pm	\$ 80	\$ 80
The Parent Trap M 1230pm		\$ 153
Thurs Morning Men's BB Study		\$ 575
Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm	\$ 60	\$ 60
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$ 73	\$ 73
Walk of Shame W 8pm		\$ 81
We Care Tu 12pm		\$ 111
Wharfrats Th 815pm		\$ 26
Women Living Sober Sa 10am		\$ 120
Women Who Drank Too Much Tu	\$ 8	\$ 8
Women's 10 Years Plus Th		\$ 107
Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu	\$ 176	\$ 284
Women's Promises F 7pm	\$ 127	\$ 394
Work In Progress Sat 7pm	\$ 613	\$ 613
YAHOO Step Sa 1130am		\$ 140
<b>Total San Francisco</b>	<b>\$ 7,571</b>	<b>\$19,246</b>

YTD	\$10,949	\$34,230
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# Trusted Servants: You Trust, I Serve

## Some Advice for Those In and Out of Office

by "Anne" Alcoholic  
on location in NYC

The best explanation of 'trusted servants' I ever heard was from an elder statesman of San Francisco AA. It goes like this:

When I am the trusted servant I focus on the servant part of the phrase. I aim at being of maximum service to those around me. It's not about me – how great I am, how popular, or how trusted. I ask myself, "How can I be of maximum service performing this commitment?" Am I of maximum service if I ask the same people who regularly attend a meeting to speak when I am the secretary? Or am I providing greater service by asking people from other meetings to come and speak? Yes, of course, the meeting will not completely self-destruct if I don't show up for my commitment. That's part of "principles over personalities". But, I can't let that be an excuse for simply not showing up for my commitment. I get the phone numbers of other trusted servants at the meeting. I talk to them at the beginning of our 6 month (or whatever) commitment. I tell them I will fill in for them if they call me ahead of time and ask them if they will do that for me, too. Now that I am sober, people can trust me to do what I say.

Which leads me to the other half of the phrase: *trusted*. I trust that the people elected or who volunteer to do service at a meeting will do as they say. I don't shout out instructions to the group or an individual, that is the secretary's job. (Well,

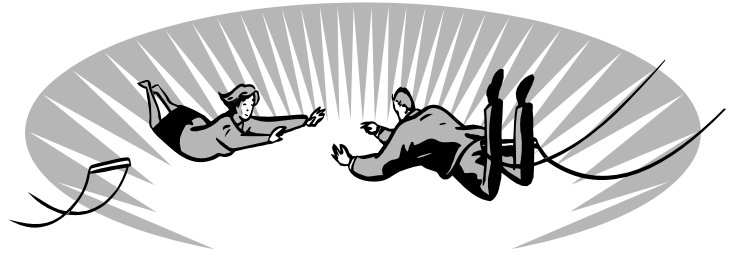
maybe not shouting. But if someone talks too much or interrupts the meeting, the secretary can speak to that person with lovingkindness.) I try not to gossip or criticize behind the backs of my meeting's trusted servants (as tempting as that may

*"But I too have experience I can share lovingly with a secretary, coffee maker or treasurer."*

be!) That is a character defect I can ask GOMU (God Of My Understanding) to remove from me. I trust that the outgoing trusted servants shared their experience with the new ones. But I too have experience I can

share lovingly with a secretary, coffee maker or treasurer. Yes, you are not a complete idiot and you know how to make coffee. But every coffee maker and every location has its own quirks. At the Urban Life Center, for example, you can't plug in more than one coffee urn at a time in the kitchen or you will blow a breaker. Don't try it, we already have. Learn from our experience.

Trusted servants. I trust when you serve. I serve when you trust.



## Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through April 15, 2010  
honoring the following members:

### ONGOING MEMORIALS

Fred B., Steven D., Conrad G., Ken M., Dick O'L., Lyle W.

### ANNIVERSARIES

**Firefighters & Friends:** Ann W. 25 years

**High Noon:**

Blue 23 years, Patsy C. 6 years, Jeff R. 5 years, Douglas 3 years,  
Molly G. & Aidan M. 2 years, Anita O. 1 year, Ken 60 days

**Irvine, CA:** Doug P. 19 years

**Big Book Basics:** Yvonne D. 23 years, Sue L. 6 years

Gordon G. 21 years, Fay K. 11 years

**A is for Alcohol:** Karen C. 23 years

# profit and loss statement: February 2010

	Feb 10	Budget	YTD 10	Budget		Feb 10	Budget	YTD 10	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					IFB Literature	17		17	
Income					PI/CPC	10	120	31	120
Contributions from Groups					Filing/Fees	0		25	25
Group Contributions	10731	12639	33965	26885	Insurance	0		1740	901
Honors	218		265		Internet Expense	82	119	137	238
Total Contributions from Groups	\$10,949	\$12,639	\$34,230	\$26,885	Office Supplies	370	170	455	340
Contributions from Individuals					Paper Purchased	204	208	406	416
Individual - Unrestricted	2676	151	3874	2010	Shipping	-239	21	-224	42
Faithful Fiver	880	751	1836	1324	Equipment Lease	1546	1546	1546	1546
Honorary Contributions	352	382	751	557	Repair & Maintenance	344	315	449	618
Total Contributions from Individuals	\$3,908	\$1,284	\$6,461	\$3,891	Payroll Expenses	4	5	8	10
Gratitude Month					Telephone	242	256	492	512
Gratitude Month - Groups	186		3031		Phone Book Listings	87	84	173	168
Gratitude Month - Individual	200		200		Miscellaneous Expense	0		0	
Gratitude Month - Other	0	1328	0	2401	Total Expense	\$18,440	\$18,914	\$37,800	\$37,585
Total Gratitude Month	\$386	\$1,328	\$3,231	\$2,401	Net Ordinary Income	-\$125	-\$879	\$12,459	\$4
Sales - Bookstore	9981	9695	19695	15428	Other Income/Expense				
Newsletter Subscript.	60	40	93	50	Other Income				
Total Income	\$25,284	\$24,986	\$63,711	\$48,655	Interest Income	\$396	\$271	\$470	\$542
Cost of Goods Sold					Total Other Income	\$396	\$271	\$470	\$542
Cost of Books Sold - Shipping	44	13	44	25	Net Other Income	\$396	\$271	\$470	\$542
Cost of Books Sold	6574	6690	12767	10646	Net Income	\$271	-\$608	\$12,928	\$546
Credit Card Processing Fees	350	248	641	395					
Total COGS	\$6,968	\$6,951	\$13,452	\$11,066					
Gross Profit	\$18,315	\$18,035	\$50,258	\$37,589					
Expense									
Inventory Adjustments	0		402						
Sunshine Club	0	46	20	46					
Reconciliation Discrepancies	0		0						
Employee Expenses									
Wages & Salaries	8844	8871	17634	17668					
Employer Tax Expenses	1275	1079	2705	2419					
Health Benefits	548	594	1732	1877					
Total Employee Expenses	\$10,667	\$10,544	\$22,072	\$21,964					
Professional Fees									
Computer Consulting	225		225						
Total Professional Fees	\$225		\$225						
Postage									
Non-Bulk Postage	44		44						
Bulk Mail	0	246	0	246					
Total Postage	\$44	\$246	\$44	\$246					
Rent - Office	4493	4493	8986	8986					
Rent - Other	75	75	75	75					
Access Expenses	270	666	720	1332					

## The Spirit of San Francisco Sober de Mayo TACOS & BINGO Sunday, May 23, 2010



1:30 pm AA/Al-Anon Speaker Meeting

3:00 pm Taco Feed

4:00 pm Bingo

### TICKETS AVAILABLE

\$15 In Advance / \$20 at the Door

8 games - 3 cards per game

additional cards \$1 each

### BINGO PRIZES AWARDED

Purchase Tickets online at [www.spirit-sf.org](http://www.spirit-sf.org)

Additional Info email [info@spirit-sf.org](mailto:info@spirit-sf.org) or call 415-218-7609

The Janet Pomeroy Center

207 Skyline Blvd - San Francisco

Between the SF Zoo & Lake Merced

# STAYING F.I.T.

## An Experience with Faith, Intuition and Trust

by Esmerelda K.

My first sense of trust and faith came with three meals a day, a warm bed and a kiss goodnight in my parent's home. Intuition was born out of this eerie awareness that I was somehow trapped inside a body. This produced an inner panic about the uncontrollable nature of my human situation.

Sunday School offered the first alternative -- angels, visions, and miracles! I carried my little bible around 24/7, lying on the lawn praying for an angel to walk out on a cloud and wave at me. My calling became vocalizing any perceived discrepancy to the truth. The wrath that befalls a child innocently "telling it like it is" to vodka-swilling adults! Being called crazy on a daily basis is surely a genesis of my insanity.

Over time I had two realizations:

- 1.) If telling the truth meant I was crazy, then those I relied upon for survival could not be trusted.
- 2.) Alcohol assured me I was supremely right.

Then one day the shot failed to deliver. The faith and trust I put in the sacrament of alcohol for that super intuition failed like it had been chained to kryptonite. My faith withered and died. Trust became an alien concept and my psychic intuition turned into a paranoid horror movie. My days were lived in fear coupled with a physical craving for that which had failed me. In my darkest hour, guns, pills and a noose raged garishly before me in a carnival of defeat. "I give up," I said. "Please help me."

My prayer was heard. My cry of surrender was mystically answered.

Someone asked, "Ever heard of A.A.? Can I take you to a meeting?"

Real faith arose out of the miracle of surrender. Distrust faded with the kindness of a good listener, the humor

*"Real faith arose  
out of the miracle of surrender."*

of shared understanding and a cup of coffee. My faith in sobriety grew dependent upon the program itself rather than on the charismatic people

within it. Faith and trust are retrofitted every time I practice patience. When I take the daily care to eat right, exercise, and practice the Eleventh Step meditation, it enables me to hear my inner voice more clearly. I become the voice. Today I have faith in the miracle of my own sobriety. I often intuitively know how to handle situations and my trust is no longer dependent on the unreliable external world but rather upon a stable inner peace.

**IP**



To arrange ASL or special needs, please contact us directly at least 72 hours in advance.

# Anonymous Idol


Proceeds benefit  
the 2010  
Western Roundup  
Living Sober  
Conference

## AA and Al Anon Meeting 6pm

## 7pm Show

\$15 suggested donation

**to be a contestant**  
email: [fundraising@livingsober.org](mailto:fundraising@livingsober.org)



Everett Middle School  
450 Church Street  
Btw 16th + 17th

[www.LivingSober.org](http://www.LivingSober.org)  
415.978.2478  
[fundraising@livingsober.org](mailto:fundraising@livingsober.org)

# Saturday May 15th 2010

# May 2010

## Moving?

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You can also **email** or **phone** us with your new contact information.

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