

the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

2010 **8**

August

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

A publication of the

Intercounty Fellowship

of Alcoholics Anonymous

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Beyond The Bay

Recovery

Knows No Bounds



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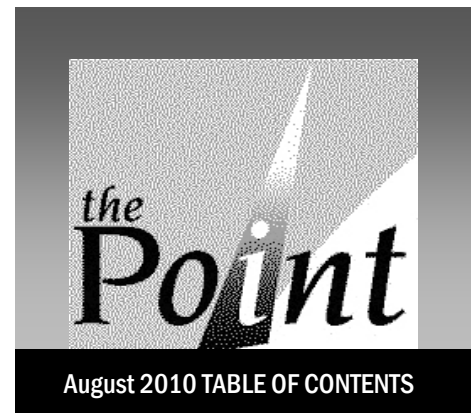
The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of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

August 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
1	2	3 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office 6pm	4 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board 101 Donahue, Marin City (St Andrew Presbyterian Church) Orientation 6pm Meeting 7pm
8 Trusted Servants Workshop Group Treasurer <i>See flyer on page 4</i>	9 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office 7pm	10 <u>SECOND TUE</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm SF 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	11 <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office 6:30pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 6:30pm
15 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	16 <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office 6:30pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael 8pm	17 <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee Central Office 6:30pm	18
22	23	24 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30pm	25
29 Pacific Regional Forum Torrance, CA More info: www.aa.org	30	31	

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5	6	7 CNCA Summer Assembly San Jose, CA <i>See flyer on page 17</i>
12	13	14
19 <u>THIRD THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office 6:30pm Please send any ?'s you have about group service to tsw@asf.org	20	21 <u>SCHEDULE CHANGE</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma Business Meeting 12:30pm (Usually 4th Saturday, but moved due to Pacific Regional Forum next week.)
26 <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St, SF Orientation 7:15pm Committee Meeting 8pm	27 Pacific Regional Forum Torrance, CA More info: www.aa.org	28 Pacific Regional Forum Torrance, CA More info: www.aa.org

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.



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“Joy at our release
from a lifetime of frustration
knew no bounds.”

Big Book, p. 129



Meeting Changes

New Meeting:

Mon - Fri	12:00pm	San Rafael	NOON SMALL ROOM, Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave. (BK, DI, Friday is SD)
Thu	12:00pm	Mission	INTO THE SUN MEDITATION GROUP, Mission Fellowship, 2900 24th St./Florida (DI, MD)
Thu	7:30pm	No. Mission	ONCE A DRUNK SAILOR, Bahá'í Center, 170 Valencia/Duboce St. (ME, SD, Women welcome on the 4th Thursday)

Meeting Changes:

Mon - Sat	8:00pm	Novato	GRUPO QUERER ES PODER, 2 Commercial Blvd. 101K Ste 2 (was 1620 Grant Ave.)
Sun	6:00pm	Novato	GRUPO QUERER ES PODER, 2 Commercial Blvd. 101K Ste 2 (was 1620 Grant Ave.)
Sun	7:30pm	Castro	SUNDAY NIGHT CASTRO SPEAKER DISCUSSION, 100 Diamond St/18th St. (was 8pm)
Mon	6:30pm	Novato	JUST CAN'T WAIT 'TIL 8, Church, 6965 Redwood Blvd./Hill Rd. (was 120 Landing Ct.)

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!**



Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous
serving San Francisco and Marin Counties

Central Office Archives Committee is asking for your help.

We are compiling a list of dates when meetings were started in SF and Marin.

Any idea when your meeting started?

Do you know of someone who might know?

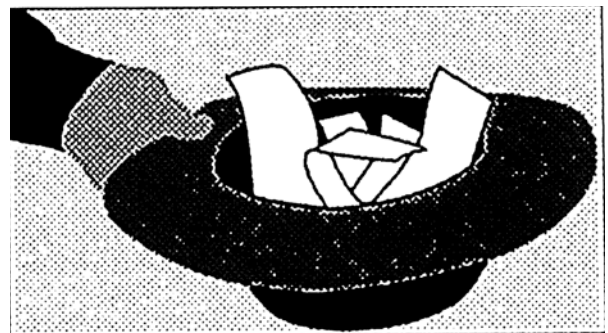
The Archives Committee gladly accepts material regarding AA in SF and Marin.

Due to a fire back in 1981
we lost everything pre-1970.

Visit us at <http://www.aasf.org/archives>.

Email to archives@aasf.org or contact Central Office
415-674-1821, 1821 Sacramento St. SF, CA 94109

Where Money and Spirituality Mix



Treasurer's Workshop

Where Does the Money Go & What Does It Do?

Sunday—August 8th, 11:00 AM—1:00 PM

Central Office 1821 Sacramento St.,
San Francisco

From the Editor

Vacation

Can we ever take a vacation from recovery? Just skip those pesky meetings and quit “practicing these principles in all our affairs”? We need a break from *everything* once in a while, right?

The etymology of the English word “vacation” reveals its use since the 14th century to mean “freedom or release” from activity or occupation. Hmm, maybe it’s the *recovery* that provides us with the *vacation* from drinking and other soul-destroying activities and occupations. Perpetual vacation, as long as I don’t pick up a drink.

August (that classic vacation month), for the second year running, is the issue dedicated to sober journeys. For those phobic of outbound bridges and tunnels, we bring reportage of travel beyond the bay: yes, members of the fellowship venture out and return *still sober*, even under trying circumstances. There *is* A.A. outside San Francisco and Marin Counties, and a fair-sized cohort of local members sojourned to San Antonio to encounter it at the international A.A. convention during its 75th anniversary year. The report is on page 6.

Read about an outpost of San Francisco-style recovery in Denmark on page 7, where the writer recalls early sobriety in the City by the Bay and expresses gratitude for the quality of sponsorship he encountered here. Another sponsor shout-out appears on page 12. And our Meet the Meeting intrepid reporter, Bree L., traveled to the very edges of civilization to bring back tales of lost tribes of alcoholics in recovery: Stinson Beach and Bolinas fellowships (page 13).

Charley D. continues his hit parade of essays on the traditions (his third in a row) at page 8, while the mystery of Serenity Prayer authorship is resolved at last – thank you, Mike M. – on page 11 along with an article on “word play” rituals from meetings. Advice on verifying meeting attendance for court-ordered drunks is the topic of our newest feature (“help@aasf.org”) at page 12.

We here at *The Point* have a lot of fun providing you with food for thought, as well as reports from the IFB (like the article from the Central Office Committee on page 9). Thanks for keeping us sober!



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.)



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.	Kristina F.
Andrew Z.	Lauren H.
Ann & Denise	Laurie L. & Richard L.
Arthur A.	Lelan & Rich H.
Barbara L.	Leo H.
Barbara M.	Lisa M.
Brian O.	Mabel T.
Bruce S.	Marit L.
C.J. H.	Mark A.
Carole K.	Mark O.
Caroline A.	Martha S.
Casey L.	Mary C.
Celia H.	Maryellen C.
Charles D.	Matt S.
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Chris H.	Michael W.
Chris L.	Michael Z.
Craig G.	Mily T.
Dan & Sherry T.	Mike M.
David J.	Mike & Steffie M.
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Fay K.	Phyllis S.
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Kathryn M.	Tom M.
Kathy M.	Tracy F.
Kevin S.	

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!

Impressions from San Antonio

A Report from the International A.A. Convention

by Molly G.

I'm sitting on the airport floor at Gate 5, charging my phone, checking messages. The convention is over. My head is racing about my experiences in Texas and the people I spent time with. Six televisions overhead read *The Alcoholism and Addiction Cure* in bold letters, an ad for a non-Twelve Step book. I look around and laugh because there are thousands of people sitting around me who found a way out.

I love the poem "Marin Headlands" by Jane Miller. It gave me some clarity and hope when I was new in A.A. I'm stealing her style to write about what happened and what it was like.

Knowing smiles around baggage claim. Avis car rental: "Seems like a lot of you are going to that convention. What do you do there?" Relief from the 94% humidity, gifted with

Perrier, string cheese, and an apple. Silly and serious chitchat. A whiteboard with markers, gratitude lists, free bubblegum. Boot shopping, registration lines, green shirts. A bubble machine on the ceiling! Trips to Sober Ranch, a coon tail hat. T-shirts: "The 13th Step: Odds are good, goods are odd" and "One Day At A Time." Crosswalks, lanyards, "Where are you from?"

Somebody's first chip: "Nobody has ever given me anything." Sleep. Very little. Sweat and air-conditioning. Canada Day buttons handed to 40 of us in line at a coffee shop. "Call Rob if you want handmade jewelry in nor-Cal, tell him Mike gave you the number. If he's pissed, delete it." Ballrooms, archives, A-Z note-passing bulletin boards, flirting because we are all in love, a cover of Sly & The Family Stone's "Thank You." Overwhelmed. "Why don't you go call your sponsees?" and "I felt like that, too."

Bad food on the Riverwalk, sweet tea, Mexican chocolate cheesecake joy. Midnight's first marathon meeting, speakers ride on a bus where a local says "I didn't know you all knew each other!" San Francisco's Ms. J sharing her light.

Alamo Dome. Saving seats, not saving seats. Echoed prayer. More texting. No photos! Three hundred and sixty degrees of people who all had a Day One. The way the flag bearers bore their flags.

"Amazing Grace." Visions for society. ICYPAA dancing, redbulling. Empty water pitchers. Fort Lauderdale, Ireland, Playas. Eminem's "I'm Not Afraid," free power outlets. D's company and sunglasses at night.

Superstar at 7:30AM: Clancy, irreverent in a white suit. "One alcoholic talking with another about behaviors he does not yet believe in." The play, the actors, and the closed-off 22nd floor. Berry cobbler, pictures with friends, their pea soup. A last minute attendee, our talk in the resting room. Jay-walking and grumpy policemen. Steps Four through Ten. How do we pick between "Healing through Laughter" and "Sex, Security and Society"? Instincts run awry, fear, isolation, one-on-ones, "I love you" and "I'm as grateful as I know how to be."

Listening. Watching. Applause for General Service. The oldtimers section. Twelve names drawn from a sombrero. His love for his wife. Her birthday. His hope. Their service. Their shamelessness. Their reliance on God. Our solution.

I lean back at Gate 5 and feel so grateful that I need not search any further, alone, inside the pages of self-help books for a non-existent cure. My brilliant airport thinking is interrupted by the unexpected voice of a cousin I haven't seen in a year; just when I thought I'd be super-bored for the next four hours. What it's like now? It's like everything is God.

MP



From Denmark, With Love

Sober in San Francisco

by Erik M.

San Francisco is my "spiritual home," although I live in Copenhagen, Denmark now. I got sober in San Francisco on June 10th, 2002; I didn't realize that this was Dr. Bob's sobriety date when my sponsor suggested that I reset my sobriety date because I had eaten a hash cookie at the Haight Street Fair. I actually copped a resentment against him at the time – I thought I had been sober that entire year, since I was dry from alcohol.

I stopped drinking in Manhattan in June, 2001. I was 31 years old. In the gorgeous summer weather, I was greasy, hungover and just plain sad when I went to A.A. Before I could duck out after the meeting, a man took me by the arm and introduced me to a guy with one year sober – I thought he was a god and he became my first sponsor.

After two months sober in New York, I thought I had it all figured out. I had worked a quick and hasty Steps One through Five and gotten a job in San Francisco over the phone. My sponsor just said, "Look, I don't recommend this kind of big change in your first year, but if you do go, then please hook up with the program and get a sponsor ASAP." I drove off, and in typical alcoholic style, I pulled into the city at midnight three days later, the day before my first day of work.

That first year not drinking was amazing. The beautiful smells of eucalyptus trees, lavender, and pine in Golden Gate Park and bike rides

up Mount Tam made me feel like I was truly born again. I was hitting about a meeting a week and didn't have a sponsor. I said I was new once in a while, but otherwise, I was too shy and self-conscious to speak at meetings – in retrospect, I realize that I was a dry drunk and just filled with plain self-centered fear! I was riding my bike to work daily and pounding on cars that came too close. More

"I had smoked weed a few times that year and honestly thought I was still sober."

than once, they gave chase, or used their cars to retaliate against my road-raging behavior. I didn't know where all this anger was coming from, so I started seeing a therapist.

Seeing a professional helped me to gain some insights into my ever-precious self, but I still felt more at home in A.A. meetings. I started seeing men and women with less time than me making friends and even getting sponsees. I had smoked weed a few times that year and honestly thought I was still sober. I went to the Buena Vista Breakfast meeting on Haight Street one Sunday morning and sat next to a guy without looking at him. He said hi and I realized he had a very serene energy all through the meeting. I worked up the courage to ask him to be my sponsor, and we started



working the steps immediately.

We met every week at a cafe and I called my sponsor daily. He also nudged me into getting commitments and I started making friends and "doing the deal" as he said. My Fifth Step was read in my sponsor's car parked at the ocean; I can't experience a foggy afternoon anywhere in the world without thinking of the cozy fog blowing in from Ocean Beach. I worked the program to the best of my ability and followed my sponsor's suggestions more often than not (including re-setting my sobriety date).

The program in Denmark is relatively young, and I long for the beautiful fellowship of SF, but I visit every year and still have great friends in and around the city. I pass it on as best I can to my Danish sponsees from various parts of the globe, and it is such a gift to be able to spread the love of A.A.



by Charley D.

HELPING ANOTHER ALCOHOLIC: THE UNPROFESSIONAL JOB

*Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional,
but our service centers may employ special workers.*

Tradition Eight commands that A.A. *should* forever remain non-professional. From a program that generally only recommends, this directive sounds stern and uncharacteristically insistent. Does it even make sense? In our society, if you're good at something, you do two things to make the most of it: first, you specialize in that task at which you excel; second, you charge money for doing what you do well.

Civilization itself arguably owes its existence to these two principles. Those who were better at farming, farmed. Those who excelled at hunting, hunted. Those who showed skill at cooking stayed in the village and cooked what the hunters and farmers produced. Eventually societies developed money as a medium of exchange so that the farmer, the hunter and the cook could focus on what they each did well and buy what they needed from each other. Voilà – the birth of professionalism.

Today's societies have spawned multitudes of specialized professionals. Not just teachers, but specialists from kindergarten to post-graduate study. We have physicians with particular expertise for almost every part of the body and for every sort of disease. Lawyers, stockbrokers, football players – all focus on some especial facet of their field. Some scholars even posit a civilization's degree of specialization as a measure of its sophistication and effectiveness.

So why did Bill W. put his foot down and issue this ukase banning professionalism? For one thing, no one has ever identified the attribute that makes someone good at helping an alcoholic.

Before A.A., professionals generally felt nothing would help. They considered alcoholism an incurable condition. Who can say who has the "skill" to carry the message of recovery to a suffering alcoholic?

Still, professionals can and do help in recovery. I got sober with the assistance of a professional – a psychologist who specialized in addiction. He urged me to attend A.A. meetings and even tricked me into going to my first one. When, at our very first session, I expressed reluctance to attend a meeting he'd recommended, he asked whether I was "afraid" to go. Unwilling to confess to being the coward I actually was (and still am), I went – with him. The fellowship of A.A. amazed me, then and now. I continued to see him after that introduction to the program. While I would never have gotten sober without him, I would never have stayed sober without A.A. My shrink helped me face what was wrong with me. A.A. gave me the strength to get better by showing me that alcoholics in some way all suffer from the same malady. From that fellowship of a failing – an addiction to alcohol – comes the power to recover.

If A.A. had had a cadre of professionals directing a flock of suffering, subservient alcoholics, it would not have worked for me. I would have chafed under the authority of an elite that supposedly knew more than I did about how to run my life. Don't get me wrong: I wasn't doing a particularly good job at it myself. Still, I'd be damned before I'd pay some "professional" to tell me what I needed to do. Even more, had they charged me for becoming a member of A.A. to pay for these professional services, I'd

have headed in another direction. Bad enough to cede one's life to these people but then also to pay for it? Absolutely not.

To professionalize A.A. would destroy its simple effectiveness as a fellowship. The fact that the alcoholics who have helped me then and now didn't want payment somehow made them more believable to me. Their sincerity stems from something other than the desire to earn another dollar. It comes, in fact, from the desire to keep themselves sober. That reward – their own sobriety – is all A.A. members ever ask as payment for service to another alcoholic. **TP**



I bought an old bottle at a yard sale. Upon polishing the bottle, a magical genie suddenly appeared. The genie exclaimed, "Thanks for letting me out of the bottle. I've been in there a long time. I'll grant you one wish."

"I've always wanted to go to Hawaii, but I'm afraid to fly and I get sea sick, so build me a road."

"That's too hard; got any other ideas?" replied the genie.

"Okay," I replied, "I can't control my drinking once I have the first drink, and if I stop, I can't stay stopped. I want to be able to drink like a normal person."

The genie replied, "Two lanes or four?"



CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

by Brad P., COC Chair

The COC is the executive committee of our Intercounty Fellowship Board. Its function is to oversee operations of the Central Office and its employees, including personnel, budgeting and fiscal oversight. Its membership is made up of IFB officers, six at-large members and the Central Office Manager. It is empowered to act on behalf of the IFB in business and administrative matters. – Editor

When most people first hear the name Central Office Committee, it likely goes in one ear and slides easily out the other without too much disturbance. Seeming banality accompanies a respectful indifference for what appears to be a small part of the A.A. picture. After all, our Eighth Tradition, (“A.A. should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ Special Workers”) reserves all the rewarding Twelfth Step work for the groups and leaves just the few chores they can’t, and probably don’t want to, do themselves for our Central Office. Most of that remaining work is done or at least orchestrated by those Special Workers and the legion of grateful A.A. members who assist them every day. So just who is the COC and what do they do that’s so significant as to warrant another committee?

If things are going well – if we A.A.

members are recovering from alcoholism with the steps, are observing the traditions in our groups and are guided by the Twelve Concepts in our service efforts – then the answer is, “not much!” But there is a lot going on behind the scenes worth mentioning. This group is made up of members with “... substantial service experience,” usually accompanied by some professional background or other experience that is useful and pertinent to the operation of our service center. It meets each month, and often works in between, to support our paid workers and volunteers by helping to ensure the smooth functioning of the vital services that are needed to keep those still suffering alcoholics coming to our meetings when they need our help. This often requires a well-informed group conscience which otherwise might be difficult and time consuming to attain.

More frequently, though, this is where we A.A. members put our “money where our mouth is,” so to speak. Not with cold hard cash, but rather loving service in the form of that most valuable resource, our time. Our Eighth Tradition was born of much contempt for paying anyone to do A.A.’s work, so some members necessarily must contribute some of the skills required to keep our small enterprise going efficiently and effectively. This is not exactly glamorous Twelfth Step work, but is

every bit as necessary. It is that effort which keeps us doing what we need to do, namely working the steps!

And what’s so “special” about those Special Workers anyway? Well, can anyone imagine having no other supervisor at work than such a group of lay volunteers, who may be seen as infrequently as a few hours a month? Or, even more pertinent, who among us could place our “principles before personalities” on such a scale as our paid workers deal with practically every day? It takes a very special person to do so, and we here in San Francisco and Marin are lucky to have two of them who show up every day to keep things going so that we can do that service on which our precious lives so depend without distraction. They deserve all the support we can give them, and that is what the Central Office Committee does.



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MAIL CHECK TO: Central Office with this request for subscription to *The Point* — 1821 SACRAMENTO ST., SF CA 94109

Longtimer Interview with Martha S., Part Two

as told to the Drunk Whisperer

DW: "So how did you cope with Bud's suicide [in 1970]?"

MS: I wasn't drinking. I wasn't taking pills. I wasn't smoking. I wasn't eating sugar and flour. I was just doing it a day at a time. Prayer and a day at a time and service. Just service, service, service. "Please God, don't let me get in any trouble you can't get me out of." [laughter] And I still say that every morning. Maybe the reason I am here is for God to show his power by what he has done for this woman who can't do anything for herself. Or her nature is not to; my motto is, if at first you don't succeed, to heck with it. I'm not loaded with will power. I'm not "Oh, I love a challenge." That's not me. I just want to have fun.

DW: But look what you have done, and how you've taken care of yourself.

MS: I believe in the traditions: "We are self-supporting through our own contributions." I thought, I am not going to go on welfare; I am not going to borrow money. My dear brother is very well to do, but I just wasn't going to ask him. There's always the Salvation Army if things don't work out!

DW: How did you support yourself?

MS: I went to Santa Barbara in 1973. I applied for a job at Sears and didn't get it and then I tried out for a wholesale grocer's, but I flunked the math test. After three months, I heard about a job at the local newspaper, the *News-Press*. I had been sober for 9 years, I guess; I was 51 years old. The publisher asked me

about my kids, and I remember saying to him, I haven't kept track of my kids, I've been busy living my own soap opera. I didn't tell him what the soap opera was. And I guess he thought that was funny. When he asked if I had questions, I said, I don't know what questions to ask. I didn't know beans about anything. But they called and offered me the job; by this time I'm down to \$100 cash. I replaced a 19-year-old girl at the reception desk, and I thought, well, if she can do it, I can do it. And right next door to the newspaper building is an A.A. hall – my prayers answered. I worked 15 years at the *News-Press*. But I never felt completely comfortable. I never felt like I belonged. I woke up in the morning with dread; I only had a high school education and I had to deal

MS: I had moved to Willits to be near my son and his family in Sonoma, and lived there for 15 years, but it got too expensive. So I was visiting down here with family, and just happened upon this place and got on the waiting list for a couple years.

DW: So how long have you lived here? Do you get to A.A.?

MS: It's just been two years. I go to A.A. in Fairfax. I haven't been for a couple months because I have to take a bus. As soon as daylight savings comes in, I can do it again. But I have lost my sense of balance so I use a cane now. Funny story, I passed out waiting for the senior van once, and the paramedics came because I hit my head. I found out later, I said to them, "Don't give me a drink, I'm an alcoholic." [laughter]

TP

Last month, in Part One, Martha described how she got sober in 1964 and how her husband couldn't. Today, Martha lives in senior housing in Fairfax and gets to A.A. on the bus when she's able.

with over 50 reporters and deadlines and oh dear. I was happy to retire. Then I did the most unselfish thing I've ever done. I moved down to Encinitas because my guardian angel and her husband were ill. I had been planning to move to Seattle when I retired, because I love that area. I kissed them goodbye, and I started thinking about all the things she had done for me. So I called them up and said, I've changed my mind. I lived down there three years; when Max would go into the hospital, I could stay with Kay. So I was able – I served my purpose is what I want to say.

DW: How did you end up in Fairfax?



Serenity Prayer Authorship Resolved

by Mike M.

"Skeptic Revisits Serenity Prayer, Citing Niebuhr." So read the title of a recent front-page article in the *New York Times* (November 28, 2009). The article brings to a conclusion some of the questions raised in an earlier *Times* article (July 2008), which I had rehashed in my first contribution to *The Point* (September 2008: "Serenity Prayer Authorship – A Whodunit"). I thought I'd share the further investigation with *Point* readers in 2010.

Reinhold Niebuhr, a theologian often described as a prophetic, politically attuned preacher who spoke at YMCAs and universities (since churches often found him too controversial), claims to have written the serenity prayer in the early 1940s.

In 2008 however, the Yale librarian who edits *The Yale Book Of Quotations* (Fred R. Shapiro) brought forth evidence to the contrary. He gleaned evidence from the internet of the serenity prayer's widespread use in the 1930s, citing a quote from Niebuhr himself that he may have written down a prayer that "may have been spooking around for centuries." The assertion sparked outrage from author Elisabeth Sifton, Niebuhr's daughter, at denying her father his due. She dated use of the prayer from 1943 based on what her father had told her.

Now, a researcher at Duke University (Stephen Goranson) has found a copy of the prayer in a student newsletter (which attributes it to a list found in yet another



student newsletter in 1936), calling it "Niebuhr's prayer" as of January 1937. The prayer as it was quoted then read: "Father, give us courage to change what must be altered, serenity to accept what cannot be helped, and the insight to know the one from the other."

The Yale Book of Quotations will now call off the search for a different author and give Niebuhr full credit. His daughter is pleased, saying, "As every living pastor knows, prayers evolve and change."

The *Times* articles give credit to those helping to make it such a well known invocation today not only to Alcoholics Anonymous, but also to the U.S.O., which adopted the Serenity Prayer during World War II.

Courage, serenity, wisdom, insight: all qualities which certainly predate 1937, but have been recombined into this simple prayer which continues to inspire A.A.s around the world every hour of every day.



Word Play Rituals

by Michael P.

Here are some A.A. rituals I've come across:

1. Tag sharing, where the person who shares picks the next person to share, that person subsequently chooses the next and so on.
2. The "we" version of the Serenity Prayer, where everyone then shouts "Wheeeee."
3. The closing person says "Who's driving the bus?" (meaning God), but I always say "Dennis" (who is a MUNI driver).
4. The "Like a Prayer" group (a Saturday meditation meeting) reads Appendix II from the Big Book. After the quote from Herbert Spencer, everyone says "Herbbbbbb!"
5. When passing out readings for the meeting, I ask, "Who wants to step up?" (and read the 12 Steps); or to read the Promises, say "I Promise!"; or say I'm looking for a "traditional" type person to read the Traditions.
6. I've been at meetings where the person selected to give the closing prayer asks people to look people in the eyes across the room, or side to side. Other times, it's to thank the person next to you for your sobriety or something. In my opinion, like the game "Telephone," the last person often hears a garbled message.
7. And there's always the rah-rah-rah, "Work it if you're worth it!"



This month's column features a query about confirming meeting attendance for those court-ordered to go to A.A. meetings.

Hi,

As part of a court order, I have to attend six A.A. meetings in San Francisco and present my attendance record to the court. The court did not provide an attendance form and the meeting location where I have attended three meetings to date does not have the form available. Instead, they have used the office letterhead and signed the sheet after each visit. Are such attendance forms available? I would appreciate the help.

Thanks,

Court-ordered

Dear C-O,

Hi, I am a volunteer with A.A. Central Office in San Francisco and help respond to requests for information; we received your inquiry about attendance forms.

As you may know from the meetings you attended and from perusing our website, A.A. is a voluntary association of men and women who help each other to recover from alcoholism. A.A. is not aligned with any sect, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Because of these core values, A.A. doesn't coordinate or work with the court system. Obviously, as your experience demonstrates, the court

system has identified A.A. as a broadly available means of potentially assisting people who have problems with alcohol. That does not change the fact that A.A. is a program of anonymity. A.A. doesn't keep any records about individuals who attend meetings. It is up to the particular group whether to sign a document attesting to meeting attendance. Each group is independent and may conduct its business as it sees fit. You have found a group (or several that meet at the same location) willing to give you a signature. Not all groups do this.

If the court that ordered you to attend A.A. wants a record that you did so, then you need to communicate with the court about an acceptable proof of attendance. We do not maintain such a document at Central Office, nor does any A.A. group or A.A. office that I am aware of. It sounds like wherever it is you are attending meetings is willing to give you a letterhead form; presumably you are attending at one of the clubhouses in the city that houses multiple A.A. (and possibly other 12-Step program) meetings. Clubhouses are not A.A.; in fact, they are separate organizations with their own legal status, boards, and ways of doing business.

Good luck in your efforts to solve your problems with alcohol.

In sobriety,

E-volunteer

For the Love of a Sponsor

*One Man Gives
His Recovery Away*

by Michael W.

Many of us are graced with finding a sponsor who truly shares their experience, strength and hope with us. My sponsor is someone I count on to be a spiritual guide through the program, life and recovery. Over the past eight years we have worked the steps many times together. Some areas of our relationship will never change; several other areas of our friendship have evolved to new levels. One example of an area that will *not* change is that I take any suggestion from him as an imperative, friendship aside. When he says something to me about my program, I take action – period. A sponsor does not need to be a best friend; however a sponsor-sponsee relationship can evolve into a truly unique type of friendship only found in A.A., one based on rigorous honesty, action, sincerity, respect, integrity and heartfelt laughter. I love this man not only as my sponsor, but as an individual. We have shared real life experiences through thick and thin. The only way I can thank him is to pass this on to someone else. A passage from Chapter Nine in the Big Book, *the Family Afterward*, comes to mind. It describes the way A.A. becomes like a family which keeps on giving: “Father feels he has struck something better than gold. For a time he may try to hug the new treasure to himself. He may not see at once that he has barely scratched

(Continued on page 17)

Meet THE MEETING

by Bree L.

Community Church on Belvedere Ave., Stinson Beach

Sunday, 8 PM

"I had long term sobriety without long term serenity" is how Max B. describes his time away from the program. Now Max attends meetings regularly, along with Peter S., Catherine C. and many others who contribute their strength. The Stinson Beach fellowship was started 24 years ago by Chris H. and Marty L. Meetings began on Thursday nights and evolved into daily meetings, bringing in members from Bolinas. Now, Sunday night is a mainstay for the fellowship at this thriving hamlet along the Pacific.

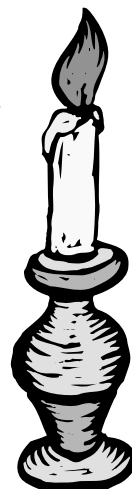
Peter S. has been attending for over 14 years. He talked about the convenience of having a meeting close by and not leaving his home turf. Most attending are truly locals, having been born in the area. One recent night there was a newlywed couple in attendance that now live in Petaluma but got sober in Stinson. They were spending their honeymoon where they got sober.

Max B. has been coming for around two years. As he tells it, he wasn't drinking or going to meetings for ten years, but continued to work with other alcoholics, including one of his best friends, an accomplished guitar player. The friend figured he could stay sober by hanging out with a non-drinking girlfriend and Max. The friend hung on tightly but was unable to get clean. Toward the end, the friend confided that even his guitar playing had ceased. Max watched an accomplished musician felled by alcoholism. The friend continued drinking and sank into a depression.

Two days before his 50th birthday, Max went to pick him up and found the man had shot himself. He'd written sad messages over all his walls and, once he ran out of wall space, he took a bullet. Next to his body was a Big Book opened to the first page, never read further. Max says he picked up that Big Book and went to the first meeting he could get to. Now two years later, Max knows sobriety and serenity. When he hears that part in the Promises that says, "we will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace," he understands the true meaning.

There's a world of recovery within the Stinson Beach fellowship. Starting the week with the Candlelight Group in Stinson, there is a speaker the first Sunday of the month and discussions on other Sundays. Monday night is a speaker/discussion meeting in Bolinas. Tuesday is a book study in Stinson. Wednesday night is a book study in Bolinas and Thursday is a discussion in Stinson, with a once-a-month speaker. Friday is a speaker/discussion meeting in Bolinas. Stinson meetings are at the Community Church, while the Bolinas meetings are at St. Aidan's Church. All are at 8 PM.

The meeting is easy to find. The hardest part is Highway 1 with 12 miles of winding road for out-of-towners from the south. The meeting is two blocks above the Fire Station on the right on Belvedere; it is in the back of the Community Church. It's worth the short drive up from Mill Valley to get to this special meeting.



TP



Virgo (Aug 23 - Sept 22)

Drinking style: Cerebral Virgos are compelled to impose order onto their bender. Their famously fussy quest for purity could lead to drinking less than other signs, sure -- but it could also lead to drinking booze neat, to sucking down organic wine or just to brand loyalty. They rarely get fully shellacked -- but, oh,

when they do! Virgo's controlled by the intellect, but there's an unbridled beast lurking within, and they let it loose when wallowed. It's dead sexy (and surprisingly unsloppy). As one Virgo friend used to declare, "I'm going to drink myself into a low level of intelligence tonight." A toast to the subgenius IQ!

IFB meeting summary – July 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	Each Day a New Beg. (M-F)	High Noon (Sat)	Mid Morning Support	Sober 5150's	Tuesday Chip
Any Lengths	Each Day a New Beg. (Sun)	High Noon (Sun)	Mill Valley 7am	Some Are Sicker Than Others	Walk of Shame
Attitude Adjustment	Early Start	High Noon (Tue)	Miracles (Way) Off 24th St.	Steppin' Up	Women Who Drank Too Much
Blue Book Special	Fireside Chat	High Noon Friday	Mission Terrace	Sunday Night Castro SD	Women's Promises
Came to Park	Friday All Groups	Huntington Square	Nativity Big Book	Sunset 9'ers (Sat.)	
Come 'N Get It	Goldmine Group	Join the Tribe	Noon Smokeless	Sunset 9'ers (Sun.)	General Service San Francisco
Common Welfare	Gratitude Group	Let It Be Now	On Awakening	Ten Years After	Gernal Service San Mateo
Common Welfare	Haight Street Explorers	Live & Let Live	Parent Trap 2	They Stopped In Time	General Service Marin
Cow Hollow Men's	Haight Street Blues	Lush Lounge	Queers Crackpots& Fallen Women	Thursday Thumpers	
Doing the Deal	Happy, Joyous and Free	Marina Discussion	Reality Farm	Tiburon Haven Group	
Downtown Mill Valley	High Noon (Monday)	Men's Gentle Touch	Saturday Easy Does It	Tiburon Men's Stag	

This is an unofficial summary of the July 2010 IFB meeting provided for convenience; it is not intended to be the completed approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes and full committee reports see "IFB" on 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 on Wednesday July 7, 2010 at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Marin City. Next month's meeting will be Wednesday, August 4, 2010 at 101 Donahue St, Marin City, CA

IFB Officer Reports

Chair Report: Thanked IFB reps that gave feedback on annual report from the previous month's meeting.

Treasurer Report: Income dipped in May. Because we had some strong previous months we are still over budget year

to date. Expenses are higher than budget due to deferred compensation expense. A little less than 2 months of expenses in unrestricted cash. The prudent reserve was increased to reflect 6 months of operating expenses. Discussion: The last prudent reserve was actually overfunded at \$116,000, it should have been \$110,000. However now it is up to \$121,000. Why is it \$11,000 higher than last year? Expenses were lower in 2008/2009, inflation and rent have gone up a bit.

A member reported that they did not like that a group's contribution status pops up online when viewing meeting details. This was directed at the treasurer who reported that the decision to make this change had been the result of work with the Ad-hoc budget committee and the Outreach committee working with the Website committee.

Central Office Committee Report: The COC approved setting up a debit card on the IFB bank account so that the Central Office Manager does not have to use her own credit card. A process was put into place to make sure that checks for all expenditures were in place. The COC also reviewed goals for the year and what was accomplished and what might still need to be passed on to the next committee. Everything is functioning well at the Central Office.

Elections

Elections for IFB Chair, Vice Chair and

Secretary and At-large COC members were held after reviewing eligibility requirements for voting and the 3rd Legacy procedure.

Michael P. was elected Chair, Naim S. was elected Vice Chair, Thayer W. was elected Secretary. Rick, Tania, Thomas, Tracy were elected to the COC.

Committee Reports

Trusted Servants Workshop Committee: A Trusted Servants workshop on Group Treasurer will be held on August 8th.

Access Committee: The Access committee will continue discussion on a new ASL policy. An AA meeting will begin July 11th at the Alano Club using assistive listening devices, Hear the Message; you don't have to be hard of hearing to attend.

Archives Committee: Tracy distributed a flyer requesting information on meeting start dates. If you know of the start dates of any meetings please send an e-mail to Tracy, a link is on AASF.org.

AA SF and Marin History Mural Committee: The committee has only received 1 application. More information on AASF website. The deadline has been extended to allow for additional submissions.

Special Committee Reports:

SF Teleservice: In the past few weeks they have had some harassing phone callers. Teleservice will begin to track num-

(Continued on page 15)

Individual Contributions

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

ONGOING MEMORIALS

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

ANNIVERSARIES

Novato Fellowship: John M. 30 years

Hilldwellers: Bonnie O. 25 years

Women's Meeting: There is a Solution: Sandy K. 6 years

Fernley, NV: Linda J. 18 years, formerly S.F. Fellowship

South San Francisco: Jim A. 36 years

Big Book Basics: Ben N. 30 years

Sober Saturday: Sherry T. 26 years

bers that call in and harass volunteers. There are several openings. There is a sobriety requirement of 1 year.

SF PI/CPC: Paul P. reported that PI/CPC had a booth at the meeting of the American Society of Addiction medicine. Were able to talk to professionals from different recovery homes and doctors about AA. Put on the usual 6 DUI classes and workshop for the month.

IFB Liaison Reports:

General Service San Mateo: Frank reported that the 48th annual anniversary party is coming up. They will be raffling off trip to Hawaii. \$10 tickets, drawing for AA conference, airfare and hotel will be held.

Living Sober: Alejandro D. submitted a message that was read at the meeting and thanked IFB reps for attending and staffing the Central Office table.

New Business:

Michael S. made a motion that the he be

reimbursed for printing out his annual report. Thomas seconded. 22 in favor. 4 opposed. 6 abstentions. Minority discussion: The IFB voted to reduce the paperwork and to put Chair reports online. Printing them was 1 persons opinion and by voting for this we are voting against our own policy. No members decided to change vote. Motion passes.

Michael S. made a motion that the Central Office would honor future requests the IFB Chair makes to print IFB business documentation out when needed for IFB meetings and IFB business purposes. Virginia seconded. Discussion: The IFB already decided that we weren't going to print everything. 2 in favor, 29 opposed. 6 abstentions. Motion does not pass.

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 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 P. chair@aasf.org

VICE CHAIR

Naim S. vicechair@aasf.org

TREASURER

Dashiell T. treasurer@aasf.org

RECORDING SECRETARY

Thayer W. secretary@aasf.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

TBD. coc@aasf.org

12th STEP COMMITTEE

Dave A. 12thstep@aasf.org

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Tracy F. archives@aasf.org

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Ted R. orientation@aasf.org

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Virginia M. fellowship@aasf.org

THE POINT

Charley D. thepoint@aasf.org

ACCESS COMMITTEE

Muriel P. access@aasf.org

TRUSTED SERVANTS

WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

Ted R. tsw@aasf.org

WEBSITE COMMITTEE

David S. website@aasf.org

PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Glen R. picpc@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Seth H. sfteservice@aasf.org

Recent Deaths

Helen K.—56 years



aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions	May '10	YTD
10 AM Dry Dock Fellowship 7D	\$ 67	\$ 67
130 PM Dry Dock Fellowship 5D	\$ 67	\$ 67
330 PM Dry Dock Fellowship 7D	\$ 67	\$ 67
Anonymous		\$ 500
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$ 36	\$ 134
Contribution Box	\$ 88	\$ 407
Deer Park Discovery Group		\$ 15
From the Start to the Finish		\$ 120
Gay Newcomers Group		\$ 20
IFB	\$ 94	\$ 587
MCYPAA		\$ 250
Pax West M 12pm		\$ 243
San Francisco Young People in A.A.		\$ 800
Serenity House	\$ 150	\$ 600
Sunset Group (Napa)		\$ 18
Fellowship Total	\$ 568	\$ 3,894

Marin Contributions	May '10	YTD
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		\$ 226
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm		\$ 63
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		\$ 1,395
Awakenings Sa 830am		\$ 33
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		\$ 155
Be Still AA Su 12pm		\$ 46
Beginners Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm		\$ 410
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		\$ 135
Caledonia Sun 8pm		\$ 250
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330		\$ 324
Cover to Cover W 800pm		\$ 197
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		\$ 186
Crossroads Sun 12pm		\$ 749
Day At A Time 7D 630am		\$ 432
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm		\$ 343
Four Horsemen Thu 7pm		\$ 25
Freedom Finders F 830pm		\$ 321
Friday Night Book F 830pm		\$ 179
Friday Night Gay Men's Stag		\$ 96
Girls Night Out W 815pm		\$ 75
Gratitude Tu 8pm		\$ 424
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm		\$ 569
Happy Destiny F 7pm		\$ 83
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		\$ 1,250
High & Dry W 12pm		\$ 285
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		\$ 223
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am		\$ 140
Island Group Th 8pm		\$ 167
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		\$ 188
Marin Young People F 830pm		\$ 30
Mill Valley 7D 7am		\$ 1,363
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		\$ 219
Monday Blues M 630pm		\$ 432
Monday Night Women's M 8pm		\$ 331
Monday Nooners M 12pm		\$ 389
Morning Attitude Adjustment		\$ 100

San Francisco Contributions	May '10	YTD
Nativity Monday Night Big Book	\$ 100	
Newcomers Step M 730pm	\$ 307	
Noon Hope F 12pm	\$ 189	
Novato Basics Tu 8pm	\$ 350	\$ 350
Novato Monday Stag M 8pm	\$ 300	
On Awakening 7D 530am	\$ 525	
Pathfinders Tu 12pm	\$ 200	
Primary Purpose W 830pm	\$ 140	
Refugee Th 12pm	\$ 60	\$ 280
Reveille 5D 7am	\$ 700	
Rise N Shine Sun 10am	\$ 447	
San Geronimo Valley M 8pm	\$ 38	
Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6pm	\$ 240	
Serendipity Sa 11am	\$ 163	
Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm	\$ 278	
Sober & Serene F 7pm	\$ 531	
Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag	\$ 175	
Steps To The Solution W 715pm	\$ 211	
Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	\$ 100	
Streetfighters Sa 9am	\$ 43	
Sunday Express Sun 6pm	\$ 200	
Sunday Friendship Sun 7pm	\$ 200	
Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun	\$ 200	
Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm	\$ 100	
Terra Linda Group Th 830pm	\$ 250	
The Fearless Searchers F 8pm	\$ 38	
There is a Solution Tu 6pm	\$ 166	
Thursday Night Book Club Th 7pm	\$ 75	
Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm	\$ 2,052	
Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm	\$ 258	
Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8	\$ 148	
Tuesday Twelve Step Tu 630pm	\$ 20	
We, Us and Ours M 650pm	\$ 200	
Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8	\$ 296	
What's It All About F 12pm	\$ 200	
Women on Monday M 7pm	\$ 85	
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am	\$ 250	
Women's Meeting Su 430pm	\$ 56	
Women's Step Study Group M 12	\$ 200	
Working Dogs W 1205pm	\$ 406	
Marin Total	\$ 410	\$ 22,548

San Francisco Contributions	May '10	YTD
10am Step Study M 10am	\$ 60	
6am Dry Dock 7D	\$ 53	
6am Dry Dock W	\$ 250	
7am As Bill Sees It Fri	\$ 86	
7am Living Sober W 7am	\$ 71	
7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	\$ 100	
830am Smokeless F 830am	\$ 208	
A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	\$ 23	
A New Start F 830pm	\$ 680	
A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm	\$ 100	
AA Step Study Su 6pm	\$ 57	

San Francisco Contributions	May '10	YTD
Acceptance Group M 530pm	\$ 71	
Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	\$ 41	
Afro American F 8pm	\$ 35	
After Work M 6PM	\$ 60	
Alumni W 830pm	\$ 206	
As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm	\$ 73	
Ass in a Bag Th 830pm	\$ 478	\$ 478
Be Still AA Su 12pm	\$ 30	\$ 215
Beginner Big Book Step Th 630pm	\$ 77	
Beginners 12 x 12 F 7pm	\$ 360	\$ 720
Beginners Meeting (Old Sutter St)	\$ 706	
Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm	\$ 434	
Beginner's Warmup W 6pm	\$ 45	
Bernal New Day 7D	\$ 909	
Big Book Basics F 8pm	\$ 298	
Big Book Study Su 1130am	\$ 135	
Blue Book Special Su 11am	\$ 217	
Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm	\$ 129	
Came To Believe Su 830am	\$ 105	
Came to Park Sat 7pm	\$ 553	\$ 553
Castro Discussion-Show Of Shows	\$ 415	\$ 415
Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm	\$ 115	
Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm	\$ 106	
Cocoanuts Su 9am	\$ 23	
Code Blue Big Book Study W 7pm	\$ 110	
Common Welfare Th 8pm	\$ 151	
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	\$ 481	
Dark Secrets F 10pm	\$ 71	
Design for Living Sat 8am	\$ 401	
Doin' the Deal Sun 10pm	\$ 86	
Each Day a New Beginning F	\$ 927	
Each Day a New Beginning M	\$ 300	
Each Day a New Beginning Th	\$ 251	\$ 804
Each Day a New Beginning Tu	\$ 522	
Each Day a New Beginning W	\$ 299	
Early Start F 6pm	\$ 1,205	
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	\$ 459	
Eureka Step Tu 6pm	\$ 165	\$ 165
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm	\$ 577	
Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa	\$ 120	
Extreme Makeover M 730pm	\$ 94	
Federal Speaker Su 12pm	\$ 244	
Fell Street F 830pm	\$ 30	
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am	\$ 446	
Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm	\$ 176	
Friday All Groups F 830pm	\$ 269	
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm	\$ 111	
Friday Smokeless F 830pm	\$ 195	
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715	\$ 224	
Full Flight From Reality Sa 1230	\$ 129	
Gold Mine Group M 8pm	\$ 325	\$ 325
Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm	\$ 180	\$ 180
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm	\$ 38	
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm	\$ 28	

San Francisco Contributions	May '10	YTD
High Noon Friday 1215pm	\$ 60	\$ 508
High Noon Saturday 1215pm	\$ 206	\$ 206
High Noon Thursday 1215pm	\$	\$ 205
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	\$ 90	\$ 718
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	\$	\$ 210
Hilldwellers M 8pm	\$	\$ 137
How Was Your Week? Sa 10am	\$ 190	\$ 247
Huntington Square W 630pm	\$	\$ 334
Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm	\$	\$ 29
Just Alkies F 7pm	\$	\$ 75
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am	\$	\$ 332
Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm	\$	\$ 120
Like A Prayer Su 4pm	\$	\$ 100
Lincoln Park Sat 830pm	\$	\$ 92
Live and Let Live Su 8pm	\$	\$ 574
Living Sober W 8pm	\$	\$ 306
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	\$ 56	\$ 139
Luke's Group W 7pm	\$	\$ 60
Luke's Group W 8pm	\$	\$ 70
Lush Lounge Sa 2pm	\$	\$ 205
Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	\$	\$ 174
Meeting Place Noon W 12pm	\$	\$ 100
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	\$	\$ 508
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am	\$ 38	\$ 62
Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm	\$	\$ 96
Mission Terrace W 8pm	\$	\$ 60
Monday Beginners M 8pm	\$	\$ 280
Monday Men's Meeting M 8pm	\$	\$ 375
Monday Monday M 1215pm	\$	\$ 80
New Life W 7pm	\$	\$ 195
Newcomers Tu 8pm	\$	\$ 168
No Reservation M 12pm	\$	\$ 696
Noon Smokeless F 12pm	\$ 140	\$ 268
Noon Smokeless W 12pm	\$	\$ 255
Off Broadway Book Th 730pm	\$ 18	\$ 54
One, Two, Three, Go! W 1pm	\$	\$ 10
Parkside Th 830pm	\$	\$ 255

San Francisco Contributions	May '10	YTD
Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm	\$	\$ 67
Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women	\$	\$ 180
Rebound W 830pm	\$	\$ 60
Relapse, Rebound, Retread & Winners	\$	\$ 84
Richmond Step Study M 730pm	\$	\$ 86
Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm	\$ 90	\$ 125
Room to Grow F 8pm	\$	\$ 258
Rule 62 W 10pm	\$	\$ 85
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	\$ 132	\$ 530
Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm	\$ 82	\$ 242
Second Chance Th 215pm	\$	\$ 28
Serenity House	\$	\$ 150
Serenity in the Park W 7pm	\$	\$ 30
Serenity Seekers M 730pm	\$	\$ 226
Sesame Step Tu 730pm	\$	\$ 108
Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm	\$	\$ 586
Sinbar Su 830pm	\$	\$ 194
Sober Across the Board M-Sa 830am	\$	\$ 133
Sober at State MW 1210pm	\$	\$ 15
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am	\$	\$ 334
Sought to Improve Th 730pm	\$ 60	\$ 60
Sp Founded Prog Of Action (SFPOA)	\$	\$ 425
Step Talk Su 830am	\$	\$ 588
Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	\$	\$ 214
Stepping Out Sat 6pm	\$ 120	\$ 154
Stonestown M 8pm	\$	\$ 100
Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm	\$	\$ 120
Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	\$	\$ 535
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	\$ 542	\$ 926
Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc	\$	\$ 431
Sunday Rap Sun 8pm	\$ 360	\$ 360
Sunday Silence Su 730pm	\$	\$ 50
Sundown W 7pm	\$ 422	\$ 422
Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th	\$	\$ 236
Sunset 11'ers F	\$	\$ 25
Sunset 11'ers Sa	\$	\$ 57
Sunset 11'ers W	\$	\$ 84

San Francisco Contributions	May '10	YTD
Sunset 9'ers Su	\$ 100	\$ 412
Sunset 9'ers Th	\$ 84	\$ 84
Sunset 9'ers Tu	\$	\$ 2
Sunset 9'ers W	\$	\$ 188
Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm	\$	\$ 219
Surf Tu 8pm	\$	\$ 127
Ten Years After Su 6pm	\$ 192	\$ 1,153
The 12 Schleppers Th 8pm	\$	\$ 80
The Lads Fr 730pm	\$	\$ 100
The Parent Trap M 1230pm	\$	\$ 153
They Don't Know Who We Are Sat	\$ 225	\$ 225
They Stopped In Time M 8pm	\$	\$ 47
Thursday Morning Men's BB Study	\$	\$ 575
Too Early Sat 8am	\$ 224	\$ 1,140
Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm	\$	\$ 60
Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm	\$	\$ 64
Tuesday Night Step Tu 7pm	\$	\$ 22
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$ 132	\$ 205
Veterans' Coffee Break W 1030am	\$ 9	\$ 9
Walk of Shame W 8pm	\$	\$ 159
Waterfront Sun 8pm	\$ 52	\$ 484
We Care Tu 12pm	\$	\$ 256
Wednesday Morning Men's Meeting	\$	\$ 146
West Portal W 8pm	\$	\$ 115
Wharfrats Th 815pm	\$	\$ 88
What It's Like Now M 6pm	\$	\$ 92
Women Living Sober Sa 10am	\$ 60	\$ 180
Women Who Drank Too Much Tu	\$	\$ 8
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	\$	\$ 107
Women's Kitchen Table Group Tu	\$ 158	\$ 517
Women's Meeting There is a Solution	\$	\$ 411
Women's Promises F 7pm	\$	\$ 492
Work In Progress Sat 7pm	\$	\$ 613
YAHOO Step Sa 1130am	\$	\$ 140
Total San Francisco	\$6,599	\$42,788
Total Contributions	\$7,578	\$69,229

(Continued from page 12)

a limitless lode which will pay dividends only if he mines it for the rest of his life and insists on giving away the entire product."

Recently my sponsor had a brief stint in the hospital. Thankfully he is just fine. I had the honor of picking him up from the hospital and then taking him to a meeting. It was truly one of the biggest honors of 2008; I just feel lucky to know him. Of course his phone would not stop ringing and

everyone noticed his chair was vacant, even though he was away from his home group less than 72 hours. The man is an inspiration to many.

I always love how Step One starts with, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol and our lives had become unmanageable." To me, it emphasizes the importance of the fellowship: recovery is about "fellowship," and the A.A. fellowship is a higher power.



California Northern Coastal Area 06 of the General Service Conference

Presents

Summer Assembly 2010

Saturday - August 7, 2010

Santa Clara Fairgrounds
344 Tully Road - Gateway Building
San Jose, CA

profit and loss statement: May 2010

	May 10	Budget	Jan-May 10	Budget		May 10	Budget	Jan-May 10	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					Bank Charges				
Income					Bank Charges - Other	0.00		2.20	
Contributions from Groups					Total Bank Charges	\$0		\$2	
Group Contributions	7,517.55	10,255.00	68,800.19	61,095.00	Postage				
Honors	60.00		378.90		Non-Bulk Postage	0.00		188.00	63.00
Total Contributions from Groups	\$7,578	\$10,255	\$69,179	\$61,095	Bulk Mail	0.00	246.00	200.00	492.00
Contributions from Individuals					Total Postage	\$0	\$246	\$388	\$555
Individual - Unrestricted	175.00	224.00	6,993.14	2,918.00	Rent - Office	4,493.17	4,493.00	22,465.85	22,465.00
Faithful Fiver	870.00	866.00	5,486.00	4,030.00	Rent - Other	75.00	75.00	300.00	300.00
Honorary Contributions	126.00	234.00	2,719.50	1,017.00	Access Expenses				
Total Contributions from Individuals	\$1,171	\$1,324	\$15,199	\$7,965	Access Expenses - Other	90.00	666.00	1,080.00	3,330.00
Gratitude Month					Total Access Expenses	\$90	\$666	\$1,080	\$3,330
Gratitude Month - Groups	135.70		3,913.50		IFB Literature				
Gratitude Month - Individual	0.00		200.00		Sunshine Club	0.00	180.00	0.00	180.00
Gratitude Month - Other	0.00	332.00	0.00	3,139.00	IFB Literature - Other	0.00		56.43	
Total Gratitude Month	\$136	\$332	\$4,114	\$3,139	Total IFB Literature	\$0	\$180	\$56	\$180
Sales - Bookstore					PI/CPC	30.00		66.34	240.00
Sales - Bookstore - Other	7,584.79	8,878.00	47,386.47	44,037.00	Filing/Fees	-25.00	93.00	0.00	118.00
Total Sales - Bookstore	\$7,585	\$8,878	\$47,386	\$44,037	Insurance	0.00		1,740.00	901.00
Newsletter Subscript.	10.96	59.00	169.88	189.00	Internet Expense	118.47	119.00	497.37	595.00
Total Income	\$16,480	\$20,848	\$136,048	\$116,425	Office Supplies	45.93	170.00	1,383.80	850.00
Cost of Goods Sold					Paper Purchased	241.53	208.00	1,420.96	1,040.00
Cost of Books Sold - Shipping	64.75	34.00	185.33	85.00	Software Purchased	0.00		0.00	96.00
Cost of Books Sold	4,958.74	6,126.00	30,934.81	30,386.00	Shipping	200.27	21.00	-16.48	105.00
Credit Card Processing Fees	314.42	227.00	1,450.78	1,127.00	Equipment Lease	0.00	1,546.00	1,545.52	3,092.00
Total COGS	\$5,338	\$6,387	\$32,571	\$31,598	Repair & Maintenance	254.13	226.00	1,211.52	1,373.00
Gross Profit	\$11,142	\$14,461	\$103,477	\$84,827	Security System	0.00		118.00	108.00
Expense					Payroll Expenses	4.20	5.00	21.00	25.00
Inventory Adjustments	0.00		-191.59		Telephone	246.42	256.00	1,455.43	1,280.00
Sunshine Club	0.00		20.00	92.00	Phone Book Listings	86.50	84.00	519.00	420.00
IFB Sponsored Events	33.65	120.00	508.65	1,379.00	Travel	25.00		25.00	
Reconciliation Discrepancies	0.00		-198.93		Training	0.00		0.00	20.00
Employee Expenses					Bad Checks	0.00		7.00	12.00
Deferred comp expense	5,467.19		9,158.19		Miscellaneous Expense	0.00		0.00	
Wages & Salaries	9,653.30	9,403.00	45,082.77	45,877.00	Total Expense	\$22,990	\$19,964	\$101,383	\$96,391
Employer Tax Expenses	716.52	770.00	4,867.14	4,961.00	Net Ordinary Income	-\$11,848	-\$5,503	\$2,093	-\$11,564
Health Benefits	1,234.00	1,283.00	7,625.00	6,415.00	Other Income/Expense				
Total Employee Expenses	\$17,071	\$11,456	\$66,733	\$57,253	Other Income				
Professional Fees					Interest Income	228.18	271.00	1,158.64	1,355.00
Computer Consulting	0.00		225.00	562.00	Total Other Income	\$228	\$271	\$1,159	\$1,355
Total Professional Fees	\$0		\$225	\$562	Net Other Income	\$228	\$271	\$1,159	\$1,355
					Net Income	-\$11,620	-\$5,232	\$3,252	-\$10,209

Write to THE POINT!

1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco, CA 94109

The Point Committee values your input

Or e-mail us at: thepoint@aasf.org

A LESSON IN HUMILITY

Taking the Defect Out of ‘Character Defects’

Gloria G.

If recovery is about staying sober and helping others to recover from alcoholism, then I want to be the best person possible so I can be there for me and for you.

The truth is I was not always the best person to be around. I really had no idea how excessive my character was until I left the alcohol behind and was left with just me. So when I started hanging out at Alcoholics Anonymous, a woman went up to a friend of mine and said, “Does she have a sponsor? Because she really

behavior so I can focus on what is really good in my life.

Weeks later I was having coffee with a friend, a friend who had a little more sobriety than I did – someone I admire. And I unconsciously started in with my complaining diatribe: too much to do, so little time, not enough money, etc. It came out of my mouth before I could even give it a thought. My friend looked at me and

“I really had no idea how excessive my character was until I left the alcohol behind and was left with just me.”

needs one.” It seemed clear to everyone that I was suffering from defects of character. I knew I was miserable, full of anger, and full of fear – but I thought my inflated ego had this well hidden. I think I have always been ready to have God remove my defects of character. And like a reasonable Catholic, I believed in the good, old-fashioned miracle: OK God, I’m ready, take them away.

So why haven’t these defects disappeared?

Here’s how it works: when I am finally beaten down by a major character flaw – let’s say, always looking at the negative while I have so much positive happening in my life – and I no longer choose to live with that negativity, then I pray that God will give me direction on how to make the changes in my thoughts and

said, “You know, I am really sick and tired of your whining and complaining, so much whining and complaining. It’s really hard to be around your negative energy.”

I was flabbergasted. I thought we were good friends. How embarrassing, how hurtful. How *necessary*. For some of us, change will only come with pain. It doesn’t always *have* to be painful, but those of us with grandiose egos need a grandiose punch in the belly to really get our attention. I thought working on my character defects would be more like going to confession; I did not expect such a public message.

So my friend gave my ego a little perspective. And that’s really what humility is all about: getting perspective. “Indeed, the attainment



of greater humility is the foundation principal of each of A.A.’s Twelve Steps.” (p. 70, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*) I have had many, many opportunities to practice these principals and gain in perspective, and the real miracle for me is that now – most of the time – I welcome these opportunities to grow even when I know I may face some uncomfortable or embarrassing moments. It is well worth it. My life is balanced, and I can see the negative *and* the positive. That which we focus on becomes a big deal. So I’ll continue to practice looking at the positive.



August 2010

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You can also **email** or **phone** us with your new contact information.
thepoint@aasf.org / San Francisco (415) 674-1821 / Marin (415) 499-0400

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