

"The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines"

From Chapter Five of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous."

# The Point

2011  
**6**  
**June**

A publication  
of the Intercounty Fellowship  
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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## *The Point*




is published monthly to inform  
A.A. 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  
A.A. members. Nothing published  
herein should be construed as a  
statement of A.A., nor does  
publication constitute endorsement  
by A.A. as a whole, the Intercounty  
Fellowship Board, the Central  
Office, or *The Point* Editorial  
Committee. Letters and articles to  
help carry the A.A. message are  
welcomed, subject to editorial  
review by *The Point* Committee.

# Losing Interest in Selfish Things

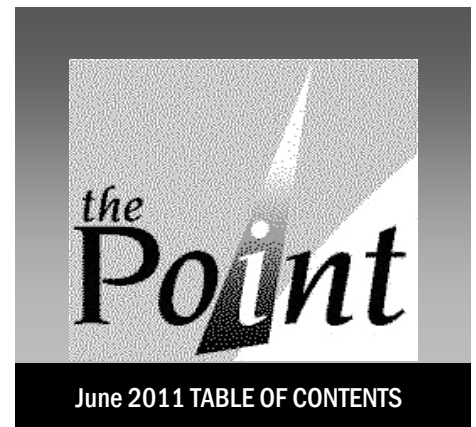


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# June 2011

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>			<p><b>1</b></p> <p><u>FIRST WED</u></p> <p>Intercounty Fellowship Board Annual Meeting 1187 Franklin St. Orientation 6pm Annual Meeting 7pm</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p><u>FIRST TUE</u></p> <p>Access Committee Central Office 6pm</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p><u>SECOND WED</u></p> <p>12th Step Committee Central Office 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 6:30pm</p>
<b>12</b>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p><u>SECOND MON</u></p> <p>SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office 7pm</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p><u>SECOND TUE</u></p> <p><i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm</p> <p>SF Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin H&amp;I 1360 Lincoln San Rafael 6:15pm</p> <p>SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St 8pm</p>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>19</b></p> <p><u>THIRD SUN</u></p> <p>Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p><u>THIRD MON</u></p> <p>SF Teleservice Central Office 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael 8pm</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p><u>THIRD TUE</u></p> <p>Outreach Committee Central Office 6:30pm</p>	<b>22</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p><u>FOURTH TUE</u></p> <p><i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm</p> <p>Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30pm</p>	<b>29</b>

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2	3	4
9	10	11 Founders Day Urban Life Center See flyer on page 4
16 <u>THIRD THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office 6:30pm	17	18
23	24	25 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> CNCA Meeting 320 N McDowell Petaluma 12:30pm
30 <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church 1751 Sacramento St SF Orientation 7pm Committee Meeting 8pm		



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"The message which can interest  
and hold these alcoholic people  
must have depth and weight."

Big Book, p. xxviii

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## Meeting Changes

### Meeting Changes:

Mon	8:00pm	Castro	THEY STOPPED IN TIME, Medical Center, 45 Duboce/Castro, SB 1 & 2 (152 Church St.)
Tue	10:00pm	Marina	FRISCO ROCKS, Dry Dock, 2118 Greenwich (was 10pm Smokeless)
Sat	10:00pm	Marina	THE 3D PROJECT, Dry Dock, 2118 Greenwich (was 10pm Smokeless)

### No Longer Meeting:

Sun	4:00pm	Hayes Valley	FROM SURVIVAL TO RECOVERY, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St/Octavia Blvd
Mon	6:30am	Mission	SOLO POR HOY NICARAGUA, 3458 Cesar Chavez St/Valencia St
Tue	5:30am	Mill Valley	UPON AWAKENING, Log Cabin, Tennessee Valley Rd
Thu	5:30am	Mill Valley	UPON AWAKENING, Log Cabin, Tennessee Valley Rd

**PLEASE NOTE:** We occasionally receive reports that meetings listed in our schedule are missing or no longer active. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken—and sometimes not. **If you know *anything* about a meeting that has relocated or disbanded — even if only temporarily — please call Central Office immediately: (415) 674-1821.** This helps us direct newcomers, visitors and sober, local alcoholics alike to actual meetings and not to rooms that housed a meeting once upon a time. ***Thank you for contributing to the accuracy of our schedule!***



Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous  
serving San Francisco and Marin Counties

## FOUNDERS DAY 2011

Saturday—June 11th  
12—4pm

Lunch, Music and Entertainment  
A.A. Speaker Meeting  
and a Pie Social

Urban Life Center  
St. Mark's Church

1101 O'Farrell (at Franklin Street)

Entertainment includes a brand new history play by the  
writer and director of "In Our Own Words" the hit  
Grapevine play of the 13th International Convention



Volunteer/Service Opportunities

[fellowship@aasf.org](mailto:fellowship@aasf.org)  
[foundersday@aasf.org](mailto:foundersday@aasf.org)



ARTISTS AND WRITERS MEETING PRESENTS THE ANNUAL:

## DRUNKS ON DISPLAY

A TALENT SHOW & BENEFIT FOR CENTRAL OFFICE

SATURDAY JULY 30  
2011

CALL FOR  
TALENT &  
DONATIONS  
FOR RAFFLE



**DONATIONS for the RAFFLE:**  
Please contact Kathleen McD at  
[krhodysgirl60@yahoo.com](mailto:krhodysgirl60@yahoo.com)  
or call 415-312-0649.

### Attention Artists !

Dancers, painters, sculptors,  
musicians, actors, writers are  
all welcome to perform  
or exhibit! WE WANT YOU!

Participants drawn by lottery.

Performance limited to 5 mins.

Deadline to enter is Friday,  
July 1.

Drawing will be at the  
Artists & Writers meeting  
July 1 at 6:30  
at All Saints Church,  
1350 Waller.

**Get your name in the hat!**  
Contact Graham J. at:  
415-374-5112.

From the Editor

## Wasted Self-Absorption

by Charley D.

Wasted. How often did we pronounce ourselves “wasted” in our drinking days? Wasted: meaning of no use to anyone, wrapped up in the cocoon of ourselves, focused only on our need for that next drink. “We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.” No promise A.A. makes seems more improbable. For the alcoholic, wasted self-absorption has become, not just a guiding principle, but a veritable way of life. Old habits break hard. But a complete change of life? Impossible!

Or maybe not.

In this issue, Suzan C. tells how fear lies at the base of that alcoholic selfishness. She lays out, for your consideration, a method she’s found effective in facing that fear and getting beyond herself. Jamie M. writes of rising out of the uselessness of intoxication with the help of a good sponsor and a commitment to service. After 25 years of sobriety, the combination still works. See how the death of Kathleen C.’s boss and an invitation to give a eulogy at his

funeral taught her to get outside herself, her fears and be useful to her late boss’s family and friends. Loss of selfishness may seem like a good idea, at least in the abstract. How does it start? Molly D. examines that inexplicable urge that got her to her first meeting. Five years later she remains grateful – and mystified.

If you’re active in A.A. service, you’ve found a way of getting beyond selfishness. Do you ever wonder if you’re doing any good? Take a look at this month’s Survey of Service. You’ll find a tribute from an alcoholic who benefited from the miracle the “Bridging the Gap” Committee can work. Why not get involved in this crucially important form of service? Read the words of Karen S. as she explains the committee’s work and how you can help.

Getting involved, helping out, doing something to make a difference – A.A. promises these things will work for you. You’ll lose that wasted self-absorption and come out of the cocoon of alcoholism a vastly different and wonderful creature.



### 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.	Kurt P.
Andrea C.	Laura B.
Andy Z.	Lauren H.
Ann & Denise	Laurie & Richard L.
Ardella H.	Layne S.
Arthur A.	Lelan & Rich H.
Barbara L.	Leo H.
Barbara M.	Linda L. & Kevin C.
Beverly C.	Lisa M.
Braden B.	Lisa S.
Brian O.	Liz & Aiden D.
Bruce S.	Mabel T.
Caroline A.	Marit L.
Casey L.	Mark A.
Catherine S.	Mark B.
Charles D.	Mark O.
Charlie O.	Martha S.
Chris L.	Mary C.
Chris S.	Maryellen O.
Chuck S.	Mia M.
Craig G.	Michael P.
Dan & Sherry T.	Michael W.
David J.	Michael Z.
David S.	Mike M.
David S.	Mily T.
Dennis & Lucy O	Mitch R.
Ed H.	Molly G.
Eric P.	Nancy W.
Erin S.	Pat P.
Esther R.	Patrick M.
Evan K.	Paul M.
Fay K.	Peg L.
Frances L.	Penelope & Robert
Herman B.	Ralf Z.
Jane K.	Ralph A.
Janet B.	Rich G.
Jeanne C.	Rick H.
Jeff B.	Robert C.
Jodie S.	Robert W.
John G.	Ron H.
John M.	Sara D.
John V.	Sheila H.
Karen C.	Steve A.
Karen K.	Steve F.
Kate R.	Stu S.
Kathleen C.	Susan G.
Kathryn M.	Terry H.
Kevin S.	Thomas H.
Kristina F.	Tim 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!*

# The First Lady of Black A.A.

## Founders' Day Features Historical Drama

by Anonymous

Jimmy M., affectionately called the First Lady of Black A.A. in South Bend, Indiana, joined A.A. in 1948 after a weeklong bender that almost killed her. She called to find a meeting and was told bluntly by the local office manager that A.A. in South Bend was “for white people only.” Whether by good fortune or divine intervention, Ray M., an A.A. member who was also a white factory worker, overheard the phone conversation in the local office, and decided to make a Twelfth Step call on her and a black man named Bill H., who had called just three days



earlier.

Jimmy and Bill (who fell in love and years later married) stayed sober, they worked the steps with Ray, and eventually through their perseverance, A.A. began to slowly integrate in South Bend, Indiana, almost a decade before “separate but equal” Jim Crow laws were repealed.

Jimmy's bittersweet story mirrors many of the same experiences of early black, gay, lesbian, Latino and young members in our fellowship. Yet despite the intolerance of a few, and in many cases, the majority of its members, A.A. groups have grown more and more inclusive over the years, often at a faster rate than the rest of society, thanks to our Third Tradition and a foundation in spiritual principles.

Jimmy's story is one of the pioneering tales dramatized in the documentary-style play “In Our Own Words: The Pioneers of Alcoholics Anonymous.” Written and directed by a San Francisco A.A. member, and performed by a troupe of 22 Bay Area members, this play has been staged in San Francisco and Marin over six times in the last two years, first premiering at the IFB's Founders' Day celebration in 2009. The same production was presented by the *Grapevine* for two days to standing room only audiences during the 2010 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Antonio, Texas. The actress portraying Jimmy Miller (who has asked to stay anonymous in this article) shares with *The Point* some of her reflections about working on the play and telling Ms. Miller's story:

“Jimmy's story reminded me how wonderful it has been to trust God for the outcome of my life through the steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Jimmy's first sponsor was simply doing his suggested Twelfth Step work when he proved to be an angel who became the spark that helped change Jimmy's life and the course of A.A. for the better. Imagine that. A

whole new epoch in A.A.'s history started simply because one alcoholic persevered enough to help another alcoholic in order to keep himself sober. One alcoholic helping another is a basic and very key element of our beautiful program. I have built my life on this foundation and the results are exquisite. It works when all other measures fail. It works; it really does.

“I related to Ray's ‘colorblind’ service to Jimmy and Bill, two willing sponsees. I was taught early the importance of Twelfth Step work, regardless of race or economic stature or anything, and I assumed it had always been this way for us. I was surprised to find out from the play, this wasn't true. My heart was warmed as the gentle presence of a loving higher power at work in our lives was revealed through the chronicling of the foundational miracles and coincidences that brought A.A. to life. God's hands and living presence are on Alcoholics Anonymous. As a result of our traditions, there is always room for God to do new and better things in Alcoholics Anonymous. I can't wait to see what next He has in store.”

Excerpts from “In Our Own Words,” including Jimmy's scene, will be performed at this year's upcoming Founders' Day celebration on Saturday, June 11th from 12-4 PM at the Urban Life Center at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in San Francisco. A new one-act play by the same author and director, about Bill W. and Dr. Bob's friendship, will also premiere on Founders' Day (see page 4 for more details).





## BRIDGING THE GAP

*Bridging the Gap strives to provide a local temporary contact to alcoholics in early recovery who are getting released from rehabilitation*

*facilities or prison. Service with BTG can be as simple as putting your name on a list to be called if someone in your area needs help finding a meeting upon release; it can be as involved as serving on the*

*committee that coordinates the outreach which meets the second Tuesday of every month in San Francisco and the second Wednesday in Marin at 6:30 PM. Check the calendar for locations. – Editor*

### Getting Help

by Chris C.

In August of 2010, I was a resident at Azure Acres, a drug and alcohol treatment center in Sebastopol. I was also the only resident from the Bay Area. This was cause for great concern on my part. Prior to entering rehab, I had made the move from the East Bay to San Francisco, leaving me with no connections in A.A. in my new city. After spending 30 years in the suburbs, the "City" was like a foreign country to me and I was scared and alone.

Unbeknownst to me, my Higher Power was already on the job! We had a visit at Azure Acres one day

from Bridging the Gap, an organization through Alcoholics Anonymous that assists newly sober residents in rehab to transition and connect with members on the outside in their own communities. The two volunteers who came that day shared their experience, strength and hope along with their praises for Bridging the Gap. I figured I had nothing to lose, so I put my contact information on the card they provided and then promptly went back to worrying.

On my second day home from rehab, my cell phone rang. It was a volunteer from Bridging the Gap inquiring about my well being and confirming that I still wanted to talk to a member from

San Francisco A.A. I was feeling so lost and alone; that call could not have come at a better time. I told the caller that I would love to have someone contact me. Within five minutes I got a call from Nancy. She was kind, warm and inviting. We chatted for a few minutes and then made a date to meet at an A.A. meeting that same night. It went very well. Nancy is now my sponsor and I am happy to report that my 90-day sobriety birthday is just around the corner. I feel so grateful to have found Bridging the Gap. It made my transition from rehab to the A.A. meeting rooms in San Francisco seamless. Without their help I sincerely feel that my story would not have the same happy ending.

**TP**

### Chairing It And Working It

by Karen S., District 06 Committee Member Chair, Panel 61

On April 2, 2007 my 33 year old pregnant sister-in-law was killed by a drunk driver, leaving behind two small daughters and a very distraught husband. Today, their lives are finally on the upswing, living in Brooklyn, New York. I miss all of them dearly. So what of the man who went to jail with blood

alcohol reportedly at twice the legal limit? Will A.A. have reached him behind the walls? Will he have gotten his staple-free *Grapevine* put out by GSO? Has A.A. continued to reach out?

Have I? A.A. has saved my life twice now. I am just past eight years (again) and part of my bottom, the second time, was driving in two blackouts that really scared me, not



having a clue how I got home, not to mention several emotional rages I had behind the wheel with people in the car with me. I know I was lucky to have not killed someone myself. Why do I get to live and others die? I don't know, but I know I am forever grateful and ready to help A.A. be there without judgment and with as

*(Continued on page 8)*

# A Telephone Volunteer Thanks An Author

(And a wet drunk gets help from *The Point*)

*The letter below was written by Ed, a Central Office volunteer, to Michele F., whose article in The Point ("Central Office Phone Shift Volunteer -- Getting Calls from Wet Drunks," March 2011) helped guide him in a phone call from someone in spiritual need.*

Michele,

Just a note to let you know how surprised I was today at Central Office when I picked up the phone at the very beginning of my shift and got a growling "Are you a volunteer?" in my ear. I assured the caller that I was and he roared, telling me that he was "not a wet drunk!" He said he had 13 years but just had to take this six-week break because he gets so mad at meetings – plus, he has all these health issues and ... I had no idea where he was going as he rambled on.

When he finally took a breath, I asked how could I help. He replied,

"Didn't you read that article in *The Point* about wet drunks?" I confessed I had not. The caller graciously agreed to remain on the line while I retrieved the issue. When we resumed the call, he seemed much calmer.

Together we examined the article. He agreed with it. He wanted to share about how good it was with someone. He explained that he's been into Central Office and folded schedules. He wanted to know how much time I have (31 years) and where I came from (Philadelphia). He wondered if I ever got any calls from "wet ones." I told him that every once in a while I do – just like in the article.

"Good," he said. "Maybe sometime I can answer the phones. Be of service, you know?"

"That can be done!" I said, and told him that 's what keeps it green for me.

Along the way, he told me his name and his home group. He thinks he'll go back soon, he said, and he was going to call his sponsor. He also said that he even might stop in some Wednesday to meet me.

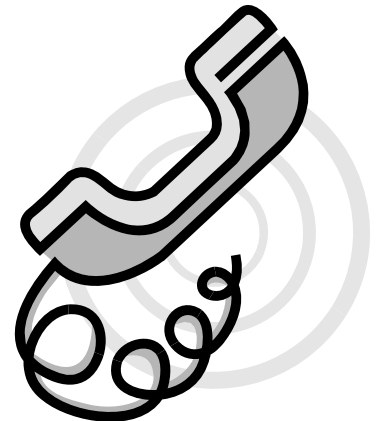
Turns out, he knows Maury [Central Office manager]. I told Maury about this call and she said, "Could you write an email about it?" And here it is.

Thanks Michele for an excellent perspective. As you can see, it hit home.

Bright moments!

Ed

**tP**



(Continued from page 7)

much heart as a fellow sufferer can have for those that haven't been so lucky.

Once, in a meeting when a Bridging the Gap (BTG) member asked for volunteers, (before my sister-in-law was killed) I filled out a blue card to be a person BTG would call if someone in my neighborhood was released to take her to a meeting;

they match people by zip code and gender. I had never been called. Now, after years of service, I am the chair of General Service in San Francisco and for the first three months of this new panel, it was without a BTG chair. I was lucky to get to fill in, before Eddy recently took over as the new BTG chair; I was able to hook two people up to get to a meeting. One call had come in from Marin, asking me to find someone to meet a woman getting

out of prison. It was so exciting, I am telling you; we drunks like the rush and I felt it. It was a spiritual rush, the very best kind, no withdrawal, no hangover. Two friends offered to meet her and that was that, and we all got the simplest gift with the greatest rewards, one drunk working with another. It works because we show up and we show up because we can. We are sober, there is nothing stopping us now.

**tP**



# ENOUGH ABOUT ME, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT ME?

by Suzan C.

When I first read the promise that “we will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows,” I presumed that most people in A.A. were lying about this, and the rest were in denial. Like “easy does it” and “live and let live,” losing interest in my needs seemed like a recipe for underachieving and being exploited by others.

What I could not grasp at the time was that “lose interest” was

meant literally. I had no idea that someday my own grandiosity, fear, rehearsals, plots, schemes and strategies would actually *bore* me. Nor could I imagine the rich rewards of focusing on other people in my environment. Most of all, I had no concept that one could live a life based on usefulness and service while still managing to “get ahead” in the material sense.

Sometime between initially scoffing at the promise and later beginning to live it, I conducted a sort of experiment. After being sober a while, I had become aware of how much fear I carried around. It was a constant feeling that something was going to go wrong. The ominous “something” could be a runaway cable car plowing through the crosswalk, my boss deciding to fire me, or having that lump on my knee develop into a malignant tumor. My friends in A.A. had taught me that alcoholic fears all share two things in common: 1) they are about what might happen in the future and 2) they are self-centered. Equipped with this insight, I started to

apply this two-part test to every fear that came up. Remarkably, those two elements were present in my every fear.

When I was able to ask myself, “Is this self-centered fear?” I could finally challenge the trouble that my brain was constantly brewing. When the answer came back “yes” I was able to discredit my own fear. I still use this tool today. It works like magic and

*Fear and longing wrap around my dreams like shipping tape around a package.*

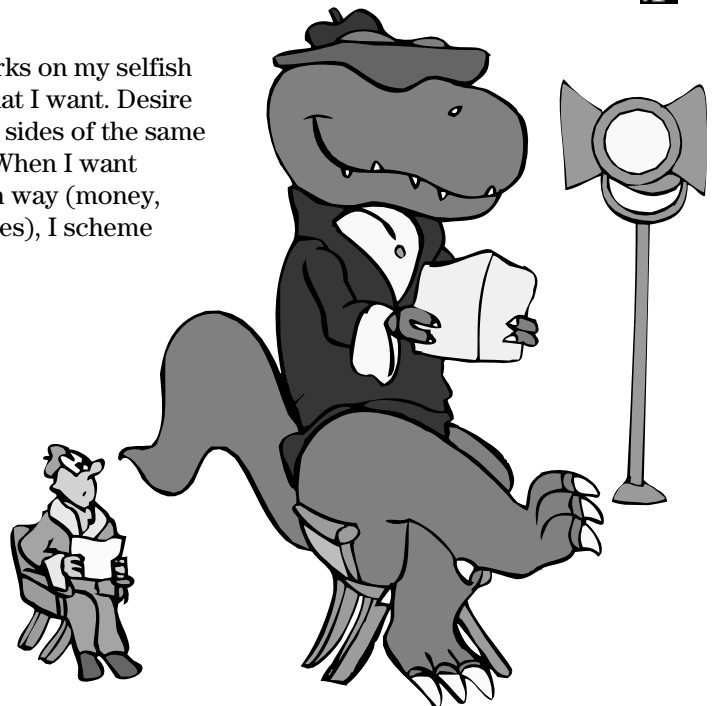
shatters my pessimism and dark imaginings. It is very much like a dieter picking up a chocolate donut and asking, “will this help me achieve my weight loss goals?” The childish voice of fear cannot withstand the examination by my sober consciousness.

This method also works on my selfish tendency to covet what I want. Desire and fear are different sides of the same coin of self-seeking. When I want something in a selfish way (money, power, glory, privileges), I scheme about how to get what I want, worry about people or circumstances that might be obstacles, and fret whether my victories will be permanent. Fear and longing wrap around my dreams like shipping tape around a package. When I ask whether my

yearning is self-centered, it forces a shift in my consciousness. I remember my program and I remember that the only true way to achieve what I want is to be of maximum service in my contributions to the world. If I have earned recognition, I will have it, not for its own sake, but only as a byproduct.

Just as I have learned that selfish thinking brings anxiety and fatigue, I have realized that gaining interest in my fellows (whether newcomers in A.A. or co-workers whose names I have not yet bothered to learn) relieves me of this very “bondage of self.” A.A. has taught me that no matter what may be confronting me, the solution is not to knead the information like mental dough. The solution is to reach out to help others, in and out of the rooms.

TP



# Useful to Others

## The Key to Walking the Spiritual Path

by Jamie M.

*“We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.”* This is a bittersweet line in the promises for me. I first came to the rooms of A.A. in the spring of 1986 – at the same time that Chernobyl was melting down. One of my favorite ways of describing a state of complete intoxication (if I could still talk) was to say, “I’m totally useless.” And I frequently felt that way in the most negative sense. I was the sort of person who caused strife, drama, and trauma in my own life and the lives of those around me. I am one of those for whom one of the side effects of alcohol was a desire to jump out of windows – so it was extremely lucky that I ended up in an A.A. meeting.

the Mission, on Potrero Hill, and in the Haight. There were a lot of gay men in these meetings, and many of them had AIDS. In those days, there was no such thing as “HIV positive.” People had AIDS, and they were going to die. But they came to meetings, they worked the steps, they stayed sober. The outpouring of courage and struggle and dedication was beyond anything I had ever seen. Bearing witness to their struggle made me forget many of my own petty worries and problems. I particularly remember the humor with which some of them met this disaster:



*The outpouring of courage and struggle and dedication was beyond anything I had ever seen.*

I was captured into the sponsorship of a Big Book thumping (and very gentle and loving) sponsor before I knew enough to know what a book thumper was, and began on my Fourth Step inventory when I was two days sober. It worked for me. I was told to do service at every opportunity. I emptied ashtrays – which was only fair considering I was a smoker – and helped put away chairs, throw out coffee cups, etc. My sponsor told me to start getting the phone numbers of newcomers as soon as I had 30 days. I did.

I found myself going to meetings in

gay or straight, we would all laugh at the arch way Jerry H. read the line, “gain interest in our fellows.” He and many like him were able to laugh in what they knew were the last days of tragically short lives. They showed me that “one day at a time” is a deeply spiritual way to live life to the greatest benefit for both myself and others.

I eventually got involved in a meeting at San Quentin, where I learned what it means to have a spiritual program in a whole new way from listening to lifers talk about how to work a Tenth Step without getting thrown off the

tiers by their less spiritual brethren. And I ultimately grew enough spiritually that I was able to give that commitment up so someone else could experience that kind of healing and growth.

In one of the first meetings I went to, there was a guy who was very quiet, but who had an intense look to him. I didn’t talk to him, and then didn’t see him for a couple of years. Then he came back. He’d been drinking for the last two years. So I talked to him. He now has something like twenty years of sobriety, and I was honored to sponsor him for a good part of that. He taught me a lot of humility

*(Continued on page 12)*

# JUNE IN A.A. HISTORY

by MEM

June 10, 1935: The date that is celebrated as Dr. Bob's last drink and the official founding date of A.A. There is some evidence that the founders, in trying to reconstruct the history, got the date wrong and it was actually June 17.

June 26, 1935: Bill Dotson (A.A. #3) entered Akron's City Hospital for his last detox and his first day of sobriety.

June 24, 1938: Two Rockefeller associates told the press about the Big Book. "Not to bear any author's name but to be by 'Alcoholics Anonymous.'"

June 25, 1939: *The New York Times* reviewer wrote that the Big Book is "more soundly based psychologically than any other treatment I have ever come upon."

June 6, 1940: First A.A. group in Richmond, VA was formed.

June 15, 1940: First A.A. group in Baltimore, MD was formed.

June 18, 1940: One hundred attend first meeting in first A.A. clubhouse in

New York at 334-1/2 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street.

June 7, 1941: First A.A. group in St. Paul, MN was formed.

June 8, 1941: Three A.A.s started a group in Kalamazoo, MI.

June 14, 1941: *Kansas City Free Press* reports the Friday A.A. group is composed of "One-time stew bums, barflies and plain drunkards."

June 30, 1941: Ruth Hock showed Bill Wilson the Serenity Prayer and it was readily adopted by A.A.

June 17, 1942: New York A.A. groups sponsored the first annual NY area meeting; 424 heard Dr. Silkworth and other speakers.

June 19, 1942: Columnist Earl Wilson reported that NYC Police Chief Valentine sent six policemen to A.A. and they sobered up. "There are fewer suicides in my files," he commented.

June 21, 1944: First issue of the A.A. *Grapevine* was published.

June 11, 1945: Twenty-five hundred attend A.A.'s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Cleveland, OH. Cleveland had 1,200 of the 20,000 A.A. members at this time

in the U.S.

June 13, 1945: Morgan R. gave a radio appearance for A.A. with a large audience. He was kept under surveillance to make sure he didn't drink.

June 1, 1949: Anne Smith, Dr. Bob's wife, died.

June 11, 1971: Ernie G. (A.A. #4) dies.

June 6, 1979: A.A. gave the two-millionth copy of the Big Book to Joseph Califano, then Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. It was presented by Lois Wilson, Bill's wife, in New York.

June 1981: A.A. in Switzerland held its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention, with Lois Wilson and Neil Wing in attendance.

June 29-July 2, 1995: 56,000 attend 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in San Diego.

June 30, 2000: More than 47,000 from 87 countries attended the opening meeting of the 65<sup>th</sup> A.A. Anniversary in Minneapolis, MN.



by Anonymous

We don't have to get tongue-tied when someone asks us why

we're not drinking; here are just a few ways to answer the question:

Q: Why are you sipping chamomile tea while everyone else is having Margaritas?

A: Because I look better with my clothes on.

Q: If you don't drink and you don't do drugs, how the hell do you relax?

A: I think about how lovely chandeliers look from a distance.

Q: Is it hard for you to be around people who are drinking and having a great time?

A: As long as I remember to keep the video camera level, it's actually pretty entertaining.



# It Isn't About Me

## Freedom From the Bondage of Self

by Kathleen C.

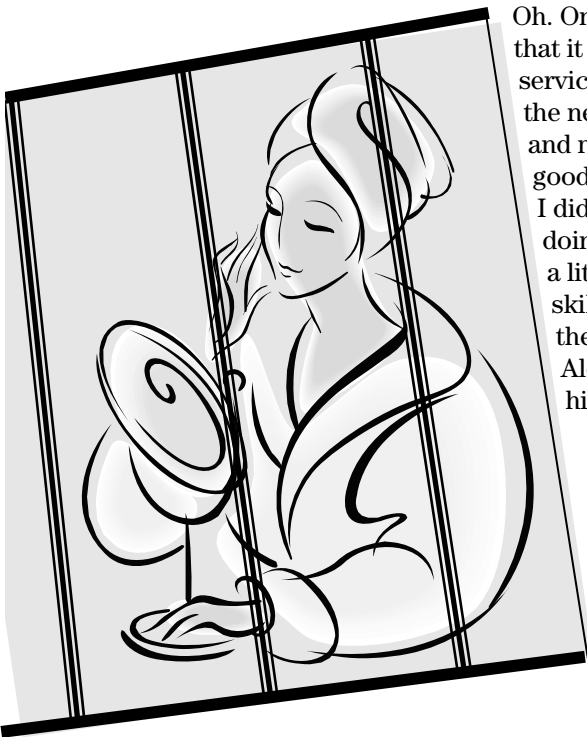
"It isn't about you, Kathleen." The voice of my sponsor came gently over the phone. I had called her all worried and concerned because I had been asked to speak at my former boss's funeral and I wanted to

do a good job and say the right things about him and make his family happy (and make myself look good). "It isn't about you," she repeated, because I sometimes don't hear what's really important. "It's about your old boss and his family. It isn't about you."

work relationship I told him that I was sober in A.A., and he thought that was a good thing, and always let me take a longer lunch hour on the days I went to noon meetings near my work.

So the eulogy I gave at his funeral came to be about him and not me, because my Higher Power helped me remember how grateful I was to have this man for a boss, what a mentor he was, and how I would miss him – and how his family and friends would miss him, too. Even now I still have to remind myself what my sponsor told me, so she doesn't have to repeat it too often: "It isn't about you, Kathleen."

**IP**



Oh. Once again she had reminded me that it isn't about me, it's about service and stepping up and doing the next right thing. Oh. So I prayed, and meditated for a while on this good man, who had hired me when I didn't really know what I was doing, but had good intentions and a little experience and a few skills, and needed a job. And by the way, I had 90 days sober in Alcoholics Anonymous when he hired me. Pretty early in our

.....

(Continued from page 10)

by insisting on going into bars and hanging out for hours at a time – and not getting drunk. In fact, one bar named a non-alcoholic cocktail after him! We formed a strong connection that I still value.

In the promises, the line "That feeling of uselessness and self pity will disappear" comes before "We will

lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows," but for me the two have happened in reverse order. When I feel useless and full of self-pity, finding a meeting and talking to a newcomer detoxes my system from these spiritual poisons. And now I have the blessed challenge of trying to be a good husband and father to a wife and children who, God willing, will never see me drunk.

When people say things about "those A.A. people," I try to remember not to argue with them. I try to remember that "...real tolerance of other people's shortcomings and viewpoints and a respect for their opinions are attitudes which make us more useful to others." (pp. 19-20, *Alcoholics Anonymous*). And being able to be useful to others not only keeps me alive, but sane and even happy.

**IP**

# Meet THE MEETING

by Rick S. and Bree L.

The St. Francis Men's Group is the second oldest continuously held meeting in San Francisco. Two Marines who had recently returned from Europe and their service in World War II wanted to start a meeting and began the group in 1948. Maury (the founder) and his brother had both been in all the serious landings of the Pacific (Guadalcanal, Guam, Iwo Jima). Maury said that with the seven total theaters of war he had experienced, the thing that scared him the most was drinking. He believed in keeping things simple, a day at a time and would say, "Have you had a drink today? If not, it's been a good day." Members at this meeting still remember Maury. He passed away ten years ago, sober, but the meeting format he originally established has not changed.

In San Francisco in 1948, there were four meetings a week. Four years later, in 1952, the *San Francisco Chronicle* listed seven A.A. meetings on the same page as the many church services held in the City.

In keeping with its original format, this is a discussion meeting and cross talk is expected. Suggestions and support are shared and

appreciated. Members do not introduce themselves when they share nor do they clap, as that was not part of A.A. in 1948. The general format is to talk about one's week as it relates to alcoholism. People can and do share more than once. That's what makes it a discussion meeting. St. Francis Men's Group would not be a good meeting in which to "hide out." It is small and all are encouraged to share. One of the perennial suggestions is to "cultivate an attitude of gratitude." The founder used to say that people went out for many reasons, but usually two things also happened. First, they stopped their regular meeting pattern which had kept them comfortable and sober, and two, they had stopped cultivating an attitude of gratitude.

Rick S., a regular participant at this group, believes that the message of A.A. is not in the format, but in the Big Book and the people, consequently proving the added value of discussion. He always looks forward to Fridays at 8:30 PM knowing he is part of the San Francisco A.A. legacy in attending a meeting that is 64 years young. He happily welcomes all to attend but says, "Just remember we don't hold hands at the end of the meeting. Our

founders didn't, so we don't."

This meeting convenes at 4301 Geary Avenue, at 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Park Presidio United Methodist Church). Rick says there are always a few parking spaces somewhere between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue on Geary. It is a closed men's meeting that meets at 8:30 PM Fridays.

**tP**



**I would like to subscribe to *The Point***

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# IFB meeting summary – May 2011

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 Alcohol	Come 'N Get It	Girl's Night Out	Reality Farm	Tuesday Chip	<i>Marin H &amp; I</i>
Agnostics and Freethinkers	Cow Hollow Young People	Haight Street Blues	Step Talk	Tuesday Newcomers	<i>Marin Teleservice</i>
Any Lengths	Each Day a New Beg. (Mon-Fri)	High Noon (Monday)	Sunday Rap	Valencia Smokefree	<i>SF H &amp; I</i>
Artist and Writers	Embarcadero Group	Keep It Simple	Sunset 9'ers (Sun.)	Waterfront	<i>SF Teleservice</i>
Back to Basics	Fireside Chat	Marina Discussion	Ten Years After	Women's Promises	<i>Spirit of San Francisco</i>
Blue Book Special	First Place	Mission Terrace	They Don't Know Who We Are		
Came to Park	Friday All Groups	Noon Smokeless	Thursday Thumpers		
Castro Discussion	Friday Morning 12 Steppers	On Awakening	Tiburon Men's Stag		

**This is an unofficial summary of the May 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 [aasf.org](http://aasf.org).

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 that individual groups cannot provide.

**Announcements:** Michael explained that the announcements were printed on purple sheet (see also <http://aasf.org/ifbinfo.cfm>).

**Chair Report:** Annual meeting coming up in June, followed by the regular meeting. If you miss the meeting in June, you will actually miss 2 meetings, which counts as 2 absences. If you get 3 absences you will be removed from the IFB. Annual committee reports will be given at that meeting. Elections will be held in July: Five COC positions, IFB Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. A subcommittee has been reviewing our Bylaws. Right now every Intergroup Representative is a board member. There will be a presentation next

month with proposed changes.

**Treasurer Report:** In March our group contributions were \$4K under budget, individual contributions were \$4K over. YTD we have a trend of being below budget. Q: Should we be concerned about contributions? Have they been down every month this year? A: We have money in the bank, however, the trend isn't good. Q: Why do budget for Gratitude Month income in March? A: groups send in Gratitude Month contributions throughout the year and we try to budget for that. We are still looking for Treasurer candidates – please get the word out.

Michael: If you are at your group and they haven't sent in money please ask them to. It's definitely something we should be aware of, but not necessarily concerned about yet.

**COC Report:** Discussed options regarding the wheelchair lift. Reviewed the remaining policies for the Form 990 and will vote on these tonight. Delivered Maury's performance review. One member resigned from the COC, will wait to fill position as elections are around the corner. Thanked Tracy and Rick who helped create an upcoming article for *The Point* regarding self support.

**COM Report:** The wheelchair lift got a new battery and still didn't work. The problem is the motor, which costs \$1,100. We need a motion to approve. We have a legal obligation to keep it working. Motion to pay \$1,130 to cover cost of motor for lift. Brian seconded. All but one in favor. Motion Passes. Starting April 1st, our rent

decreased by \$1,000/mo. We are continuing to see a trend of lowered group contributions. Recommendation was made to ask your Treasurers to send contributions groups might be sitting on in now rather than waiting. Li L: Seemed like Gratitude Month in November was not announced very well or participated in. It's our responsibility (IFBs) to make sure the fellowship is aware of Gratitude Month. Maury: Only about 45% of listed groups send in contributions to central office. We appreciate individual contributions, but the groups are those that need to be supporting our service entities.

## IFB LIAISONS:

**Marin Teleservice:** Had monthly meeting last week and Spaghetti Feed last Saturday. Went very well. We have a 12th Step Workshop scheduled for July 19th.

**SF Teleservice:** A few shifts open on weekends. Encourage members at your meetings that shifts are always coming open. Orientation is 3rd Monday of the month at Central Office.

**Spirit of San Francisco:** Working on a place for October event. A lot of open positions if anyone is interested. Meets the first Monday of the month.

**Marin H&I:** Going to start to put time limit on commitments. Contributions for April were over \$2K. Not having problems finding people, but just opened a new commitment at a facility in Greenbrae, need someone with a lot of time sober.

**SF H&I:** Working on getting group reps for meetings. Article in *The Point* about

# Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through May 15, 2011  
honoring the following members:

## ONGOING MEMORIALS

Conrad G., Jonathan L., Dick O'L., Matt S., Lyle W.

## ANNIVERSARIES

**Afro American Beginners:** Herman B. 40 years

**Pt. Angeles, WA:** Nancy R. 30 years

**High Noon:** Blue 24 years, Jaime 13 years

Patsy & Jamie 7 years, Homer 6 years

Michele 3 years, Scott & Leah 1 year

**Alameda, CA:** Jim H. 23 years

H&I available to discuss this.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

**Plaque committee:** Waiting for the plaque to arrive from manufacturer. Will announce the time that the plaque will be installed, all will be welcome to attend.

### NEW BUSINESS:

**Form 990 policy resolutions:** The board must review the Form 990 which is longer and more detailed than the 990EZ. Expenses are reported differently, expenses related to program services v. administrative costs are broken out. Management costs higher than most because we only have a couple of employees, makes sense because we primarily have volunteers doing the (12th Step) work. Would like to answer yes for the questions related to policies named in the Form 990, therefore we have a proposed policies here tonight. Must report every board member on the 990, which is one reason we may propose changes to our Board structure. The proposed 990 policies are: Conflict of Interest, Whistleblower and Document Retention. The proposals are based on Santa Clara Intergroup policies, drafted by an attorney and reviewed by an additional attorney. All documents say we want to run our business in a legal and honest way. Rich motioned to approve all three documents, Charlie seconded. All in favor, motion passes.

**Nominating Committee:** Five COC positions are coming up. We need to activate the Nominating Committee. Rich G. has agreed to Chair the Nominating Committee. Stu motioned to approve, motion was

seconded and passed. Looking for at least two members: Stu and Rich H. volunteered. IFB members will be polled for availability in June. The Nominating Committee will interview members and make recommendations to the IFB.

### Committee Focus:

**Fellowship Committee:** Saturday June 11 is Founders Day. Flyers were presented to the group and a description of the event was given. All information is on the web.

### MEET THE MEETINGS:

**Girls Night Out:** Started by Laurie G., Wed nights at 8:15 at Marin Alano Club. Read the Big Book until they get to a step, then they read the 12x12, then a Tradition. That's the first ½ of the meeting, the second ½ is discussion. They have a dictionary that is used to look up words and always have Fellowship afterwards. Check it out if you are a woman.

**Haight Street Blues:** Meets on Tuesday nights at All Saints Church just off Waller and Masonic. It's been there close to 15 years. Neighborhood meeting, close to the front lines, discussion is really good. See the same people there 5 years later, ½ people there have long term sobriety. Get to know some really dependable people there.

**Next IFB Meeting: Wednesday, June 1, 2011, 7 - 9PM, First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at O'Farrell, SF CA**

## 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

Joseph M. vicechair@aasf.org

#### TREASURER

Dashiell T. treasurer@aasf.org

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Thayer W. secretary@aasf.org

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

Margaret J. coc@aasf.org

#### 12th STEP COMMITTEE

Gloria E. 12thstep@aasf.org

#### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Tracy F. archives@aasf.org

#### ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Blu F. orientation@aasf.org

#### FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Michelle A. fellowship@aasf.org

#### THE BUZZ

Li L. thebuzz@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

# aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions	Apr. 11	YTD
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$ 30	\$ 120
Contribution Box	\$ 66	\$ 248
IFB	\$ 92	\$ 366
TSWC	\$ 26	\$ 26
<b>Fellowship Total</b>	<b>\$ 214</b>	<b>\$ 760</b>

Marin Contributions	Apr. 11	YTD
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am	\$ 273	
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	\$ 1,178	
Bolinas Step Study W 8pm	\$ 71	
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330p	\$ 117	\$ 236
Cover to Cover W 730pm	\$ 337	
Creskide New Growth Sun 7pm	\$ 59	
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	\$ 386	
East San Rafael Big Book	\$ 80	
Freedom Finders F 830pm	\$ 77	\$ 263
Friday Night Book F 830pm	\$ 166	
Girls Night Out W 815pm	\$ 82	\$ 82
Happy Destiny F 7pm	\$ 145	
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	\$ 2,500	2,500
High & Dry W 12pm	\$ 150	\$ 150
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am	\$ 154	
Island Group Th 8pm	\$ 126	
Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm	\$ 125	
Living in the Solution F 6pm	\$ 168	
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm	\$ 127	\$ 377
Mill Valley 7D 7am	\$ 290	\$ 945
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm	\$ 189	\$ 189
Monday Blues M 630pm	\$ 250	
Monday Night Madness M 6pm	\$ 150	
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm	\$ 874	
Monday Night Women's M 8pm	\$ 211	
Morning Attitude Adjustment	\$ 90	
Nativity Monday Night BB M 8pm	\$ 100	\$ 200
Newcomers Step M 730pm	\$ 330	
Noon Hope F 12pm	\$ 24	
Noon Small Room 5D 12pm	\$ 130	
Noon Tu 12pm	\$ 100	\$ 100
Novato Monday Stag M 8pm	\$ 15	
On Awakening 7D 530am	\$ 347	
Primary Purpose W 830pm	\$ 53	\$ 151
Quitting Time MWF 530pm	\$ 100	
Refugee Th 12pm	\$ 50	
Reveille 5D 7am	\$ 99	\$ 99
Rise N Shine Sun 10am	\$ 173	
San Geronimo Valley M 8pm	\$ 44	
Sausalito 12 Step Study Group	\$ 225	
Sausalito Sober Sisters Th 330pm	\$ 79	\$ 79
Serendipity Sa 11am	\$ 55	
Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm	\$ 92	
Sober & Serene F 7pm	\$ 100	

Marin Contributions	Apr. 11	YTD
Sober Sisters Wed 12pm	\$ 149	
Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag	\$ 395	
Steps to Freedom M 730pm	\$ 109	\$ 225
Steps To The Solution W 715pm	\$ 103	
Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	\$ 100	
Sunday Express Sun 6pm	\$ 150	\$ 300
Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm	\$ 150	
Three Step Group Sa 530pm	\$ 200	
Thursday Night Book Club Th 7pm	\$ 22	
Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu	\$ 200	\$ 700
Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm	\$ 753	
We, Us and Ours M 650pm	\$ 100	
Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm	\$ 56	
Wednesday Night SD W 7pm	\$ 22	
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am	\$ 200	\$ 200
Women's Step Study Group M 12pm	\$ 75	\$ 75
Working Dogs W 1205pm	\$ 250	
Young People's Chopsticks Sa 1030pm	\$ 44	
<b>Marin Total</b>	<b>\$4,698</b>	<b>\$15,743</b>

San Francisco Contributions	Apr. 11	YTD
6am Dry Dock 7D	\$ 150	
6am Dry Dock F	\$ 53	
6am Dry Dock Th	\$ 72	
6am Dry Dock W	\$ 96	\$ 96
7am Grab Bag M 7am	\$ 84	
7am Living Sober W 7am	\$ 14	
7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	\$ 136	
7am Step Discussion Tu 7am	\$ 109	
830am Smokeless F 830am	\$ 203	\$ 203
830am Smokeless Tu 830am	\$ 169	
A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	\$ 56	\$ 157
A Step Beyond Th 6pm	\$ 226	
A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm	\$ 120	\$ 120
Acceptance Group M 530pm	\$ 30	
Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	\$ 398	
After Work Big Book M 6pm	\$ 42	
After Work M 6PM	\$ 160	\$ 160
Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm	\$ 72	\$ 72
Alumni W 830pm	\$ 202	
Any Lengths Sat 930am	\$ 325	
Ariana Cafe Group M - F	\$ 100	
Artists & Writers F 630pm	\$ 618	
As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	\$ 540	
As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm	\$ 120	\$ 120
Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm	\$ 158	
Beginner's Warmup W 6pm	\$ 47	
Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	\$ 327	
Bernal New Day 7D	\$ 742	
Big Book Basics F 8pm	\$ 307	\$ 307
Big Book Study Su 1130am	\$ 236	

San Francisco Contributions	Apr. 11	YTD
Blue Book Special Su 11am	\$ 119	
Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm	\$ 102	\$ 102
By the Book Sa 10am	\$ 29	
Came to Believe 830am M 830am	\$ 60	
Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows)	\$ 466	
Castro Nooners F 12pm	\$ 85	
Cocanuts Su 9am	\$ 281	
Common Welfare Th 8pm	\$ 104	
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	\$ 180	
Design for Living Sat 8am	\$ 218	\$ 218
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am	\$ 644	\$ 1,140
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am	\$ 699	
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	\$ 359	\$ 586
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	\$ 193	\$ 193
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am	\$ 591	
Early Start F 6pm	\$ 1,273	
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	\$ 420	\$ 640
Epiphany Group Th 8pm	\$ 40	
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm	\$ 213	
Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa 8pm	\$ 48	
Extreme Makeover M 730pm	\$ 51	
Federal Speaker Su 12pm	\$ 174	
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am	\$ 140	
Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm	\$ 37	
Franciscan Noon Discussion M 12pm	\$ 34	
Friday All Groups F 830pm	\$ 149	
Friday at Five F 5pm	\$ 24	
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm	\$ 114	
Friday Night Women's Mtg F 630pm	\$ 42	
Friday Smokeless F 8pm	\$ 72	
High Noon Friday 1215pm	\$ 55	
High Noon Monday 1215pm	\$ 153	
High Noon Sunday 1215p	\$ 101	
High Noon Thursday 1215pm	\$ 120	
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	\$ 66	
High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	\$ 25	
Hilldwellers M 8pm	\$ 160	
Huntington Square W 630pm	\$ 491	\$ 491
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm	\$ 303	
K.I.S.S. M 6pm	\$ 114	\$ 114
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am	\$ 571	
Like A Prayer Su 4pm	\$ 199	
Live and Let Live Su 8pm	\$ 63	
Living Proof Th 630pm	\$ 80	\$ 80
Living Sober W 8pm	\$ 61	
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	\$ 469	
Lots Of Parking Su 6pm	\$ 20	
Luke's Group W 7pm	\$ 64	\$ 124
Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	\$ 209	
Meeting Place Noon W 12pm	\$ 161	
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	\$ 367	



# Rants

## &

# Raves



by Anonymous

I have a friend who got sober 16 years ago in the southern part of the state where, he says, "They do A.A. right. They have no respect for the traditions in the Marina. I don't know how anybody stays sober here." Harsh words, I thought, and while I nodded my head in sympathy, I also thought, "Oh, get over it. A.A is A.A. Different people, different color chips, same program."

Of course, this thought was coming from someone who has, until recently, only known Marina A.A. It never occurred to me, until I spoke at

## Tired of the Talk in Marina A.A.

a meeting not long ago and left feeling exponentially worse than I did when I arrived, that there are places in A.A. where you do not *ever* get a call from someone reporting on what someone else said you said in a meeting about a personal tragedy in your life. Or where that caller is clearly interested *only* in the value that your personal tragedy has in the next gossipy phone call she's going to make.

Starting out one's sober journey by getting involved with an abusive psychopath, as I did, does not make the rooms a safe place. So that was *my* mistake. But since making it, I have listened to people gossip about me, or about him. I've spent brunch in a Café near the Dry Dock and listened as a woman two tables over loudly bad-mouthed her ex-sponsee (by name) and then went on to pronounce judgment on the guy from

the meeting whose fiancée dumped him the week before (also, loudly, by name).

But in spite of all of this, it didn't occur to me until recently that the distrust I have felt in the Marina fellowship was not a normal way to feel about a recovery community. It wasn't until I saw the look of realization on my friend's face, as he patiently listened to me, that I began to conceive of another A.A. "My God," he said, "I just realized that's the only A.A. you know – that's so sad."

There *is* another A.A., of course – and I'm finding it. In Bernal, in the Mission, all over the city, in the South Bay. It's a big wide world of A.A., but I know now that I want my small corner of it to be rooms filled with people who are working a program and passing it on – along with the traditions that guide it.



San Francisco Contributions	Apr. 11	YTD
Midnight Meditation Sat 12am	\$ 69	
Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm	\$ 41	
Mission Terrace W 8pm	\$ 28	
Monday Beginners M 8pm	\$ 205	
Monday Monday M 1215pm	\$ 120	\$ 120
Newcomers Tu 8pm	\$ 118	
No Reservation M 12pm	\$ 208	
Off Broadway Book Th 730pm	\$ 55	
One Liners Th 830pm	\$ 272	\$ 272
Parkside Th 830pm	\$ 271	\$ 271
Pax West M 12pm	\$ 450	\$ 955
Pax West Th 12pm	\$ 116	\$ 690
Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm	\$ 150	
Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm	\$ 65	
Raising the Bottom W 9pm	\$ 140	
Reality Farm Th 830pm	\$ 367	
Refugee Th 12pm	\$ 60	\$ 60
Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm	\$ 60	
Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sa 5p	\$ 318	\$ 495
Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm	\$ 261	\$ 641
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm	\$ 218	\$ 753
Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm	\$ 20	
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	\$ 298	
Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm	\$ 122	\$ 257
Second Chance Th 215pm	\$ 35	
Serenity House	\$ 150	\$ 600

San Francisco Contributions	Apr. 11	YTD
Serenity Seekers M 730pm	\$ 380	
Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm	\$ 347	
Sinbar Su 830pm	\$ 127	
Sisters Circle Su 6pm	\$ 100	
Sober at State MW 1210pm	\$ 250	
Sober Saturday Sa 830am	\$ 80	
Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm	\$ 62	
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am	\$ 141	
Sought to Improve Th 715pm	\$ 60	
SFPOA Th 7pm	\$ 371	
Spirit of San Francisco	\$ 90	
Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	\$ 310	\$ 310
Stonestown M 8pm	\$ 49	
Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm	\$ 154	
Sunday Morning Gay Men's Sta 930a	\$ 470	\$ 470
Sunday Night Castro SD Su 730pm	\$ 5	
Sunday Rap Sun 8pm	\$ 307	\$ 307
Sunday Silence Su 730pm	\$ 67	
Sunset 11'ers Su	\$ 100	
Sunset 11'ers Tu	\$ 83	
Sunset 9'ers Sa	\$ 145	
Sunset 9'ers Tu	\$ 40	\$ 40
Sunset Big Book SS Sa 730pm	\$ 74	
Ten Years After Su 6pm	\$ 300	\$ 1,303
The Drive Thru W 1215pm	\$ 339	
The Dry Dock Fellowship	\$ 119	

San Francisco Contributions	Apr. 11	YTD
The Lads Fr 730pm	\$ 164	\$ 164
The Parent Trap 2 Wed. 430pm	\$ 27	
The Pepper Group F 12pm	\$ 78	
There is a Solution Tu 6pm	\$ 214	
Thursday Downtown Th 630am	\$ 62	\$ 62
Thursday Thumpers Th 7pm	\$ 100	
Too Early Sat 8am	\$ 685	
Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm	\$ 180	
Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm	\$ 9	\$ 14
Tuesday Night Step Tu 7pm	\$ 89	\$ 89
Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am	\$ 87	
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$ 83	\$ 98
Waterfront Sun 8pm	\$ 229	
Wednesday Noon Steps W 12pm	\$ 37	
Wharfrats Th 815pm	\$ 113	
Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	\$ 108	
Women Living Sober Sa 10am	\$ 60	
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	\$ 429	
Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm	\$ 67	
Women's Meeting There is a Solution	\$ 234	\$ 234
Women's Promises F 7pm	\$ 407	
Work In Progress Sat 7pm	\$ 450	
YAHOO Step Sa 1130am	\$ 155	
<b>San Francisco Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,244</b>	<b>\$34,458</b>

<b>All Contributions</b>	<b>\$13,155</b>	<b>\$50,960</b>
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# profit and loss statement: March 2011

	Mar 11	Budget	YTD	Budget		Mar 11	Budget	YTD	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					Insurance	705	1237	2383	2915
Income					Internet Expense	118	120	355	360
Contributions from Groups	10029	14000	37805	44500	Office Supplies	32	135	703	1005
Contributions from Individuals	6418	2510	12895	7530	Paper Purchased	811	610	1254	1030
Gratitude Month	133	500	3936	10000	Software Purchased	0	0	0	0
Sales - Bookstore	10813	9530	29278	28590	Shipping	0	0	0	0
Cost of Books Sold	-7710	-6747	-21747	-20241	Printing	0	0	0	0
Total Income	\$19,682	\$19,793	\$62,167	\$70,379	Equipment Lease	1577	1577	1577	1577
Expense					Repair & Maintenance	524	262	880	884
Employee Expenses	20353	19168	43660	42584	Security System	118	118	118	118
Professional Fees	75	75	225	375	Payroll Expenses	6	39	14	117
Postage	44	0	288	243	Telephone	234	250	711	750
Rent - Office	4664	4664	13993	13992	Phone Book Listings	87	87	260	260
Rent - Other	150	75	225	225	Travel	11	20	48	60
Access Expenses	0	675	0	2025	Training	0	0	0	0
IFB Literature	0	20	50	85	Bad Checks	0	0	0	15
IFB Sponsored Events	0	20	40	60	Miscellaneous Expense	0	0	0	0
PI/CPC	0	20	0	60	Total Expense	\$25,286	\$24,737	\$58,501	\$59,739
Sunshine Club/12th Step Comm.	0	20	0	50	Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	-\$5,604	-\$4,944	\$3,667	\$10,640
Archives Committee	0	0	0	0	Interest Income	\$168	\$200	\$532	\$620
Filing/Fees	0	0	20	40	Depreciation/Amortization Expense	-378	-378	-1134	-1134
					Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-\$5,814	-\$5,122	\$3,064	\$10,126

## Treasurer's Report

For the month of March group contributions were \$4,000 under budget, but were offset by individual contributions which were \$4,000 over budget. This is primarily due to one large (\$3,000) individual contribution. Year-to-date, total contributions are \$7,000 under budget.

Bookstore sales were \$1,300 over budget in March, and are \$680 (2%) over budget year-to-date.

Operating expenses were \$400 over budget and mostly in-line with budget, employee expenses were \$1,200 over budget due to timing of employee health benefits and

access expenses were \$675 under budget.

We had a net deficit of \$10,036 for March, compared to a budgeted deficit of \$9,577, or \$459 below budget. Year-to-date net deficit is \$5,238.

Unrestricted cash balance decreased by \$12,600 to \$23,300, which represents one month of average operating expenses. The decrease in March is primarily due to the annual deferred compensation contribution transferred to restricted cash and a late March literature order from AAWS.

OVERALL RATING: FAIR

### Founders Day Picnic Stafford Lake Park, Novato

Saturday, June 11, 2011

9am - 5pm

12noon: BBQ, 2pm: Speaker Meeting

\$10 per Car for Parking

\$12 Suggested Donation for BBQ

More info: [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org)



# Pause When Agitated

## Out of the Blue, a Moment of Clarity

by Molly D.

I was standing in the kitchen of my scramble-to-find San Francisco apartment. My new roommate had just exited, and his words clung to the air like monkeys: “Are you gonna get a job? Are you gonna pay rent? What are you even doing here? Who are you?”

I stood in stunned silence, with that *wah-wah* whooshing sound in my ears – the “oh, sh\*t” sound. The “I have no idea what I’m doing” sound. Then, like popping a can of obvious, I knew what to do next. I needed a beer. A six-pack was in the fridge, or some of one anyway.

I knew what would fill in that whirring, vertigo sensation, what would snap me back to normalcy. A beer: forgetting in a glass bottle, the cotton gauze between me and you, the missing puzzle piece that would make this moment all right. Whatever happened after that just didn’t matter – a beer would fix right now.

The next moment I experienced what I now know people call a moment of clarity, but I must admit there wasn’t anything clear to me about what I did next. I might more accurately call it a moment of “huh?” Instead of reaching for the handle to the refrigerator, I went back to my little rented room, went online, and typed

“Alcoholics Anonymous San Francisco” into the search engine. From there, [aasf.org](http://aasf.org) offered a link: “Find a meeting.” I clicked the link, I found a meeting, and I drove to 7<sup>th</sup> and Irving.

All of this action was as hazy to me as my frequent brownouts, not really knowing what I was doing, or why, where I was going, and what on earth would happen when I got there. But somehow I knew to my core that this was the right thing to do. I had no conscious thought of “Maybe I should go to an A.A. meeting” or “maybe alcohol is my problem” – nothing like that occurred to me. The

*Somehow I knew to my core  
that this was the right thing to do.*

only thing that did was the impulse, more felt than thought, to get somewhere safe – and somehow I knew A.A. was that place.

When I got to the meeting, I had what I later learned is a run-of-the-mill first meeting experience: I introduced myself as a newcomer and sobbed. Later, three women suggested that we go out for coffee, and as shaken and at-a-loss as I was, I let myself be led by these strangers to a table, a hot cup, and an hour of conversation. I don’t know what was said. I do know I babbled about how cruel my

roommate was, and that I didn’t know what to do. I know that they listened and shared until my blood pressure came back down, pulling me down from the rafters, and helping me to feel that it would be safe to go home that night.

The most important thing they said was, “Come to a meeting tomorrow.” And, the next day I did.

I cannot say why it was that particular moment of that particular day that the Universe conspired to nudge me to A.A. There wasn’t anything radically unusual or severe. It was another hopeless situation in another hopeless town, like so many I’d fled before. But perhaps that blankness of my brain as I stood in the kitchen, that instant when I really had no better idea – before I got the “better” idea – perhaps that moment was long enough for G-d to plant the idea of A.A. in my head. Finally I had offered myself a moment of silence to allow for something else to happen. And something else did, five sober years ago.



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**Write to THE POINT! — The Point Committee values your input**

**Or e-mail us at: [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org)**

**June 2011**

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