

the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

2011 **11**
November

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

A publication of the

Intercounty Fellowship

of Alcoholics Anonymous

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The Sudden Realization We Are Not Doing It Alone



6 Hard of Hearing

8 The Buck Stops Here

10 God Could & Would...





12 12 Things I'm Grateful For

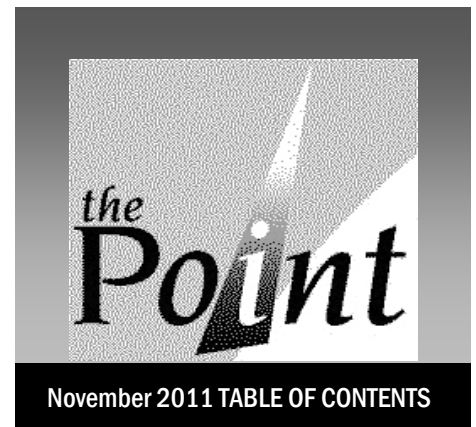
19 Gratitude Month

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.

November 2011

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY |
|--|--|--|---|
|  | | 1 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office 6pm | 2 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board Meeting 101 Donohue St., Marin City, CA Orientation 6pm Meeting 7pm |
| 6 | 7 | 8 <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 | 9 <u>SECOND WED</u> Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 6:30pm |
| 13 | 14 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office 7pm | 15 <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee Central Office 6:30pm | 16 |
| 20 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day | 18 <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office 6:30pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael 8pm | 22 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30pm | 23 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

| THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|---|--|
| 3 | 4 | 5 <u>CNCA Fall</u> <u>Inventory Assembly</u> See flyer on page 18 |
| 10 | 11 <div>Veterans Day Central Office Closed</div> | 12 |
| 17 <u>THIRD THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office 6:30pm <u>DUE TO HOLIDAYS:</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St, SF Orientation 7:15pm | 18 | 19 |
| 24 <div>Thanksgiving Holiday Central Office Closed</div> | 25 | 26 |
| <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> | | |



F.Y.I.

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Calendar | 2 |
| Meeting Changes | 4 |

DEPARTMENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| From the Editor | 5 |
| Survey of Service | 7 |
| The Promises | 9 |
| October and November in A.A. History | 11 |
| The Promises | 13 |
| Letters To The Editor | 13 |

BUSINESS

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Faithful Fivers | 5 |
| IFB Meeting Summary | 14 |
| Group Contributions | 16 |
| P&L | 18 |

“Surrounded by so many A.A. friends,
these so-called loners tell us
they no longer feel alone.”

Twelve & Twelve, p. 120



Meeting Changes

New Meetings:

Mon 8:00pm Pacific Heights
Fri 6:30pm South of Market

BROTHERS IN ARMS, CPMC, 2333 Buchanan St, Thornton Room (CL, ME, ST)
FRIDAY NIGHT BLAST, 88 Sixth St/Mission St (SD, WH)

Meeting Changes:

Mon 8:00pm Larkspur

MONDAY NIGHT WOMEN'S GROUP, 230 Doherty Dr Park at Hall Middle School
walk around the back (was at MSW, 1251 S Eliseo Dr, Greenbrae)

Sat 8:30am Novato

AWAKENINGS, 789 Hamilton Pkwy (was 646 Canyon Rd/Hill Rd)

No Longer Meeting:

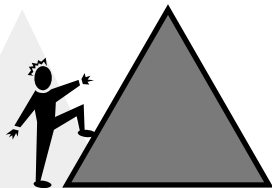
Wed 5:00pm Hayes Valley
Fri 7:00pm Sausalito

THE PLAYERS CLUB, Mission Fellowship, 2900 24th St/Florida
WE HAVE A SOLUTION, Center, 125 Bulkley Ave

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 or e-mail us at aasf.org. 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!

THE ANNUAL TRADITIONS WORKSHOP

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 5
10 am—12 pm



presentation on

THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR TRADITIONS
by John T.

followed by Twelve Speakers
sharing their experience, strength, hope
and the history of each Tradition

ILWU Clerks Hall on Berry St
(at the foot of 2nd and King Streets
—NE corner near the ball park)

Tiburon Haven

presents



Mill Valley



Thanksgiving Day Dinner

Doors Open 11AM

Meeting Starts 12PM

Delicious Meal Follows the Meeting!

Food Donations are Welcome!

Strawberry Rec Center Loft
118 E Strawberry Dr, Mill Valley

Questions & Queries:

strawberrythanksgiving@gmail.com

From the Editor

Give Thanks

by Jane K.

For what are you grateful today? This month? This year? In November we gather together at Thanksgiving to be thankful as a nation; in A.A. we celebrate Gratitude Month.

Especially for newcomers to A.A., Thanksgiving marks the beginning of the holiday season with its challenges to sobriety around every corner. To the newcomer (and the rest of us, too): get a copy of the book *Living Sober* and read (or re-read) pages 65-71.

Write your gratitude list, and I bet that, like Esmerelda's on page 12 of this issue, the majority of things on it will be due to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous in your life. Read Suzan's article on page 8 and think about what you put in the basket or give to Faithful Fivers (if you give anything). Think about what you wasted on booze and contrast your clarity of mind today.

Read the current state of our local A.A.'s finances on page 19, and weep. It should not be this way, if we really believe what we say about the program. Sure, there's an economic recession; maybe it's even a depression. But we're each

responsible for the outstretched hand of A.A., and our Central Office services are critical to that responsibility. Especially if you are employed or have a regular source of income, step up and dig deeper. Write a check to Central Office and tell your family that you're giving to charity this year instead of buying stuff that nobody really needs. Are these extravagant suggestions? We think not. Many have done the same in the past, and for that, our current membership can be grateful. Don't let down our sisters and brothers who aren't yet part of the fellowship, but who need the hand of A.A.

During Gratitude Month, it is the custom of our fellowship to pass the basket twice in meetings, with Central Office as the sole beneficiary of the second collection. You can make sure your meeting adopts this practice and that your treasurer knows about it. As I count my blessings, reflecting on the past year, I am absolutely certain that without A.A. – and without Central Office in particular – my life would be a shambles and I would be blaming somebody else for it. Today, I am responsible for myself and for my share of support for the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

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 visit www.aasf.org.)



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

| | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Alejandro D. | Laura B. |
| Andrea C. | Lauren H. |
| Andy Z. | Laurie & Richard L. |
| Ann & Denise | Layne S. |
| Ardella H. | Lelan & Rich H. |
| Arthur A. | Leo H. |
| Barbara L. | Linda L. & Kevin C. |
| Barbara M. | 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. |
| Dennis & Lucy O. | Mily T. |
| Diane E. | Mitch R. |
| Ed H. | Molly G. |
| Erin S. | Nancy W. |
| Evan K. | Pat P. |
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| Frances L. | Paul M. |
| Herman B. | Peg L. |
| James W. | Pene P. |
| Jane K. | Penelope & Robert |
| Janet B. | Phillip B. |
| Jeanne C. | Ralf & Jocielyn |
| Jeff B. | Rich G. |
| Jodie S. | Rick H. |
| John C. | Robert C. |
| John G. | Robert W. |
| John M. | Ron H. |
| John V. | Sara D. |
| Karen C. | Sheila H. |
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| Kate R. | Steve F. |
| Kathleen C. | Stu S. |
| Kathryn M. | Susan G. |
| Kevin S. | Terry H. |
| Kristina F. | Tim M. |
| Kurt P. | Tracy F. |
| | William M. |

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. Remember, individual contributions are 100% tax deductible!

Hard of Hearing

But Getting the Message

by Rick R.

My name is Rick and I'm an alcoholic. I was born hearing, grew up Hard of Hearing (HOH) and became deaf. I use a small d for deaf because American Sign Language (ASL) is not my first language and I do not consider myself culturally Deaf (Big D Deaf). I have a cochlear implant, which does not "cure" my deafness, just like lack of alcohol doesn't "cure" my alcoholism. My cochlear implant is a tool, just like my sobriety is a tool.

When I came into the program, I missed 90 percent of what was being said in meetings.

As a functionally HOH person, I worked to conceal my hearing loss. Just like I worked to conceal my alcoholism. I didn't want anyone to see me as HOH, or drunk. As I got drunk, I didn't care what other people thought; I was freed of that constant pain.

As my emotional sobriety slowly increased, I began to work the program around this "character defect": my hearing loss. I began to embrace this thing that I had denied and resisted for so long. This "character defect" trigger was neutralized. The feelings of shame and fear, connected to this trigger, diminished and positive feelings began to grow. I began to define myself, instead of allowing others to define me. I began to advocate for myself, not in an antagonistic way, but in a loving way. I began to feel lucky to be Late Deafened in

the same way that I feel lucky to be an alcoholic. The pain I have experienced has allowed me to now experience joy. I never would have arrived at this place any other way.

Along this road of sobriety and hearing loss, I have come to realize that there are a number of things I can do to help myself. Learning ASL is one of these things. So I became willing to go to night school and learn. I am reasonably proficient, but far from fluent in ASL. It has brought me joy. The work I do is the joy I get. This has allowed me to enjoy the ASL interpreted meetings that have been started here in San Francisco (Friday and Saturday nights at the Alano Club). I feel a social identity with the people in the program and with the other HOH and Deaf and deaf who attend these meetings. This social identity, this feeling of connection, this feeling that I don't



have to apologize or explain in these rooms, is so very important. The newcomer in a recovery meeting is exactly like the newcomer in a hearing loss support group meeting. I see them sitting by the door; arms folded, eyes darting. Many times, when asked to share, to say something, they burst into tears. They feel so relieved, so connected, for the first time in their lives. Then their real journey begins, just like my journey began several years ago.

My community, our community, of the HOH, the deaf and the Deaf is huge. Conservative estimates run about 10% of the general population – the same as the estimates for drug and alcohol addiction. It is widely recognized that the incidence of drug and alcohol addiction in the Hearing Loss Community (HLC) is greater than in the general population. In the greater Bay Area, there are well over one thousand weekly meetings. Of all those meetings, we have one meeting with captioning and six (at latest count) with ASL interpreting.

I have had to work hard for my sobriety. But the work I do is the joy I get. Part of my sobriety includes telling my story and carrying the message to other HOH, Late Deafened and Deaf who are working for their own sobriety. I hope that I will be able to make it a little easier for the people who come after me. I feel a commitment to help carry this message to others and I encourage and welcome all who help. I wish to thank the SF Alano Club for providing two ASL interpreted meetings and I hope that others will contribute to allowing these underfunded meetings to continue.





by Jamie M.

When I first came to A.A. my sponsor advised me in a very loving, low-key way: get a step meeting, a Big Book meeting, and a commitment. I don't remember which commitment I got first, but I vividly recall feeling pretty crazy at about eight or nine months sober and realizing that I was going to only one meeting a week and that just because I was the coffee maker. So service at the group level definitely got me through that rough patch.

That realization lit a fire under me: I was a lot more interested in service. In my second year of sobriety I did a lot of service at group level. I was doing service for five different meetings a week: secretary, coffee maker, literature person, greeter, treasurer. I can't remember them all; I just remember wondering if I was taking service opportunities away from other people. I concluded that I needed the commitments. A guy asked me to sponsor him, and I asked my sponsor if I should. I was told to finish my Fourth and Fifth Steps before starting, and so I did. So service helped motivate me to work two key steps in the program.

Somewhere along the line I heard that "there's a form of service for every character defect" and I concluded that I probably would need to do every form of service to deal with all my character defects. So I got on the Twelfth Step list with teleservice. I ended up going to visit a guy who was crying, drunk in the Tenderloin, with scars up and down both arms. I saw him a couple of months later and he was sober and looked a lot better. On another occasion I went to see a guy at the hospital who was here from a

A FORM OF SERVICE FOR EVERY CHARACTER DEFECT

Service Definitely Keeps This Alcoholic Sober

small town up north for an operation that he couldn't get locally. It was maybe going to work, or maybe not. I got to visit with him the day before; I never found out what happened to him.

Because of taking an overnight teleservice commitment, I had the experience of answering the phone at 2:30 in the morning to hear a small voice say, "I'm scared, I'm alone, I need help, I don't know what to do." And I was able to be the first person he talked to when he "reached the jumping off place." I also had the experience of a man calling from Southern California threatening to kill himself by drinking a beaker of mercury. I didn't really believe him, and I believed him even less when I got the same call from the same guy a month later. But I'm inclined to believe the guy really was an alcoholic.

I remember walking out of San Quentin with my H&I buddy one evening and agreeing with him when he said, "I took all kinds of alcohol and drugs, hoping to get the feeling I have now, and nothing ever worked but this." I've been blessed to do service at San Bruno jail, also.

I did General Service for ten years. I could write a separate article about that alone: it really teaches you how to get along with people, to say the least. Some of the more obvious miracles of the program happened for me there, but they are hard to describe. If you want to "practice these principles in all our affairs," that's the perfect place.

I have done Bridging the Gap, where

you go with people who've just gotten out of jail or a treatment program to their first meeting or two. A friend and I went with a man getting out of treatment back to his home to pour out the vodka he'd left in the fridge. He had a great story about counterfeiting 500 one dollar bills on a Friday night for a weekend of drinking; the Treasury men were waiting for him at the print shop where he worked on Monday morning.



I remember being at a meeting when a guy I knew got up to speak, and said "I know I need to be sober, and I suppose it's better than drinking, but I've just never had as much fun or felt as good sober as I did drinking." At that time, he'd never done any service.

My sponsor told me that just going to the same meetings on a regular basis is service; people see you coming

(Continued on page 12)

The Buck Stops Here

Financial Strategies For the Alcoholic Mind

by Suzan C.

Why do I persist in observing the Seventh Tradition with a dollar bill, knowing that most alcoholics have contributed the same amount since the 1960s when a dollar could buy a double-decker burger with fries, salad and dessert? Is it that I am ignorant of inflationary factors or just plain cheap? Or is there something deeper going on, some strange attachment I have to my one buck?

Fiscal irresponsibility pervaded my drinking days. I exceeded my credit limits and stopped answering the telephone to avoid collection agencies. Part of growing up in A.A. and having my sanity restored was learning to manage money. Today, thanks to my Higher Power, my friends in A.A., and reading up on money management, I am doing much better. Today I am quick to rattle off the many ways the average

consumer can save money: a dollar here, a dollar there, it all adds up.

Most shopkeepers proudly display their first dollar bill in a handsome frame. There are websites devoted entirely to hidden art and information located on a dollar bill. The celebrity financial advisor Suze Orman

watch the other alcoholics throw in their dollar, and the basket comes to me, and I fall in with the group and throw in my dollar. If I am feeling generous and throw in two dollars, a question passes through my consciousness, barely noticed: “Are you going to put in two dollars *every* time now?” My mind answers, “No.” Is it

There is a subliminal fear associated with my habit of throwing a single dollar into the meeting basket.

recommends a plan for getting out of debt that is founded on a single dollar. Steven Spielberg, who certainly has many dollars, says “Why pay a dollar for a bookmark? Why not use the dollar for a bookmark?” Even though each dollar bill may be mortgaged by 40 cents of treasury bonds, that iconic legal tender is, on some level, a holy object in our culture.

Financial experts say that irrational spending (or not spending) is rooted in emotions such as fear, guilt and shame. I had a lot of fear of economic insecurity before I found A.A. and worked the steps. That fear would make me hoard money instead of paying off high interest rate debt. I also knew guilt, returning home with clusters of shopping bags when I couldn’t even make minimum card payments. And I knew shame: my peers were contributing to their 401-K plans while I was blowing every paycheck on bar tabs and outfits to wear to the bars.

There is a subliminal fear associated with my habit of throwing a single dollar into the meeting basket. I

the extra flutter of descending green material that overwhelms me? Is it the idea that I have “doubled” my spending, or have I contemplated the annual budget impact? Perhaps I have concluded that A.A. has enough money (knowing full well the staggering amount of work accomplished by local and national offices).

Yet, I have discovered ways of getting two dollars into the basket without having these reactions. Sometimes I put in five dollars and take back three. This actually leaves me feeling like I “stole” less money out of the basket. Another method I have used is to fold my two dollars into an interesting shape and put it somewhere handy before the meeting. Then I have a moment of creative pride as I drop the sculpture into the basket and send it on its way. Whether flopping and fluttering, or folded into a swan, it’s the same green stuff for Central Office and General Services. For me, it somehow helps me avoid images of my former spendthrift life. Maybe, one silly trick at a time, I can manage to buck the trend.

TP





CAME TO BELIEVE, THEN SUDDENLY REALIZED

by Anonymous

I spent most of my adult life clinging to my disbelief in a Higher Power. I viewed spirituality and religion as different points on the same spectrum of superstition. But my creed came with a footnote of ambivalence. Apparently the very remote possibility that God actually did exist justified praying in times of extreme bad luck. These occasions were frequent for me. I was a firm disbeliever but hedged my bets.

When I came into the rooms and saw Step Two on the wall, it seemed to say “sooner or later you will get it because we will beat you over the

*I was a firm disbeliever
but hedged my bets.*


head until you do.” Eventually, against a lifetime of adamant insistence and a litany of drunken essays proving the absurdity of faith, I found that I was slowly but steadily “coming to believe.”

The progressive, “educational variety” of spiritual experience that takes place in Step Two contrasts noticeably with the Ninth Step promise, “we will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.” It is not so much that I woke up one day and

said “hey, I’ve actually shown up to work on time for a whole month!” Instead, it was a whole bunch of “suddenlys” that began to happen. I would suddenly realize that I had finished a stressful encounter without losing my temper, patience or composure (I call these “who was that masked man?” moments). I would suddenly glimpse someone who looks remarkably like me saying and doing things that I never was able to before, and realize that I had changed.

After making amends to some people on my “hell, no, over my dead body” list, and walking away without my heart pounding or my eyes fixed on the ground, I suddenly realize that God has given me dignity instead of pride, courage instead of anger, acceptance instead of bullheadedness. Until I found the steps and the fellowship, I could no sooner face my enemies with grace than I could follow through on the morning vow to get through the day without drinking. My bushels of good intentions scattered on the ground when push came to shove. I worshiped my own thinking because in the confines of my mind, everything was possible, and I could execute the most challenging task flawlessly. The trouble always came with the doing. Plans went sideways or failed, mostly because those damned other people didn’t do what

they were supposed to do. I was like a cartoon character, foiled again by the dastardly rabbit.

God’s ability to do for me what I cannot do for myself (live life with serenity and balance, handle difficult situations and people, go forward each day helping others instead of focusing on myself, just to name a few) has a lot to do with my ability to follow the program as it is taught in the Big Book of A.A. This involves giving up on some of the grandiose thinking that I indulged in for so much of my life. While I have not consciously given up my scheming, rehearsing and manipulating, I have “suddenly realized” that they have been pushed out of my head by all of the fresh material deposited by A.A. Every time I suddenly realize how I have changed, I acknowledge that my brilliant mind is not doing these things for me. God can and does because I have sought. My new life is a living amends, an essay filled with wonder, amazement and infinite possibility, remarkably absent of any footnotes of ambivalence. 



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God Could And Would (If He Were Sought)

Saved From A Wine Slip

by Anonymous

In the year 2000 I had the good fortune to visit the Tuscany region of Italy. I was traveling with a tour group from Massachusetts. Small groups of friends formed among the 50 people that were traveling together; I found one such group that was friendly and welcoming, and joined it. Somehow my sober status never came up; at the meals I would turn over my wine glass, and nobody seemed to notice.

But the many days without meetings were slowly and subtly starting to take their toll. I began thinking, “Who would know and what would it hurt –

earned self-respect. With a sense of urgency I pulled out the telephone book and started dialing Alcoholics Anonymous in Rome, the nearest big city. I finally got through, but the reception was so poor they couldn’t hear me and I couldn’t hear them.

I got down on my knees and prayed for the obsession to be lifted. Nothing seemed to change. I started thinking that not getting through to Alcoholics Anonymous was a sign that I should try drinking again!

So with a sense of determination and excitement about drinking the Italian wine I walked into the dining room.

across the table, Frannie, looked to her friend Sheila sitting next to me and quietly said, “I know it has been a tough day for you – would you rather I didn’t drink tonight?” A look passed between them and her friend said, “No, go ahead and have a glass of wine, I’m okay.” I turned to her and asked “Don’t you drink?”

Sheila said, “No, I can’t drink – I gave it up several years ago.” Meanwhile, the man had begun pouring wine into my glass. I almost jumped out of my chair and exclaimed, “No, please don’t, I’m not drinking either.” Sheila looked at me and quietly asked, “Are you a friend of Bill’s, by any chance?” I almost wept. “Yes, I am!” Looking like she had just found a long lost friend, she confided, “Today was so hard; was it hard for you, too?” From that dinner on we were inseparable.

After getting home, my sober life began again – but with a deeper understanding that “God could and would – if he were sought.”
(*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p.60)



I felt an involuntary pull to sit at another table

one evening of wine, celebrating with these new friends?” I started planning the first drink.

Then came the day: the wine tour day. The burnt orange and yellow countryside with sunflowers dotting the fields and charming old farm houses were a distraction to the stops at the wineries. My new companions were very impressed that I didn’t want to try the wine at the wine cellars we visited, but I thought, “Tonight, I will not turn the wine glass over.”

When we got back to the hotel I went up to my room to change for dinner and my wine escapade. I would deal with the fallout later – after all, anybody could understand a wine slip in Tuscany!

Suddenly I realized that I was throwing away all my sober years and

Then something odd happened. I felt an involuntary pull to sit at another table – a *specific* table. Since I didn’t really know anybody at this table, this was definitely strange. The desire seemed to come from outside myself. Waving to my other friends, I turned to somebody at the table and asked, “Can I sit with you?” and heard “Yes absolutely, we have room, please join us.”

Two women who had come on the trip together were sitting next to and across from me. They introduced themselves. One of the men stood up and started to pour the wine. The woman



OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER IN A.A. HISTORY

by MEM

Possible Secession of San Francisco Group?

The following paragraph is taken from A.A. Bulletin #1 dated 11/14/40 from The Alcoholic Foundation (predecessor to Central Office in New York), signed by Ruth Hock, Secretary:

"This bulletin is an effort to develop a mutual idea exchange sheet to establish a closer feeling of friendship between A.A. groups from the east coast to the west, and we hope it will prevent the secession from the A.A. ranks of our San Francisco group who threatened to call themselves "Dipsomaniacs Incognito" unless they heard from us more frequently. A bulletin has been contemplated for some time but delayed due to lack of sufficient personnel and office facilities. We now have at least the equipment and hope to be able to make this bulletin a periodic spree (not alcoholic)."

Following are entries from our usual source, *A Narrative Timeline of A.A. History (Public Version, April 2004)*, including some October history, as there was no History column in the October issue:

November 11, 1934: Bill W.'s final drunk begins on Veterans Day and lasts about a month.

October 14, 1939: A disappointing review of the Big Book in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* is unfavorable and dismissive.

November 21, 1939: A.A.s in San Francisco hold the first California A.A. meeting in the Clift Hotel.

November 11, 1940: The first issue of the *A.A. Bulletin* (later to become *Box 459*) was mailed to groups.

October 1942: Clarence S. stirs up a controversy in Cleveland after discovering that Dr. Bob and Bill W. were receiving royalties from Big Book sales. Bill and Dr. Bob re-examined the problem of their financial status and concluded that royalties from the Big Book seemed to be the only answer to the problem. Bill sought counsel from Father Ed Dowling, who suggested that Bill and Bob could not accept money for Twelfth Step work, but should accept royalties as compensation for special services.



October 20, 1945: Dr. William Duncan Silkworth was hired as director of alcoholic treatment at the Knickerbocker Hospital in New York City. He worked at both the Towns and Knickerbocker Hospitals until his death in 1951. Alcoholics were referred to the "A.A. Ward" at Knickerbocker Hospital by the New York Intergroup Association.

October 22, 1949: Florence R., A.A.'s first sober woman, begins drinking again and commits suicide.



November 1949: The short form of the Twelve Traditions was first printed in the *A.A. Grapevine*. The entire issue was dedicated to the traditions in preparation for the forthcoming Cleveland Convention.

October/November 1950: On behalf of himself and Dr. Bob, Bill W. issues a preliminary document titled *Your Third Legacy – Will You Accept It*. In it, Bill explained the proposed organization and implementation of the General Service Conference. 50,000 copies of the pamphlet were distributed by the New York office. For the next several months, Bill W. stumped the country and attended more than two dozen assemblies, electing area committees and conference delegates.

October 30, 1951: The American Public Health Association presents the Lasker Award to A.A. at the San Francisco Opera House.

October 1954: The *Alcoholic Foundation, Inc.* is renamed the *General Service Board of A.A., Inc.*

November 9, 1966: President Johnson appoints Marty M. to the First National Advisory Committee on Alcoholism.

November 3, 1975: A.A. Archives are formally opened in New York City.

November 1986: The first paperback edition of the Big Book is published.

October 6, 1988: Lois W., Bill's wife and a co-founder of Al-Anon, dies at age 97.



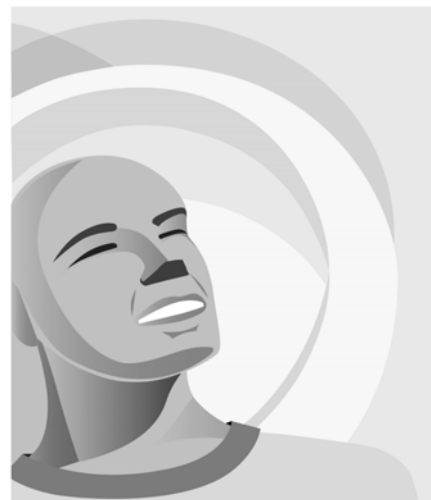
Twelve Things I'm Grateful For

by Esmerelda K.

1. I am grateful that when I wake up I know exactly where I am.
2. I am grateful that when I sit down to meditate in the morning after waking my mind is quiet and peaceful and able to clearly hear my Higher Power's direction for me, instead of a cacophony of insane screaming voices telling me to do things that are bad for me and others.
3. I am grateful to the kindness of my sponsor who listens to me every morning and lends her experience, strength and hope to me when she doesn't have to.
4. I am grateful that I live in a house with running water to drink, and to clean my body and my dishes, as well as electricity – and that I have the money to pay to keep it all running one day at a time.
5. I am grateful to know to eat, and to have an appetite for breakfast first thing in the morning, and to know I must eat green and natural food three times a day for a stable mind and a healthy body that I so mysteriously

still have after all the abuse I put it through.

6. I am grateful and happy for my morning meetings and the fellowship of my A.A. friends, and that I have their numbers and can call them whenever I want.
7. I am grateful for work to do and the people to do it with so that I can have the money to do what needs to be done, and I'm grateful that during the day when conflicts arise I no longer have to be "right" but have been given the ability to *listen* to others and to offer them the victory instead of always being a disagreeable know-it-all troublemaker.
8. I am grateful to know to rest and grateful that I no longer feel guilty for resting when I need to.
9. I am grateful for invitations to do things with people whenever they extend them and I always try to accept them unless I have a really good reason not to, instead of isolating in my house alone.
10. I am grateful to be of service to others when they ask me and grateful



that one of the first things I learned in A.A. was to say "yes" whenever I am asked to do anything, unless I have a really good reason not to.

11. I am grateful for the consciousness that can now see others, outside the bondage of self. I'm grateful that I can see where I can help people every day on the street, at work and in my family, and more importantly, see where my "help" is *not* needed or appropriate.

12. I am grateful for the continued Grace and bountiful love and compassion of my precious Higher Power and all the angels that have helped me to stay sober for 30 years one day at a time.

TP

(Continued from page 7)

back and staying sober, so that's Twelfth Step work. I didn't believe it until one day I was completely crazy (more than usual, I mean) and went to a meeting I'd never been to before. There was a guy there I recognized from other meetings, and I felt safer and more sane immediately. It had

never occurred to me that I might have the same effect on someone else.

Now that I've been sober for a while, I sometimes am able to just sit in a meeting and listen, to hear another alcoholic's pain and struggle, and to see myself in him, and to not judge – especially not judge out loud, in front of other people. This can be a very

difficult form of service for me, but I remember that that sense of nonjudgmental love is one of the things that got me to come back to my second or third, or my fourth or fifth, or my five hundredth meeting.

If you surrender to the program, is there anything you can do that *isn't* service?

TP



WHAT WE COULD NOT DO FOR OURSELVES

Grateful for the Gift of Sobriety

by Michael W.

"God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves" is one of the most compelling statements in the promises. There is simply no way I should be sober today and helping other alcoholics (when I'm lucky). Finding a higher power in Step Two took me two years; those two years were the worst of my life, total terror. When I finally was able to find my idea of this higher power, starting with the Pacific Ocean, everything changed and the obsession was removed. That concept evolved into a God of my own understanding.

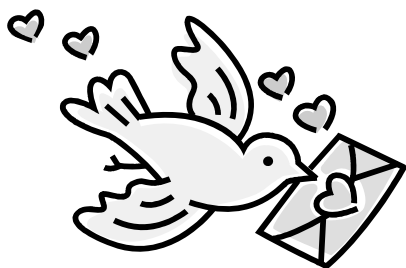
During these difficult economic times, many of us get trapped into thinking we are sober, talented, and that God will help us through, but that only goes so far. God is not going to open up the sky, come down to earth, and provide a solution for me or for any of my

friends who are seeing rough times. Do I have gratitude for a job rejection letter? Yes, I try; at least they read my resume and replied. Do I have gratitude for the coherence to even apply for a job? Yes, when I was drinking I could not function.

I have food to eat, a roof over my head, my kids are taken care of, and it is only due to the program and finding

gratitude that I am able to stay sober during a rough patch of total powerlessness. I know I am not alone and I know someday things will change, as long as I stay sober, work the steps, do service, help others, go to meetings, take one day at a time. Yes, I have seen much, much worse days: when I was not experiencing the gift of sobriety.

TP



Dear People,

It is alarming to see a crucifix used as an illustration on page 8 of the September issue, along with an opposing coiled serpent (original sin of Genesis?) and reference to gospel. The cross is decidedly a Christian icon, and the reference to gospels

and saints are as well. Bill W., as the anonymous writer of the article states, was anything but a saint, let alone a messiah suffering to redeem the sins of the world. All of this seems to me to violate an important tradition of the program which states that "A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization,

or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes." A newcomer glancing casually at the publication may see only this image without reading and leave before the meeting begins.

Ray B.

Letters to the Editor

IFB meeting summary – October 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 | Cow Hollow Men's Group | High Noon (Mon) | Mission Terrace | Step Talk | Tiburon Haven |
| Artists and Writers | Cow Hollow Young People | Huntington Square | Monday Beginners | Sunday Bookworms | Too Early |
| Attitude Adjustment Hour | Each Day A New Beg (M-F) | Join The Tribe | Noon Smokeless | Sunday Rap | Tuesday Chip |
| Back To Basics | Each Day A New Beg (Su) | Keep It Simple | Reality Farm | Sunset 9'ers (Sunday) | Walk Of Shame |
| Blue Book Special | Embarcadero Group | Live & Let Live | Saturday Easy Does It | Sunset Speaker Step | Waterfront |
| Came to Park | First Place | Marin Stag | Sesame Steps | Ten Years After | Women's Promises |
| Castro Discussion | Friday Morning 12 Steppers | Marina Discussion | Sober 5150's | They Don't Know Who We Are | |
| Come 'n Get It! | Haight Street Blues | Miracles (Way) Off 24th St. | Sober Saturday | Thursday Thumpers | GGPPAA |

This is an unofficial summary of the October 2011 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.

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.

The monthly IFB meeting was held on Wednesday October 5, 2010 at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at O'Farrell, San Francisco, CA.

Announcements :

Teleservice has several open shifts. San Francisco Unity Day, October 29, 2011 Urban Life Center, 1101 O'Farrell St./ Franklin St. Learn about service opportunities, with all committees holding orientations and signups.

IFB Officer Reports:

IFB Chair Report, Margaret J.: Marin Unity Day, General Service delegate spoke about communication process with GS between NY and our region. Marin GS Rep

talked about group conscience. Important to understand what is going on to have true group conscience.

Looking for support in volunteers and attendance at: San Francisco Unity Day, (Oct. 29), Volunteer Appreciation Party for Central Office volunteers, November 12, 2011 and the Central Office anniversary party in January, 2012.

November is Gratitude Month. Important for group conscience to decide on extra passing of basket in support of Central Office during November.

Treasurer's report for month ending August 31, 2011, Michelle C.: Group contributions were \$106 over budget while individual contributions were \$583 under. YTD total contributions are \$5501 less than budget.

Bookstore sales were slightly under budget for the month and are \$920 under budget YTD.

Operating expenses were \$1657 under budget, due to rent reduction of \$1000 per month and access expenses under budget at \$675. Total operating expenses were 6.9% under budget.

Deficit for August was \$2583; YTD deficit is \$10,072. Unrestricted cash decreased by \$735 to \$23,081, or about one month operating expenses.

COC Report, Phil L.: COC Goals: Improve efficiency of Financial Reporting; Increase awareness of service opportunities.

Operations and Employee handbook update has begun, marking up existing manual for accuracy, and if affected by proposed bylaws changes.

Received update on Bylaws Committee activities, with opportunity to absorb all

this evening.

Central Office Manager's Report, Maury P.: Just returned from Intergroup Seminar in Tucson, her 10th. Gave presentation on communications, well received. Made progress at seminar with workshop on communication with GS and a recommendation for change of policy to allow for a collective voice by seminar members.

Five CO phone shifts open, one year of sobriety required.

CNCA Inventory Assembly will be held Saturday, November 5 in San Francisco. One topic to be how well the Area supports local service entities. All interested encouraged to attend.

Volunteer appreciation Party Sat, Nov. 12, 6-9 PM at St. Mark's, red brick church on bottom floor. Food to be provided by the group. A lot of fun!

New pamphlet: "AA for the Alcoholic with Special Needs". Updated pamphlets include; "Self Support: Where Money and Spirituality Meet", including a new diagram for meeting use to determine contribution levels, "The AA Member: Medications and Other Drugs" suggests that members and sponsors do not advise on medications and other drugs. "Understanding Anonymity" pamphlet updated to include discussion of anonymity in public spaces on the web.

San Mateo schedules. Now available at \$.10 each, same charge as Marin schedule.

Liaison Reports

GGYPAA, (Golden Gate Young People in AA) Jen, Robin: September activities included Marin Unity Day, Hosted Waterfront Group dance at Ft. Mason.

Individual Contributions

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

ONGOING MEMORIALS

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

ANNIVERSARIES

Firefighters & Friends: Denise H. 26 years,
High Noon: Brice 5 years
Tiburon: Terry H. 32 years,
Selma, OR: Jack W. 29 years
Melissa G. 25 years, Laura B. 26 years
Women's Kitchen Table: Peg L. 30 years

Upcoming Halloween dance in Mill Valley, October 28. GGYPA elections November. Day of the Steps, December, SF. January will be a "Twin Theme dance in Marin. Next Business Meeting Oct 16, 2:30 at Alano Club.

Access Committee, Brian C. Muriel has stepped down from Chair, Brian now taking over as Chair. Excited about the new Access pamphlet. Set agenda topics for next meeting.

Bylaws Review: As a 501c3 organization our bylaws legally binding. Over the years additions made that altered overall document, sometimes contradictory. Committee met 12 times over last few months. Main reason for changes is IRS form 990 threshold change down to \$250,000, with requirement to list all board members. Current structure lists all IFB members as board member.

Proposal to have a board of 11 members. Intergroup meetings would focus on service work, rather than running the organization. Board to oversee administration, (as COC does now). Will go over changes in a review tonight, the first of two readings for proposed changes, per current bylaws. Two weeks (Wed October 19,) special meeting at Central Office to review changes in depth. Next IFB meeting to present a second time and have a vote to accept or reject changes. RSVP requested

Review: See also full document on this presentation online at AASF.org. IFB member lawyer and second review by

a non-IFB member lawyer have performed a legal review of the proposed changes. Email aa@aasf.org with questions

NEXT MEETING WILL BE IN MARIN at 7pm, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 101 Donahue St., Marin City, CA

November is Gratitude Month



Gratitude is an Action!

"Our groups, our areas, and A.A. as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and our bills are paid." (Bill W., 1957)

Many groups pass a second basket to support our Central Office at each meeting in November.

Some also make Gratitude Month a time to focus attention on AA's Twelve Traditions.

Treasurers: Please note "Gratitude Month" on your contributions so that they may be properly recorded.

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

Margaret J. chair@aasf.org

VICE CHAIR

Rich G. vicechair@aasf.org

TREASURER

Michelle C. treasurer@aasf.org

RECORDING SECRETARY

Thayer W. secretary@aasf.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

David S. coc@aasf.org

12th STEP COMMITTEE

OPEN 12thstep@aasf.org

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Michael P. 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

Brian C. 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. sfteleservice@aasf.org

aa group contributions

| Fellowship Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| ACYPAA | | \$1,674 |
| Brisbane Breakfast Bunch | \$ 22 | \$ 258 |
| Contribution Box | | \$ 464 |
| Fellowship Contribution | | \$ 77 |
| IFB | \$ 130 | \$ 853 |
| Fellowship Total | \$ 152 | \$3,326 |

| Marin Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| 12 & 12 Study Sa 815am | | \$ 479 |
| Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am | \$ 282 | \$2,155 |
| Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am | | \$ 200 |
| Bolinas Step Study W 8pm | | \$ 71 |
| Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm | | \$ 337 |
| Cover to Cover W 730pm | | \$ 337 |
| Creskide New Growth Sun 7pm | | \$ 83 |
| Crossroads Sun 12pm | | \$ 450 |
| Day At A Time 7D 630am | \$ 132 | \$ 235 |
| Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm | | \$ 886 |
| East San Rafael Big Book | | \$ 173 |
| Experience, Strength & Hope Sa 6pm | | \$ 78 |
| Freedom Finders F 830pm | | \$ 263 |
| Friday Night Book F 830pm | \$ 174 | \$ 340 |
| Girls Night Out W 815pm | | \$ 82 |
| Gratitude Tu 8pm | \$ 17 | \$ 263 |
| Happy Destiny F 7pm | | \$ 178 |
| Happy Hour (Marin) Th 6pm | | \$ 78 |
| Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm | | \$2,500 |
| High & Dry W 12pm | | \$ 150 |
| Intimate Feelings Sa 10am | | \$ 154 |
| Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am | | \$ 113 |
| Island Group Th 8pm | | \$ 330 |
| Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm | | \$ 125 |
| Living in the Solution F 6pm | | \$ 381 |
| Marin City Groups 5D 630pm | | \$ 577 |
| Mill Valley 7D 7am | | \$1,453 |
| Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm | \$ 126 | \$ 315 |
| Monday Blues M 630pm | | \$ 400 |
| Monday Night Madness M 6pm | | \$ 150 |
| Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm | | \$1,777 |
| Monday Night Women's M 8pm | | \$ 499 |
| More Will Be Revealed F 12pm | \$ 200 | \$ 200 |
| Morning Attitude Adjustment | | \$ 90 |
| Nativity Monday Night BB | | \$ 300 |
| Newcomers Step M 730pm | | \$ 330 |
| Noon Hope F 12pm | | \$ 152 |
| Noon Small Room 5D 12pm | | \$ 130 |
| Noon Tu 12pm | | \$ 100 |
| North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm | | \$ 170 |
| Novato Monday Stag M 8pm | | \$ 15 |

| Marin Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| On Awakening 7D 530am | | \$ 347 |
| Pathfinders Tu 12pm | | \$ 171 |
| Primary Purpose W 830pm | | \$ 151 |
| Quitting Time MWF 530pm | \$ 500 | \$ 780 |
| Refugee Th 12pm | \$ 30 | \$ 180 |
| Reveille 5D 7am | | \$ 99 |
| Rise N Shine Sun 10am | \$ 183 | \$ 446 |
| San Geronimo Valley Book Study | | \$ 127 |
| San Geronimo Valley M 8pm | | \$ 140 |
| Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6pm | \$ 393 | \$ 393 |
| Sausalito 12 Step Study Group | | \$ 386 |
| Sausalito Sober Sisters Th 330pm | | \$ 229 |
| Serendipity Sa 11am | \$ 96 | \$ 403 |
| Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M) | | \$ 90 |
| Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm | | \$ 378 |
| Sober & Serene F 7pm | | \$ 243 |
| Sober Sisters Wed 12pm | | \$ 149 |
| Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag | | \$ 395 |
| Steps to Freedom M 730pm | | \$ 394 |
| Steps To The Solution W 715pm | | \$ 103 |
| Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm | | \$ 150 |
| Sunday Express Sun 6pm | | \$ 450 |
| Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm | | \$ 273 |
| Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm | | \$ 150 |
| T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm | | \$ 78 |
| Terra Linda Group Th 830pm | | \$ 250 |
| Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag | | \$ 45 |
| The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm | | \$ 53 |
| There is a Solution Tu 6pm | | \$ 133 |
| Three Step Group Sa 530pm | | \$ 200 |
| Thursday Night Book Club Th 7pm | | \$ 22 |
| Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm | | \$ 1,098 |
| Tiburon Beginners & Closed | | \$ 700 |
| Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm | \$ 150 | \$ 150 |
| Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm | | \$ 753 |
| We Have a Solution F 7pm | \$ 126 | \$ 126 |
| We, Us and Ours M 650pm | | \$ 250 |
| Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm | | \$ 56 |
| Wednesday Night SD W 7pm | | \$ 22 |
| Wednesday Sundowners W 6pm | | \$ 200 |
| What's It All About F 12pm | | \$ 450 |
| Women's Big Book Tu 1030am | | \$ 480 |
| Women's Lunch Bunch F 12pm | \$ 100 | \$ 100 |
| Women's Step Study Group M 12pm | | \$ 75 |
| Working Dogs W 1205pm | | \$ 500 |
| Young People's Chopsticks Sa | | \$ 44 |
| Memorial Group Contribution | | \$ 267 |
| Marin Total | \$2,509 | \$29,774 |

| San Francisco Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|
| 130 Smokeless M 130pm | | \$ 9 |
| 130 Smokeless Th 130pm | | \$ 5 |
| 330 Smokeless F | | \$ 13 |
| 330 Smokeless M | | \$ 9 |
| 330 Smokeless Su | | \$ 22 |
| 330 Smokeless W | | \$ 25 |
| 515pm Smokeless M | | \$ 12 |
| 515pm Smokeless Sa | | \$ 10 |
| 515pm Smokeless Su | | \$ 13 |
| 515pm Smokeless W | | \$ 36 |
| 6am Dry Dock 7D | | \$ 150 |
| 6am Dry Dock F | | \$ 53 |
| 6am Dry Dock Sa | | \$ 81 |
| 6am Dry Dock Th | | \$ 89 |
| 6am Dry Dock W | | \$ 96 |
| 7am As Bill Sees It Fri | | \$ 101 |
| 7am Grab Bag M 7am | | \$ 195 |
| 7am Living Sober W 7am | | \$ 14 |
| 7am Smokeless Sa 7am | | \$ 9 |
| 7am Smokeless Su 7am | | \$ 150 |
| 7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am | | \$ 461 |
| 7am Step Discussion Tu 7am | | \$ 109 |
| 830am Smokeless F 830am | \$ 156 | \$ 359 |
| 830am Smokeless Th 830am | | \$ 20 |
| 830am Smokeless Tu 830am | | \$ 382 |
| 830am Smokeless W 830am | | \$ 38 |
| 830pm Smokeless W 830pm | | \$ 7 |
| A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm | \$ 37 | \$ 237 |
| A New Start F 830pm | | \$ 300 |
| A Step Beyond Th 6pm | | \$ 299 |
| A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm | | \$ 120 |
| AA As You Like It Tu 530pm | | \$ 88 |
| AA Step Study Su 6pm | | \$ 23 |
| Acceptance Group M 530pm | | \$ 60 |
| Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm | | \$ 524 |
| After Work Big Book M 6pm | \$ 227 | \$ 269 |
| After Work M 6PM | | \$ 160 |
| Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm | | \$ 72 |
| Alumni W 830pm | | \$ 302 |
| Any Lengths Sat 930am | | \$ 537 |
| Ariana Cafe Group M - F | | \$ 100 |
| Artists & Writers F 630pm | | \$2,395 |
| As Bill Sees It Th 6pm | | \$ 988 |
| As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm | | \$ 120 |
| Ass in a Bag Th 830pm | | \$ 101 |
| Be Still AA Su 12pm | | \$ 611 |
| Beginners 12 x 12 F 7pm | | \$ 300 |
| Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm | \$ 201 | \$ 358 |
| Beginners Tu 630PM | | \$ 20 |

| San Francisco Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD | San Francisco Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD | San Francisco Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Beginner's Warmup W 6pm | | \$ 139 | Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm | | \$ 103 | Reality Farm Th 830pm | | \$ 367 |
| Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm | | \$ 772 | High Noon Friday 1215pm | \$ 41 | \$ 254 | Rebound W 830pm | | \$ 60 |
| Bernal New Day 7D | \$ 331 | \$2,432 | High Noon Monday 1215pm | \$ 140 | \$ 293 | Refugee Th 12pm | | \$ 60 |
| Big Book Basics F 8pm | \$ 141 | \$ 569 | High Noon Saturday 1215pm | | \$ 516 | Richmond Big Book Study Th 730pm | \$ 6 | \$ 6 |
| Big Book Study Su 1130am | \$ 321 | \$ 557 | High Noon Sunday 1215p | | \$ 101 | Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm | | \$ 90 |
| Blue Book Special Su 11am | | \$ 119 | High Noon Thursday 1215pm | | \$ 440 | Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm | | \$ 495 |
| Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm | | \$ 225 | High Noon Tuesday 1215pm | | \$ 102 | Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm | | \$1,313 |
| Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm | \$ 71 | \$ 71 | High Noon Wednesday 1215pm | | \$ 25 | Saturday Big Book Sa 2pm | | \$ 21 |
| By the Book Sa 10am | | \$ 29 | Hilldwellers M 8pm | | \$ 407 | Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm | | \$1,003 |
| Came to Believe 830am M 830am | | \$ 60 | How Was Your Week? Sa 10am | | \$ 151 | Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm | | \$ 40 |
| Came To Believe Su 830am | | \$ 134 | Huntington Square W 630pm | | \$ 651 | Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm | \$ 176 | \$1,283 |
| Came to Park Sat 7pm | \$ 210 | \$ 390 | Join the Tribe Tu 7pm | | \$ 901 | Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm | | \$ 376 |
| Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) | | \$ 466 | K.I.S.S. M 6pm | | \$ 114 | Second Chance Th 215pm | | \$ 35 |
| Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm | | \$ 48 | Keep Coming Back Sa 11am | | \$ 684 | Serenity House | \$ 150 | \$1,350 |
| Castro Nooners F 12pm | | \$ 85 | Let It Be Now F 6pm | | \$ 109 | Serenity Seekers M 730pm | \$ 114 | \$ 494 |
| Cocoanuts Su 9am | | \$ 484 | Light Steppers Su 7pm | | \$ 60 | Sesame Step Tu 730pm | | \$ 28 |
| Code Blue Big Book Study W 7pm | | \$ 178 | Like A Prayer Su 4pm | | \$ 199 | Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm | | \$ 347 |
| Common Welfare Th 8pm | \$ 264 | \$ 368 | Lincoln Park Sat 830pm | | \$ 40 | Sinbar Su 830pm | | \$ 127 |
| Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm | | \$ 438 | Live and Let Live Su 8pm | | \$ 150 | Sisters Circle Su 6pm | | \$ 562 |
| Creative Alcoholics M 630pm | | \$ 195 | Living Proof Th 630pm | | \$ 80 | Sober at State MW 1210pm | | \$ 250 |
| Dark Secrets F 10pm | | \$ 19 | Living Sober W 8pm | | \$ 254 | Sober Saturday Sa 830am | | \$ 326 |
| Design For Living - Big Book | \$ 120 | \$ 153 | Living Sober with HIV W 6pm | \$ 717 | \$1,186 | Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm | | \$ 139 |
| Design for Living Sat 8am | | \$ 218 | Lots Of Parking Su 6pm | | \$ 20 | Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am | \$ 180 | \$ 321 |
| Diamond Heights Tu 830pm | \$ 33 | \$ 125 | Luke's Group W 7pm | | \$ 124 | Sought to Improve Th 715pm | | \$ 132 |
| Dignitaries Sympathy W 815pm | | \$ 180 | Meeting Place Noon F 12pm | | \$ 209 | SFPOA Th 7pm | | \$ 371 |
| Dry Dock Discussion M 830pm | | \$ 24 | Meeting Place Noon W 12pm | \$ 132 | \$ 604 | Spirit of San Francisco | | \$ 90 |
| Each Day a New Beginning F 7am | | \$1,765 | Mid Week Sanity W 630pm | | \$ 11 | St. Francis Men's F 830pm | | \$ 240 |
| Each Day a New Beginning M 7am | | \$1,292 | Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am | \$ 288 | \$1,162 | Step Talk Su 830am | | \$ 335 |
| Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am | | \$1,339 | Midnight Meditation Sat 12am | | \$ 129 | Steppin' Up Tu 630pm | | \$ 430 |
| Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am | | \$ 868 | Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm | | \$ 41 | Stonestown M 8pm | \$ 100 | \$ 148 |
| Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am | | \$ 493 | Mission Terrace W 8pm | | \$ 124 | Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm | | \$ 442 |
| Each Day a New Beginning W 7am | | \$1,244 | Monday Beginners M 8pm | \$ 151 | \$ 675 | Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag | | \$ 902 |
| Early Start F 6pm | \$1,099 | \$2,372 | Monday Monday M 1215pm | | \$ 164 | Sunday Night Castro SD | \$ 214 | \$ 219 |
| Easy Does It Tu 6pm | | \$ 96 | Moving Toward Serenity W 830pm | | \$ 202 | Sunday Rap Sun 8pm | | \$ 307 |
| Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm | \$ 138 | \$1,228 | New Friday Big Book F 12pm | | \$ 116 | Sunday Silence Su 730pm | | \$ 152 |
| Epiphany Group Th 8pm | \$ 40 | \$ 180 | Newcomers Group Tu 7pm | | \$ 20 | Sundown W 7pm | | \$ 668 |
| Eureka Step Tu 6pm | | \$ 76 | Newcomers Step M 730pm | | \$ 360 | Sunset 11'ers Su | | \$ 100 |
| Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm | | \$ 213 | Newcomers Tu 8pm | | \$ 469 | Sunset 11'ers Tu | | \$ 285 |
| Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa 8pm | \$ 60 | \$ 168 | No Reservation M 12pm | | \$ 257 | Sunset 9'ers Sa | | \$ 265 |
| Extreme Makeover M 730pm | | \$ 51 | Noon Smokeless F 12pm | | \$ 65 | Sunset 9'ers Su | | \$ 181 |
| Federal Speaker Su 12pm | | \$ 174 | Noon Smokeless M 12pm | \$ 35 | \$ 103 | Sunset 9'ers Th | | \$ 64 |
| Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am | | \$ 296 | Noon Smokeless Su 12pm | | \$ 10 | Sunset 9'ers Tu | | \$ 110 |
| Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm | | \$ 37 | Noon Smokeless Th 12pm | | \$ 8 | Sunset Big Book SS | | \$ 74 |
| Fireside Chat Sa 9pm | | \$ 103 | Noon Smokeless W 12pm | | \$ 31 | Sunset Early Morning W 7am | | \$ 83 |
| Franciscan Noon Discussion M 12pm | \$ 46 | \$ 80 | Off Broadway Book Th 730pm | | \$ 55 | Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm | \$ 241 | \$ 491 |
| Friday All Groups F 830pm | | \$1,323 | Once An Alcoholic Th 715pm | | \$ 35 | Surf Tu 8pm | \$ 636 | \$ 636 |
| Friday at Five F 5pm | | \$ 85 | One Liners Th 830pm | | \$ 272 | Ten Years After Su 6pm | | \$1,831 |
| Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm | | \$ 223 | Parkside Th 830pm | | \$ 397 | The Drive Thru W 1215pm | | \$ 483 |
| Friday Night Women's Meeting F 630pm | | \$ 42 | Pax West M 12pm | | \$1,498 | The Dry Dock Fellowship | | \$ 119 |
| Friday Smokeless F 8pm | | \$ 240 | Pax West Th 12pm | | \$1,044 | The Lads Fr 730pm | | \$ 259 |
| Gold Mine Group M 8pm | \$ 445 | \$ 801 | Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm | | \$ 150 | The Leaky Cauldron Su 1030am | | \$ 80 |
| Goodlands Su 2pm | | \$ 316 | Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm | | \$ 183 | The Parent Trap 2 Wed. 430pm | | \$ 27 |
| Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm | | \$ 418 | Raising the Bottom W 9pm | | \$ 140 | The Pepper Group F 12pm | | \$ 123 |
| Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm | \$ 160 | \$ 160 | Reality Farm Th 830pm | | \$ 367 | | | |

Continued on p. 19

profit and loss statement: August 2011

| | Aug 11 | Budget | Jan - Aug 11 | Budget | | Aug 11 | Budget | Jan - Aug 11 | Budget |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|--------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| Ordinary Income/Expense | | | | | Filing/Fees | 0 | | 93 | 80 |
| Income | | | | | Insurance | 0 | | 2383 | 2915 |
| Group Contributions | 12106 | 12000 | 100218 | 111500 | Internet Expense | 123 | 120 | 905 | 960 |
| Individual Contributions | 1927 | 2510 | 25911 | 20080 | Office Supplies | 62 | 135 | 1165 | 1680 |
| Gratitude Month | 0 | | 4128 | 10400 | Paper Purchased | 526 | 180 | 2449 | 1890 |
| Sales - Bookstore | 9426 | 9500 | 75087 | 76000 | Software Purchased | 0 | | 145 | |
| Newsletter Subscript. | 22 | 30 | 296 | 240 | Printing | 0 | | 38 | |
| Total Income | \$23,481 | \$24,040 | \$205,641 | \$218,220 | Equipment Lease | 1597 | 1577 | 4786 | 4731 |
| Cost of Goods Sold | | | | | Repair & Maintenance | 262 | 360 | 3532 | 2292 |
| Inventory Adjustments | 40 | | 40 | | Security System | 0 | | 236 | 236 |
| Shipping | 118 | 31 | 568 | 248 | Payroll Expenses | 411 | 40 | 445 | 315 |
| Cost of Books Sold | 6782 | 6425 | 53196 | 51400 | Telephone | 244 | 250 | 1914 | 2000 |
| Credit Card Processing Fees | 304 | 291 | 2594 | 2328 | Phone Book Listings | 87 | 86 | 692 | 692 |
| Total COGS | \$7,244 | \$6,747 | \$56,399 | \$53,976 | Travel | 0 | 40 | 72 | 560 |
| Gross Profit | \$16,237 | \$17,293 | \$149,242 | \$164,244 | Training | 0 | | 25 | 25 |
| Expense | | | | | Bad Checks | 0 | | 0 | 45 |
| Sunshine Club/12th Step | 0 | 20 | 0 | 160 | Total Expense | \$18,419 | \$20,076 | \$156,035 | \$167,588 |
| Archives Committee | 0 | 15 | 0 | 130 | Net Ordinary Income | (\$2,181) | (\$2,783) | (\$6,793) | (\$3,344) |
| IFB Sponsored Events | 41 | | 612 | 1000 | Other Income/Expense | | | | |
| Reconciliation Discrepancies | 0 | | 0 | | Other Income | | | | |
| Employee Expenses | 11083 | 11510 | 100317 | 100634 | Interest Income | 182 | 205 | 1428 | 1630 |
| Professional Fees | 0 | 250 | 2153 | 2805 | Total Other Income | \$182 | \$205 | \$1,428 | \$1,630 |
| Postage | 244 | 44 | 744 | 731 | Other Expense | | | | |
| Rent - Office | 3664 | 4664 | 32315 | 37312 | Depreciation Expense | \$584 | \$378 | \$4,672 | \$3,024 |
| Rent - Other | 75 | 75 | 525 | 600 | Total Other Expense | \$584 | \$378 | \$4,672 | \$3,024 |
| Access Expenses | 0 | 675 | 360 | 5400 | Net Other Income | (\$402) | (\$173) | (\$3,244) | (\$1,394) |
| IFB Literature | 0 | 15 | 83 | 235 | Net Income | (\$2,583) | (\$2,956) | (\$10,037) | (\$4,738) |
| PI/CPC | 0 | 20 | 49 | 160 | | | | | |

Treasurer's Report

For the month of August, group contributions were \$106 over budget and individual contributions were \$583 under budget. Year-to-date, total contributions are \$5,501 lower than budget.

Bookstore sales were slightly under budget in August, and are \$920 (or 1.3%) under budget year-to-date.

Operating expenses for August were \$1,657 under budget primarily due to rent expense under budget by \$1,000 and access expenses under budget at \$675. Total operating expenses year to date are 6.9% under budget.

We had a deficit of \$2,583 for August,

compared to a budgeted deficit of \$2,956. Year-to-date net deficit increased to \$10,072.83.

Unrestricted cash balance decreased by \$735 to \$23,081 which represents slightly more than one month of average operating expenses.

The trend of lower than budgeted income (individual contributions and bookstore sales) appears to have continued in August by \$665. Ongoing communication to groups on the meaning of self support continues to be important.

OVERALL RATING: FAIR

CALIFORNIA NORTHERN COASTAL AREA 06

of Alcoholics Anonymous

FALL ASSEMBLY

SATURDAY - NOVEMBER 5th

Saroyan Hall, St Gregory Church

825 Brotherhood Way, San Francisco

Registration, Orientation 8:30—10 am

Business Meeting: 10 am—12 pm

Lunch: 12 pm—1 pm

Area Inventory: 1 pm—4:30 pm

What's on your mind?: 4:30 pm—5 pm

Gratitude Month

The Seventh Tradition of Self-Support

by Anonymous

Do you feel like you have heard this before? That our Intergroup is in the midst of a financial crisis that requires your attention and Gratitude Month couldn't come a minute too soon, to balance the budget.

You have. And while there is a reluctance to raise the alarm again this year, as our current IFB treasurer, Michelle C., says, "people in the fellowship would wonder why we had a deficit get so high and not ask for help."

Here's the context: based on the fall-off in contributions during 2009, the IFB built a 2010 budget that predicted a \$20,000 deficit. There was an accompanying message to the groups: that the rate of contributions had decreased over 10% and unless that slide was halted, Central Office's prudent reserve would be invaded in order to simply maintain the current level of services. As a result, groups and individuals stepped up with generous Gratitude Month and year-end giving.

The immediate crisis was averted and the self-support message was tamped down, but guess what? Once again, contributions decreased! We're back

to the same place: due to lower income, our prudent reserve may be invaded to keep our services at the same level. The probable deficit is around \$12,000.

Please understand, Central Office has done the hard work of cutting expenses where possible. In fact, this year it negotiated a significant rent reduction to our office lease, a reduction to the tune of \$75K over the term of the lease. Overall, expenses are almost 7% under budget, so no one is wasting money. It is a straight up issue of the groups not giving and, to a lesser extent, of decreased literature sale income.

Group treasurers often give reports that reflect a rosier message than is warranted. You know how it goes, "We paid the rent, we bought the coffee and literature, we have a reserve, we are self-supporting." Well, no. If the group has not contributed at least its share to Central Office and General Service, then it is not self-supporting. The schedules and pamphlets don't print themselves. Teleservice, our website, events, and special workers don't generate income other than what comes in from the groups.

Group contributions are published

every month in The Point, albeit several months later than current (for instance, this month, September's contributions show up). Check out your group's year to date (YTD) amounts. Also, look at the profit and loss bottom line and review the IFB treasurer's report, a simple easy-to-understand narrative, published in The Point (this month, for August). For the last several months, the overall rating has been either "fair" or "poor." Not good.

When we operate on a regular basis in crisis mode, not only do we fail at self-support, we also tax our trusted servants on the IFB and on our Central Office Committee who manage our budget and finances. With constant worry and concern over whether the fellowship can meet its financial obligations, our programs suffer. There can be no initiative for new efforts to reach the alcoholics who are still suffering when everyone's attention is focused on making ends meet.

Bottom line: the Seventh Tradition passing of the basket in our local San Francisco and Marin fellowship is not keeping up with our obligation of self-support for local services. [Read the editorial and the article on page 8 for action items.]



| San Francisco Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|
| There is a Solution Tu 6pm | \$ 214 | |
| They Don't Know Who We Are Sat | \$ 100 | |
| Thursday Downtown Th 630am | \$ 62 | |
| Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm | \$ 223 | \$ 649 |
| Thursday Thumpers Th 7pm | \$ 100 | |
| Too Early Sat 8am | \$ 68 | \$1,344 |
| Too Young Su 830pm | \$ 16 | |
| Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm | \$ 360 | |
| TSWC | \$ 26 | |
| Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm | \$ 128 | |
| Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm | \$ 14 | |
| Tuesday Men's Pax Tu 12pm | \$ 509 | |

| San Francisco Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD |
|------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| Tuesday Night Step Tu 7pm | \$ 89 | |
| Tuesday Women's Tu 630pm | \$ 15 | |
| Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am | \$285 | |
| Valencia Smokefree F 6pm | \$ 82 | \$530 |
| Walk of Shame W 8pm | \$ 81 | \$283 |
| Waterfront Sun 8pm | \$504 | |
| We Care Tu 12pm | \$162 | |
| Wednesday Morning Men's Mtg | \$100 | |
| Wednesday Noon Steps W 12pm | \$ 37 | |
| West Portal W 8pm | \$ 83 | \$ 83 |
| Wharfrats Th 815pm | \$ 95 | \$381 |
| What It's Like Now M 6pm | \$300 | |

| San Francisco Contributions | Sep. 11 | YTD |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm | \$ 322 | |
| Women Living Sober Sa 10am | \$ 120 | |
| Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm | \$ 691 | \$ 1,120 |
| Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm | \$ 67 | |
| Women's Meeting There is a Solution | \$ 234 | |
| Women's Promises F 7pm | \$ 794 | |
| Work In Progress Sat 7pm | \$ 450 | |
| YAHOO Step Sa 1130am | \$ 277 | |
| San Francisco Total | \$ 8,744 | \$ 78,524 |
| YTD | \$11,405 | \$111,624 |

November 2011

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