

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

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

The Point

2012
January

A publication
of the Intercounty Fellowship
of Alcoholics Anonymous

1821 Sacramento Street
San Francisco CA 94109-3528
(415) 674-1821
From Marin call (415) 499-0400
Fax (415) 674-1801
www.aasf.org
aa@aasf.org

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.

Rarely Have We Seen A Person Fail



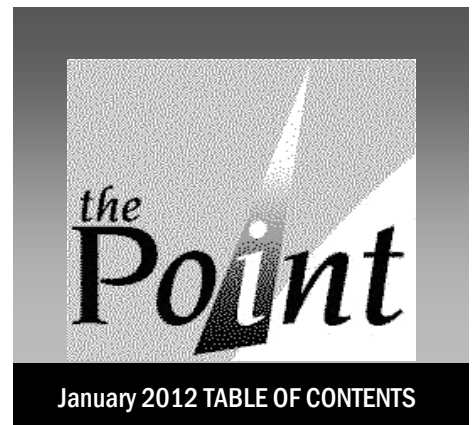
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January 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2 CENTRAL OFFICE CLOSED	3 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office 6pm	4 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intergroup Meeting 1187 Franklin St. Orientation 6pm Business Meeting 7pm
8	9 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office 7pm	10 <u>SECOND TUE</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm SF Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St 6:30pm Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln San Rafael 6:15pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St 8pm	11 <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office 6:30pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 6:30pm
15 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	16 CENTRAL OFFICE CLOSED <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office 6:30pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael 8pm	17 <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee Central Office 6:30pm	18
22	23	24 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30pm	25
29	30	31	

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5	6	7
12	13	14 Annual Meeting SF Public Information and Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee see flyer p. 5
19 <u>THIRD THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office 6:30pm	20	21
26 <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St, SF Orientation 7:15pm Committee Meeting 8pm	27	28 CENTRAL OFFICE'S 65th ANNIVERSARY PARTY! See flyer on p. 13 or visit www.aasf.org

Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at meetings of the IFB, COC, IFB committees or service events sponsored by the preceding entities, including ASL interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative formats, should contact Central Office at (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.



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“Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.”

Big Book, p.58



Meeting Changes

Meeting Changes:

Sun	8:00pm	Ingleside
Fri	5:30pm	Financial
Fri	6:00pm	Hayes Valley

SUNDAY RAP, 399 San Fernando Way (Doors are locked & No One Admitted after 8:10pm)
 NEW 86 GROUP, 660 California St/Grant (was 6:00pm)
 LET IT BE NOW, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St/Octavia Blvd (add ASL)

No Longer Meeting:

Sun	11:00am	Hayes Valley
Tue	8:00pm	Novato
Wed	5:00pm	Hayes Valley
Thu	6:30am	Financial
Sat	9:00am	Pacific Heights

HEAR THE MESSAGE, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St/Octavia Blvd
 NOVATO BASICS, Church, 1180 Lynwood Dr.
 THANKS GOD, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St/Octavia Blvd
 THURSDAY DOWNTOWN, Church, 566 Bush St/ Grant Ave
 BUSHWACKERS, Clay St/Pierce St

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!***

BROADS

WITHOUT BOOZE #19



Semi-Annual Women's Luncheon & Speaker Meeting

Sunday, January 29th, 2012

11:30 am - Fellowship /Lunch - 12:00 pm

Open Speaker Meeting - 1:00-2:00 pm

(Speaker: Barbara M., San Francisco)

Attending meeting only?

*Please arrive **no earlier** than 12:45 pm to allow luncheon to finish. Thank you.*

United Irish Cultural Center
 2700 - 45th Avenue (near Sloat)
 San Francisco, CA

SPEAKERS WANTED!!

Carry the AA message to schools, professional organizations, the medical community & drunk driving classes

Annual Meeting - Speaker Workshop - Lunch

Review PI/CPC 2011 activities and committee positions to be filled in February

(two years of continuous sobriety and attendance at one workshop per year required for speaker eligibility)

Saturday, January 14, 2012

10am – 12pm

ILWU Clerks Hall on Berry Street
 at 2nd and King Streets—NE corner near the ball park

For further information e-mail: picpc@aasf.org
 or contact Central Office: 415-674-1821



From the Editor

The Road To Happy Destiney

by Charley D.

A.A. has its roots in failure. From its founders three quarters of a century ago to the newly recovering alcoholic who walked into her first meeting this morning, every member knows that bleak, grinding, familiar feeling. A.A. promises a way out of that quandary – if only the alcoholic will follow this simple program. In this issue, we examine that promise as stated in Chapter 5 of the Big Book: Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.

To help make that promise come true, see how our local Intergroup has revamped itself, adopting new bylaws that aim to streamline the organization and thus strengthen its ability to help any alcoholic in need to hoist himself out of failure.

In “Following the Path,” Kristen E. emphasizes thoroughly following the A.A. way and defines failure only as falling off the path completely. She writes, in a second piece, of being the type to whom the program has come slowly. While sobriety made her mental condition worse initially,

she persevered and recovered.

Do we speak too much of failure? M.E.M. complains that the familiar passage from Chapter 5, heard at the start of virtually every A.A. meeting, focuses too much on what can or did go wrong. He wonders whether the newcomer, with the taste of failure so fresh, won’t take talk of further failure at the start of an A.A. meeting as more discouragement. He urges a more encouraging, positive opening reading.

Ever wonder how A.A. first took flight in this region? Read Bruce K.’s enthralling story of the first A.A. meeting on the West Coast in “51 Potomac Street.”

Finally, in our regular Meet the Meeting feature, see how a meditation meeting has engendered a family of fellowship and generated some delectable pastries.

Let us all take heart from the fact that we can, with the help of our fellows and our Higher Power, rise from our failures and embrace a bright, new day.

Happy New Year to all.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Point is published monthly to inform A.A. members about business and meeting affairs of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, *The Point* publishes original feature articles submitted by local A.A. members that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates its pages, and in determining the editorial content, the editors rely on the principles of the Twelve Traditions.

(This is a summary; for the full editorial policy, please go to www.aasf.org.)



Faithful Fivers 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:

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Andrea C.	Karen K.	Robert
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Barbara M.	Kristina F.	Robert C.
Braden B.	Kurt P.	Robert W.
Brian O.	Laura B.	Ron H.
Bruce S.	Lauren H.	Samuel W.
Carole K.	Laurie & Richard	Sara D.
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David S.	Mark A.	William M.
Dennis & Lucy O.	Mark B.	
Dianne E.	Mark O.	Your
Ed H.	Martha S.	Name
Eric P.	Mary C.	Here!
Erin S.	Maryellen O.	
Evan K.	Mia M.	Or
Fay K.	Michael P.	Here!
Frances L.	Michael W.	
Gregory G.	Michael Z.	Or
Herman B.	Mike M.	Here!
James W.	Mily T.	
Jane K.	Mitch R.	
Janet B.	Molly G.	
Jeanne C.	Nancy W.	
Jeff B.	Niels R.	
Jodie S.	Pat P.	
John C.	Patrick M.	
John G.	Paul M.	
John M.	Peg L.	
John V.	Pene P.	

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!

Big Changes at the IFB

Intercounty Fellowship Board Reorganizes

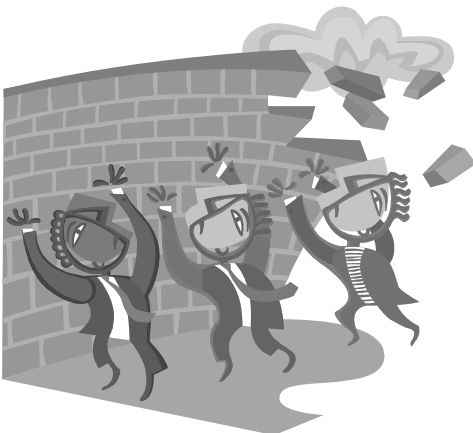
by Michael P., Past Chair, IFB and
Charley D., Chair, The Point Committee

A.A.'s far-flung Twelfth Step activities, carrying the message to the next sufferer, are the very lifeblood of our A.A. adventure. Without this vital activity, we would soon become anemic; we would literally wither and die.

Now where do A.A.'s services – worldwide, area, local – fit into our scheme of things? ...The answer is simple enough. Every single A.A. service is designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible...

-Bill W., p. 8 October 1967 Grapevine

Recently, our intergroup has reorganized its management (but not its mission) by adopting new bylaws. An intergroup's bylaws define its purpose and dictate its management. In revising the bylaws, the intergroup remained mindful of Bill Wilson's charge that we must actively strive to provide the best possible Twelfth Step services whenever and wherever they are needed: individually, through groups, and through the intergroup itself.



The Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, our local intergroup, is a registered nonprofit corporation, designated as a "501(c)3 entity," (which means contributions to it are tax deductible). It exists to help provide Twelfth Step opportunities for hundreds of A.A. members in San Francisco and Marin through Teleservice, Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC), the Sunshine Club, and the Access Committee, as well as support through Central Office and the Bookstore, published schedules, a website, the Trusted Servants' Committee, and local publications like *The Point* and "The Buzz."

Over the past year, a bylaws committee met several times, updating every bylaw section to maximize our focus on service. You can download the new bylaws and a comprehensive bylaws review document at <http://www.aasf.org/ifbinfo.cfm>. If you still have questions, send them to aa@aasf.org.

Here are some highlights of the new bylaws:

Monthly Meetings: The Intergroup meets the first Wednesday of each month. Bylaw changes now allow us to handle more of the organization's administrative work in the meetings of a separate board of directors and to focus monthly meetings more on service than administration. We're hoping to expand our Twelfth Step activities, particularly through the Outreach Committee and the PI/CPC. If you love service, this is the place for you.

Membership: Each registered A.A.

group can elect a representative to the intergroup. Formerly, every representative became a member of the board of directors. That meant the board that ran the intergroup consisted of literally dozens of members who attended monthly meetings. If every group had sent a representative, directors would have numbered in the hundreds. Now, the Intergroup Representatives (IGRs) are service members who in turn elect representatives to serve on an eleven-member board at the annual meeting in June. There is no longer a limit on the number of times an IGR may be elected to a two-year term (it used to be four years maximum). It is up to each group to decide. Also, if an IGR misses three consecutive intergroup meetings, instead of automatically terminating, they are simply marked "inactive" until they re-register.

Board of Directors: The IGRs will vote into office nine board members, with three of the positions open each year. The other two board members are the Treasurer and the Central Office Manager. The term for board members is three years. A director may serve two consecutive terms.

IGR Responsibilities: Intergroup representatives will now have responsibility to: a) Elect board members b) Approve the annual budget c) Activate and deactivate service committees, and d) Chair all service committees. Decisions still follow the spirit of the Twelve Concepts of World Service, with an emphasis on achieving a unanimous group conscience in most, if not all, decisions.





by K. E.

“Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.” This is a bold statement, isn’t it? In a world where alcoholism defies cure – even definition – and where self-help books, psychiatric drugs, psychotherapy, and alternative cognitive approaches all claim curative percentages, a statement like this in Chapter Five of *Alcoholics Anonymous* could make one wonder about its method and its founders. Estimates range from 25% to 95% that don’t make it in A.A. That’s a lot of people not “thoroughly” following the path.

The Twelve Steps that form the foundation of A.A., though, are open-ended enough to allow for an endless amount of effort – and the growth that results from it. When I first came to the rooms, it was this statement of thoroughness that gave me hope. As bad as things seemed, I would *not* fail (unless I was really rare, and I didn’t believe I was *that* rare) – as long as I did the work.

Many people have said that the Twelve Steps are “simple”; after working on them for the last five years, however, I beg to differ. Take, for example, the Third Step: “We turned our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.” “Thoroughly” following this step is neither simple nor easy. What *is* our will, really, and when is it driven by “self” and when is it driven by something greater than self? What

FOLLOWING THE PATH

is “self” anyway, and what *is* “God”? The possibilities for self-deception are endless. I can believe I’m surrendering when really I’m resisting. It’s easy to do a check on this, of course: what are the results of my actions on my well-being and that of others? If they’re negative, it’s worth considering that I’m being driven by self, that I’m not in surrender. Even then, sometimes the right path is an uncomfortable path, but what feels crappy in the beginning feels better in the end (like the decision not to take a drink). How then can you tell? How does a lost person find the “right” path?

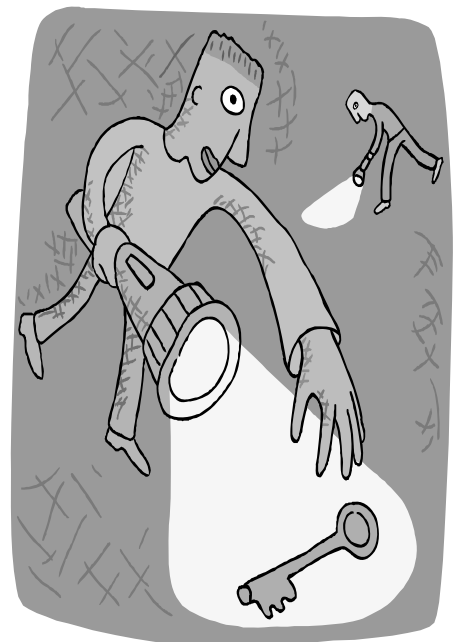
The “path” in the Big Book is like a flashlight

The “path” in the Big Book is like a flashlight; it is considerably better than nothing at all, but it is highly dependent on where we point it. “Go here,” it says. “Look at this.” But the “here” and the “looking” are all up to me. How thoroughly am I really doing it? In the times when nothing seems to be getting better, I ask myself whether I am “thoroughly” following the path, and this brings me back to the solution. Sometimes the answer is startling: maybe I haven’t even *thought* about a Higher Power in months. Maybe I have become so caught up in doing what I thought was “my part” (trying to “take action” in all areas of my life) that I forgot to *trust* that only a portion of the outcome of anything I endeavor to do is up to me. Maybe I started out going in a direction that

“felt” good only to find out that it was a character defect that drove me there, not an intuition communicated through divine guidance. Straying, at least for me, is an easy thing to do.

It seems to me that “thoroughly” following the path means not giving up on it. If I don’t give up on my quest to follow the steps – most importantly the first one, which makes doing all of the others possible – then I cannot fail, in part because there is no clear definition of “success.” “Progress, not perfection,” right? If I’m not drinking, and I’m constantly returning to the steps when I forget them, if I’m forever seeing in them nuances and truths that I didn’t before, then I’m following the path. The only “failure,” it seems to me, is stepping off the path altogether.

AP



51 Potomac Street

Local A.A. History Preserved

by Anonymous

If you can find Potomac Street in San Francisco, you'll discover a quiet, one-block-long residential street that ends at Duboce Park and a lovely white, three unit house on your right where the first group of Alcoholics Anonymous held its initial meeting on the West Coast, in early December of 1939.

There is a plaque on the doorpost of 51 Potomac that says, simply:

IN EARLY DECEMBER OF 1939

THE MEETING OF THE FIRST
GROUP OF

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

ON THE WEST COAST OF THE
UNITED STATES

WAS HELD IN THE KITCHEN OF

51 POTOMAC STREET

The book *Alcoholics Anonymous* had appeared earlier that year. The handful of recovered drunks who had put it together needed a way to distribute it. So one of their number in New York went on the national Gabriel Heatter radio program to promote the book.

Among the many listeners to that show across the country was a woman, Mrs. Gordon Oram, a non-alcoholic, who ran a boarding house at 51 Potomac Street. Mrs. Oram had a boarder, a salesman, named Ted C. She liked him, but was concerned about him. He had been in and out of state hospitals and jails because of his drinking. He considered himself one of the "worst alcoholics" in California.

After hearing the Heatter radio program, Mrs. Oram wrote to the

New York office and obtained a copy of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, for Ted. Others in the Bay Area had also heard the program or read an article, "Alcoholics and God," in *Liberty* magazine (September 30, 1939 issue) and they too had contacted A.A.'s New York office.



So when an A.A. member from New York, Ray W., came to San Francisco for a sales training course in November of that year, he brought with him a list of those who had made inquiries, including Mrs. Oram's boarder, Ted. From his room in the Clift Hotel on Geary Street, Ray called those on his list. He arranged for some of them to meet with him in his hotel room on Tuesday, November 21, 1939. It was there that an organizing meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous on the West Coast was held. Aside from Ray and Ted, there were two others present, Don B. and Dave L., and the meeting lasted about two hours.

It had become clear from the list of contacts that they would need to form an A.A. group in San Francisco where they all could meet regularly. Mrs. Oram offered her kitchen as a

meeting place. So in early December 1939, the "San Francisco Group" began meeting in Mrs. Oram's kitchen, and later in various members' homes. In October of 1940 they found a more or less permanent site for their meetings in the Telegraph Hill Community House at 1736 Stockton Street in North Beach.

Flash forward over 70 years, and in early 2011, the Intercounty Fellowship Board appointed a small committee to explore and, if feasible, implement the plaque idea. After some communication delays, they met with the building owners who approved the idea and the text, and offered some thoughts on where the plaque should be mounted. A member of the local fellowship in the business made the plaque as his contribution to the project.

Around noon on Saturday, May 28, 2011, two members of the plaque committee met with the owners in front of the building and, with little ceremony, mounted it on the left doorpost. All four then took a tour of the upper flat to see just where this little bit of A.A. history had taken place.



**SINBAR GROUP presents
39th Annual**

Pie & Ice Cream Social

Sunday, Jan. 29th, 2012

St. Finbar Church,

415 Edna/Hearst Ave. SF

Speaker at 8pm, Social to follow

Arrive early and stay late!

Pie — Ice Cream — Recovery

Rants &



Raves

by MEM

Tuning out is a common phenomenon during an A.A. meeting. Hearing the same reading at meeting after meeting, sometimes with passion and inflection, but more often rattled off flat-voiced in a hurry to move the meeting along and get to the “real stuff” of sharing, can easily spin us off into private reverie.

*I came to my first meeting feeling like a failure
and expecting to meet many others of like mind.*

I most often tune out during the first paragraph read at most meetings from “How It Works” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, Chapter 5). But this is usually purposeful, because the paragraph seems to me such an unwelcoming invocation for a meeting where we come for help. In its place in the first chapters of the Big Book, the language has appropriate context. However, when extracted and read as the first item at every meeting, it becomes to me very condescending and pessimistic.

“Rarely have we seen a person fail” is a phrase so ingrained in our subconscious that to criticize it brings inevitable cries of “Heresy!” Or worse yet, “Take it to General Service, buddy, if you don’t like our literature.” At the ripe old age of one in A.A., I naively raised the notion of altering the language during a business meeting of my home group.

How It DOESN'T WORK

One A.A. Suggests a New Welcome

Our GSR nearly fainted at the thought of having to carry such a request upward in the General Service structure. Ultimately I abandoned the request, being unable to offer cogent alternative language. As with “God as you understand him” and other givens in A.A., it’s much easier to go along with it and focus on what you need to hear.

I came to my first meeting feeling like a failure and expecting to meet many others of like mind. Why was I immediately being reminded of those who do not recover; who cannot or

will not give themselves to this program; who are constitutionally incapable of being honest; unfortunates who are not at fault but seem to have been born that way; who are naturally incapable; and whose chances are less than average. Oh and P.S., those who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders as well!

I’m just saying this has always struck me as a most unwelcoming “welcome.” So many “can’ts” and “won’ts” and incapacities and low chances and suffering from grave disorders. We’re already down and out; we get it already!

In the spirit in which I am attempting to learn to operate, I feel compelled to offer an alternative to that which I criticize. I’ve at least gained the wisdom over the last years to realize I can’t and shouldn’t attempt to rewrite Bill’s words. But the task here is daunting, since the

“offending” paragraph has become so institutionalized and part of trademarked A.A.

I searched the Big Book in earnest and was drawn to the first two paragraphs of Chapter 11 (A Vision For You). Consider this: “For most normal folks, drinking means ... release from care, boredom and worry. It is joyous intimacy with friends and a feeling that life is good. But not so with us in those last days of heavy drinking. The old pleasures were gone. They were but memories. Never could we recapture the great moments of the past. There was an insistent yearning to enjoy life as we once did and a heartbreaking obsession that some new miracle of control would enable us to do it. There was always one more attempt – and one more failure.”

“The less people tolerated us, the more we withdrew from society, from life itself. As we became subjects of King Alcohol, shivering denizens of his mad realm, the chilling vapor that is loneliness settled down. It thickened, ever becoming blacker. Some of sought out sordid places, hoping to find understanding, companionship and approval. Momentarily we did – then would come oblivion and the awful awakening to face the hideous Four Horsemen – Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration, Despair. Unhappy drinkers who read this ... will understand!”

We would then cut back to “Our stories disclose in a general way ...” This may not be how it works, either, but I’ll keep thinking about it. I am, after all, just one voice “in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”



Are These Extravagant Promises?

by Kristen E.

When I entered the rooms of A.A. in October of 2006, I wasn't convinced I was an alcoholic, just that I could no longer drink. It wasn't until I'd spent my first three sober nights in a row shaking and sweating red wine that I realized, with a strange sort of shock, that normal, "after work" drinkers did not experience this sort of thing when they abstained for a few days. And that this just might indicate that *I was*, in fact, an alcoholic after all.

Once this realization sunk in, I settled in to endure the A.A. rhetoric my good friend, then sober for 16 years, said would change my life. I was not convinced of this, either. I listened to the promises, read at every meeting, and I did not think that either the specific pain they described (I did not, for example, understand that I was "self-seeking") or the relief they promised was relevant to me. What I did know is that I was miserable, and that alcohol was *part* of the problem. I didn't ever believe – though I suppose I hoped – that removing alcohol from my life would in any way significantly change it: it was just something I had to do, the way I had to drink water in order to stay alive. I also suspected that the people for whom this program worked "slowly" were not particularly bright; after all, it wasn't that complex. I just had to do what I was told: Don't drink. Do an inventory. Call some people I didn't want to call. I did not believe these things would fix me, only that I had to go through the motions to fit in.

I was not prepared for two things in my five-year journey through A.A.:

1. That I was one of the "sometimes slowly" variety

2. That I would come to see that the Twelve Steps, and my day-at-a-time commitment not to pick up a drink, would profoundly change my life.

I am one of those for whom the cessation of drinking was the beginning of unraveling. Unbeknownst to me, alcohol had been a form of self-medication for a wacky brain chemistry that had been jerking me around from the profound depths of sorrow to dizzying heights of euphoria (with more time spent in the depths than the heights) since I was 11 years old. And it wasn't until I stopped drinking that the worst nastiness began. I became so anxious at work that I could no longer function: in the middle of leading large meetings my brain would suddenly freeze and I would become incapable of speaking. My thoughts came so quickly and wound in such tight circles that even the smallest decision – which to do first, the dishes or the laundry – was an agony. I also had to face the fact that I had an almost lifelong propensity to search out in my romantic partners the precise cruel and abusive streak that my dead father possessed. In short, alcohol was a big band-aid, and when it was ripped off I began bleeding like a stuck pig.

I watched others around me recover quickly: one friend, at a year sober, had gone from having no girlfriends and a stormy relationship with her boyfriend to being popular and connected, happily married and pregnant. I sat in meetings and listened to people say that it had been a few months, and they were already feeling so much better it was incredible. When I heard this I felt forgotten by whatever God visited the A.A. rooms. I felt like a loser and a failure.



It's only five years later that I can say with the same kind of shock I had when I first came to realize I was an alcoholic that my life is so profoundly different as to be almost unrecognizable. I have surrendered not only to alcohol but also to my depression, and am treating it successfully. I have fallen into the rock-bottom pit of abusive relationships, and climbed back out.

The outer shell of my life doesn't look much different than it did when I entered the rooms; the easily recognizable signposts of transformation have so far eluded me. And yet when I walk around these days I feel *solid* in my skin. Stressful jobs, major disappointments, loneliness, conflicts: they still come, but they no longer subsume me. There is an almost magnetic core that pulls me back to the center when things fall out of balance. It wasn't until a few weeks ago, when reviewing the Tenth Step with a sponsee, that I realized that the process of *balanced* inventory is now so thoroughly ingrained in me that I hardly know I'm doing it. I no longer see *only* the bad in myself; instead, I can see my part in *context*, with compassion and understanding for my mistakes.

(Continued on page 11)



JANUARY IN A.A. HISTORY

by Gilbert F.

January is a month during which each member of A.A. should pause and reflect upon the contributions made by one of its founders, Bill W. Bill died at a Miami hospital on January 24, 1971. Below is a reprint of an article about his memorial service, originally published in *The New York Times*.

As I read the following article, I was struck by the way some of the comments made Bill W. more of a real person, rather than someone I only read about in A.A. literature. Bill W. was human. He had his character defects, but people understood his uniqueness and "greatness." Dr. Norris' statement, "What his death means is that all of us will have to listen harder than ever to discern the group consciousness," is especially relevant. Each A.A. group, and A.A. as an organization, will have to continuously and diligently work to listen to the group conscience.

Bill W.'s legacy will continue to live through our concerted effort to work together, through our ability to "practice these principles in all our

affairs" by following our traditions, and through reaching out to the alcoholic who still suffers.

The New York Times, Monday,
February 15, 1971

"500 [sic] Meet at St. John's to Mourn
Loss of Bill W."

By Paul L. Montgomery

"He was my inspiration, and not mine alone," said Marty M., one of the first women members of Alcoholics Anonymous. "He was one of the most gifted human beings who ever lived on this earth." She spoke at a memorial service yesterday afternoon at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine for William Griffith Wilson, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, who died Jan. 24.

In the tradition of the group whose inspiration he was, Mr. Wilson was known during his life as Bill W. His full name, like that of the other co-founder, Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith, was disclosed only after death. Dr. Smith died in 1950.

About 5000 [sic] members and others, including Mr. Wilson's wife, Lois, gathered in the crossing of the cathedral for the service, one of many held throughout the world yesterday to honor the founder. There was fond laughter at remembrance of his first direct and

sometimes irascible ways, reverent silence when his virtues were described, and a few tears.

"When we saw him, we knew we were in the presence of greatness," said Bob H., general manager of the group's World Service Office. "Bill really needs no panegyrics from us, no monuments. We just have to think of the half million recovered alcoholics." Dr. John L. Norris, chairman of the group's board of trustees, recalled that Mr. Wilson, after doing much to develop the group therapy methods, decreased his role in the organization to promote group responsibility.

"We can never again say, as we have said so many times before, 'Bill, what do you think?'" Dr. Norris said. "What his death means is that all of us will have to listen harder than ever to discern the group consciousness." Dr. Norris, a retired physician, was not an alcoholic, so he acts as he says "the face man" for the group and allows his name to be used. "I drink once in a while," the doctor said in an interview. "It doesn't do much for me though."

The service was conducted by the Rev. Yvelin Gardner of St. George's Episcopal Church, Hempstead, L.I.; Rabbi David Seligson of the Central Synagogue, 55th Street and Lexington Avenue, and Father Joe A., a Catholic priest, read prayers.

tP

(Continued from page 10)

here is an increasing sense of pleasure these days simply in being alive: the rhythm of my car, the sun, the fog; the humor and sadness and

beauty of the world. I could never reach these things before, as hard as I tried. I am living inside an entirely different world, and as it turns out, that's the only world that really matters. The promises may indeed be

extravagant (the text never really answers this question) but I have worked for them, and slowly, they are materializing.

tP



Dear Help,

I was sober in San Francisco for 18 years and worked the phones in Central Office for much of that time. I have been living in Paris, France since 2002, and I am the treasurer of the A.A. Anglophone Intergroup.

We are setting up a telephone service and are getting telephone responder guidelines from different offices around the United States. I was wondering if we could get something like that from the San Francisco office – basically, guidelines that we would give to someone new on the phones on how to respond to different situations.

Also, if you have a policy on Thirteenth Stepping, that would be a big help as well. Hitting on newcomers is a big problem in Paris, even among Twelfth Step workers.

Many thanks for your help.

Jim

Hello, Jim.

How exciting and rewarding for you to be able to get into such committed service in Paris. Regarding telephone responder guidelines, I am forwarding your request to the San Francisco Teleservice Committee. Members wishing to serve on the Teleservice Committee attend a

meeting held the third Monday of each month. (Maybe it would be possible for you to attend by Skype? I'm just thinking out loud here.)

Regarding a policy on Thirteenth Stepping (and the question did make me chuckle! And I know it is a problem!), we do not have any policy. That is something we consider an “outside issue,” or a matter suited to self-governance rather than group governance, and thus, it would be against the A.A. traditions to have such a policy.

Sincerely,

e-Volunteer #1

Dear Jim,

I also am a volunteer who responds to emails to our “help” line. I actually disagree with e-Volunteer #1's advice on Thirteenth Stepping. As I understand the term, it typically refers to a long time member initiating a “romantic” (or strictly sexual) relationship with a newcomer.

The book *Living Sober*, which is conference-approved literature, has a section (pp. 61-63) that advises the newly sober member to stay out of new emotional entanglements until that person has some time under their belt, due to a lack of emotional maturity in early sobriety. It follows, I believe, that members with more time should not attempt to establish a relationship in contravention of this

advice to the newcomer. Re-printing this material in guidelines to Twelfth Step volunteers seems wise to me.

A friend of mine in the program recently reminded me of the history of the term “Thirteenth Stepping.” She says it refers to the fact that alcoholics in recovery must continue the Twelve Steps throughout their lives in order to insure their sobriety. If we don't, then the Thirteenth Step is the final one, into the grave, when our disease is not arrested. The application of the term to hasty romantic entanglements within the program suggests that the practice often leads to relapse. If members understand the gravity of Thirteenth Stepping in this sense, perhaps it would stop them from hitting on newcomers.

I saw a lighthearted description of Thirteenth Stepping online as “Step 1 + Step 12 = Step 13: My life is unmanageable and I'd like to share it with you in an unprincipled affair.”

I am attaching our Teleservice Committee pamphlet that is produced locally. Good luck with your project.

e-Volunteer #2



Meet THE MEETING

by Anonymous

When you have a home group in A.A., you are part of life at last. It is a place where you are seen and known, a place where you feel accepted and loved. Your home group will notice if you are AWOL, and often track you down with a phone call or e-mail to make sure you are OK.

When I was growing up, I mostly wanted to be invisible. Having a group of people that knew what was going on in my life wasn't something that made me comfortable. Yet despite my reservations, I was led to my A.A. home group and I have remained there for the last 15 years. It is not the most glamorous meeting in San Francisco. In fact, it may be one of the least glamorous meetings in the city. It is held in a long-term care facility for indigent, disabled adults.

The format of our meeting is 20 minutes of meditation, followed by sharing, and then a closing 10-minute period of silence for prayer or meditation. Many of the residents in the hospital who can sit still for 20 minutes attend the meeting. Most of them are in wheel chairs; one of them is blind; one cannot speak, but he has a "talk box" that's been programmed to say the Third

Step prayer. Have you ever heard the Third Step prayer recited in the voice of R2D2 from Star Wars? Stop in to visit my home group and you will be amazed!

The acceptance, the respect, and the kindness that fills the hospital Community Room sometimes fills my eyes with tears. It is that powerful.

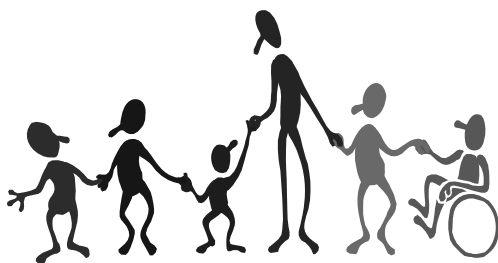
We have the usual suspects when it comes to trusted servants. Our coffee maker may be the best baker who ever graced the rooms of A.A. We also have service positions for "buddies" who escort residents from their rooms to the Community Room meeting place. Over time, friendships can develop between the escort and the resident they bring to the meeting. Last week, one of the residents who belongs to our group passed away. The loss was felt deeply by his "buddy." She wrote a poem about him. But it really

affected the entire meeting. There is a feeling of "family" in our group – and a death in the family affects us all.

When I first started coming to this meditation meeting, I envisioned a calm, quiet, "spiritual" atmosphere. Things may not always be calm and quiet, but it is most definitely a spiritual meeting. The acceptance, the respect, and the kindness that fills the hospital Community Room sometimes fills my eyes with tears. It is that powerful.

Please stop by and visit our meeting on a Saturday afternoon. We could use some support from the fellowship at large. The meeting starts at 5PM, but if you want to sample our most excellent baked goods, I suggest you get there early.

Saturday Afternoon Meditation meets at 5PM at Laguna Honda Hospital at 375 Laguna Honda Blvd, at Woodside Ave. The meeting is held in the Meditation Community Room in the New Hospital Facility on the 1st floor.



The Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous presents—

Our 65th Anniversary celebration

Saturday, January 28th from 6 to 9pm

The Urban Life Center 1101 O'Farrell St.

Dinner, old-timers panel, speaker meeting, raffle, fellowship and more!

\$10 suggested donation, no one turned away—visit www.aasf.org for updates and additional info.

IFB meeting summary – December 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

Any Lengths	Each Day A New Beg (Su)	Keep It Simple	Reality Farm	Sunset 9'ers (Sunday)	Walk Of Shame
Artists and Writers	First Place	Live & Let Live	Saturday Beginners	Sunset Speaker Step	Wharf Rats
Attitude Adjustment Hour	Friday Morning 12 Steppers	Marina Discussion	Sesame Steps	Ten Years After	Women's Promises
Back To Basics	Girls Night Out, Marin	Miracles (Way) Off 24th St.	Sober 5150's	They Don't Know Who We Are	
Blue Book Special	Haight Street Blues	Newcomers Tuesday Night	Sober Saturday	Thursday Thumpers	GGYPAA
Came to Park	High Noon (Mon)	No Reservation	Step Talk	Tiburon Haven	SF H&I
Come 'n Get It!	Huntington Square	Noon Smokeless	Sunday Night Castro SD	Too Early	SF PICPC
Each Day A New Beg (M-F)	Join The Tribe	Queers, Crackpots and Fallen Women	Sunday Rap	Tuesday Chip	SF Teleservice

Held at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at O'Farrell, San Francisco, CA on Dec. 7, 2011.

This is an unofficial summary of the December 2011 Intercounty Fellowship 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.

December Announcements

Teleservice: Seth H., Teleservice Committee Chair, talks about the gratifying service of Teleservice. Several open shifts. Next orientation Monday, December 19, at 6:30.

Outreach Committee: Rich H., All about getting more IGRs to represent groups of SF and Marin. Committee meeting and orientation is 3rd Tuesday, Dec 20.

Reminder that **Central Office will be closed** that last week of the year through Monday, January 2, 2012.

65th Anniversary of Central Office:

Blu F., Event will be held on January 28, seeking volunteers for set up, people who know the A.A. community to do outreach, contact others to form a panel of local "old timers".

Intergroup Meeting format change:

This is now an Intergroup membership meeting and no longer a board meeting. Following are ideas and commentary on changes to meeting format: Rebecca M.: Service opportunities more in-depth. Gloria E.: Are we trying to have more IGRs involved in outreach or Intergroup committees? Mary W.: How can we be more of service? Perhaps have liaisons to report each week. We're here to serve the fellowship of SF and Marin. Rich H.: Could be more representation from organizations such as Dry Dock, which has multiple meetings. Benefits to the fellowship at large is motivational. Communicate to groups how and why the Intergroup and Central Office benefit the groups. Maury P.: Suggest discussion of issues that come up at Central Office to the group for discussion? E.G. a suggestion that meetings pass a second basket once a month for Central Office. Another example is our definition of a Closed Meeting, "alcoholics only" instead of open to anyone with the desire to stop drinking. Town Hall type of meeting: Where the 9th Tradition (service committees) meets the 12th step (getting the message out).

Officer reports

Chair: Margaret J., Has been monitoring the new online contributions levels, which have been going well.

Treasurer's Report: Michelle C., Group contributions under budget by \$544; Individual contributions \$246 under budget; YTD contributions \$6633 less than budget. Bookstore sales are \$762 under budget for October, and \$1,507 under YTD.

Expenses for October were \$29,000 over budget due to accrued deferred compensation and vacation pay out for the Special worker who left. Does not impact cash flow.

Total operating expenses are 8% YTD over budget, with October deficit of \$31000 compared to budgeted deficit of \$752. YTD Deficit is \$43,993.

2012 Draft Budget

Question: Seth – What is reasoning for budgeted income and expenses project increases?

Michelle C.: Three-year average used, also based on higher online donations, and as a method of balancing the budget.

Terry B. Motions to approve. Tim M. seconds. All in favor.

Central Office Committee: Phil L., Last week we worked on the draft budget. Also are in process of evaluating the applicants for the CO special worker position that is open.

Central Office Manager Report: Maury P., Some meeting places are not open on holidays, please let us know of any cancellations. Alcohons - Mission Fellowship (2900 24th St.). Thanks to Li L. for helping out at Central Office for last five weeks. Excited about changes at Central Office.

Individual Contributions

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

ONGOING MEMORIALS

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

ANNIVERSARIES

Barbara M.—54 years

Chris W.—33 years

Peg L.—30 years

Dennis O.—18 years

Early , Joyous and Free: Gordon M.—8 years

While the last few months have been challenging there is a very positive feeling about our direction and problems that are being solved.

Liaison Reports

GGYPAA: Rob, Announces a dance , Twin themed, meeting at 7pm, dance at 8:30pm on Friday, December 10, 410 Sycamore Valley Rd., Mill Valley.

Committee Reports

H&I Report: Next HJ&I meeting will be January 26th at Old First Church on Sacramento. There are over 20 panels that need volunteers.

Access Committee: Brian C., There will be a deaf/hard of Hearing Alcolthon, on December 24. Chat online. See announcements at aasf.org.

PICPC: Rich G., There will be an annual meeting on January 14, 2012, which includes an orientation and workshop, 10am at ILWU union hall at 2nd and Berry. Requirement to volunteer; 2 years sobriety, workshop, and observe a DUI class.

Meet the Meeting

Each Day a New Beginning, Joe M.: Meets at 7am M-F at Our Lady of Safeway, Church St. Combines reading of As Bill Sees it, a Step meeting Wednesday, and Speaker on Friday. There are 100-150

regular people, largely gay population, a lot of variety and sobriety.

Huntington Square, Nancy W.: Grace Cathedral Wed 6:30pm, 100-200 people. History: The meeting has been going for about 50 years, originally started as a private AA meeting for Bishop Pike of California, who was known as a colorful character.

Ten Years After, Carlin H.: Meets Sunday at 6pm On Dorland St. between 17th and 18th Sts.. There are about 80 - 100 people, focus is on issues of long-term sobriety. Deals with issues also of new or grownup sobriety, in which there are always things to learn where "our disease can come back in a new disguise."

Tiburón Haven, Phil L.: AKA "Strawberry Rec". An open, speaker meeting, with average 150-300 people. There is an annual Thanksgiving meeting and dinner.

Meet the Meeting next month: Saturday Beginners, Chip G.; Newcomers, Colin D.; Miracles way off 24th St., Carolyn R.; Girls Night Out, Rachel

Next meeting of the Intercounty Fellowship will be Wednesday, January 4, 2012 at 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

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. sfteservice@aasf.org

aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions	Nov. 11	YTD	Marin Contributions	Nov. 11	YTD	SF Contributions	Nov. 11	YTD
ACYPAA		\$1,674	Novato Monday Stag M 8pm		\$ 15	130 Smokeless M 130pm		\$ 9
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$ 48	\$ 332	On Awakening 7D 530am		\$ 347	130 Smokeless Th 130pm		\$ 5
Contribution Box	\$ 77	\$ 591	Pathfinders Tu 12pm		\$ 171	330 Smokeless F		\$ 13
Fellowship Contribution		\$ 77	Primary Purpose W 830pm		\$ 151	330 Smokeless M		\$ 9
IFB	\$ 86	\$1,024	Quilting Time MWF 530pm		\$ 780	330 Smokeless Su		\$ 22
Fellowship Total	\$ 211	\$3,698	Refugee Th 12pm		\$ 210	330 Smokeless W		\$ 25
			Reveille 5D 7am		\$ 99	515pm Smokeless M		\$ 12
Marin Contributions	Nov. 11	YTD	Rise N Shine Sun 10am		\$ 446	515pm Smokeless Sa		\$ 10
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		\$ 479	San Geronimo Valley Book Study		\$ 127	515pm Smokeless Su		\$ 13
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		\$2,683	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		\$ 140	515pm Smokeless W		\$ 36
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		\$ 200	Saturday Night Sa 8pm	\$ 132	\$ 132	6am Dry Dock 7D		\$ 150
Bolinas Step Study W 8pm		\$ 71	Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6pm		\$ 393	6am Dry Dock F		\$ 53
Candlelight Meditation M 730pm	\$ 94	\$ 94	Sausalito 12 Step Study Group		\$ 386	6am Dry Dock Sa		\$ 81
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		\$ 439	Sausalito Sober Sisters Th 330pm		\$ 229	6am Dry Dock Th		\$ 89
Cover to Cover W 730pm	\$ 202	\$ 539	Serendipity Sa 11am		\$ 403	6am Dry Dock W		\$ 96
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		\$ 99	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm	\$ 68	\$ 158	7am As Bill Sees It Fri		\$ 101
Crossroads Sun 12pm		\$ 450	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		\$ 542	7am Grab Bag M 7am	\$ 137	\$ 332
Customer	\$ 31	\$ 31	Sober & Serene F 7pm	\$ 255	\$ 498	7am Living Sober W 7am		\$ 14
Day At A Time 7D 630am		\$ 235	Sober Sisters Wed 12pm		\$ 149	7am Smokeless Sa 7am		\$ 9
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm		\$ 886	Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag		\$ 395	7am Smokeless Su 7am	\$ 55	\$ 205
East San Rafael Big Book		\$ 173	Steps to Freedom M 730pm		\$ 394	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		\$ 461
Experience, Strength & Hope Sa 6pm		\$ 78	Steps To The Solution W 715pm		\$ 103	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		\$ 109
Freedom Finders F 830pm		\$ 263	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm		\$ 150	830am Smokeless F 830am		\$ 359
Friday Night Book F 830pm		\$ 518	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		\$ 600	830am Smokeless Th 830am		\$ 20
Friday Night Gay Men's Stag F 830pm		\$ 96	Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm		\$ 273	830am Smokeless Tu 830am		\$ 382
Girls Night Out W 815pm		\$ 82	Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm		\$ 150	830am Smokeless W 830am		\$ 38
Gratitude Tu 8pm		\$ 263	T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm		\$ 78	830pm Smokeless W 830pm		\$ 7
Happy Destiny F 7pm		\$ 178	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		\$ 250	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	\$ 17	\$ 290
Happy Hour (Marin) Th 6pm		\$ 78	Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag		\$ 45	A New Start F 830pm		\$ 300
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	\$1,950	\$4,450	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		\$ 239	A Step Beyond Th 6pm		\$ 299
High & Dry W 12pm		\$ 150	There is a Solution Tu 6pm		\$ 133	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		\$ 120
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		\$ 154	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		\$ 400	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		\$ 88
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am	\$ 167	\$ 279	Thursday Night Book Club Th 7pm		\$ 22	AA Step Study Su 6pm	\$ 18	\$ 41
Island Group Th 8pm		\$ 330	Thursday Night Miracles Th 830pm		\$ 75	Acceptance Group M 530pm		\$ 60
Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm		\$ 125	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm	\$(1,200)	\$ 1,098	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		\$ 524
Living in the Solution F 6pm		\$ 381	Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu		\$ 1,055	After Work Big Book M 6pm		\$ 269
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		\$ 913	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		\$ 150	After Work M 6PM		\$ 275
Marin Pacific Group Tu 730pm	\$ 50	\$ 50	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		\$ 753	Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm		\$ 72
Mill Valley 7D 7am		\$2,099	Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm		\$ 350	Alumni W 830pm		\$ 302
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		\$ 315	We Have a Solution F 7pm		\$ 126	Any Lengths Sat 930am		\$ 537
Monday Blues M 630pm		\$ 400	We, Us and Ours M 650pm		\$ 350	Ariana Cafe Group M - F		\$ 100
Monday Night Madness M 6pm		\$ 150	Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm		\$ 56	Artists & Writers F 630pm	\$ 293	\$ 2,688
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		\$1,777	Wednesday Night Speaker Disc 7pm		\$ 22	As Bill CCs It Sun 8am	\$ 40	\$ 40
Monday Night Women's M 8pm		\$ 499	Wednesday Sundowners W 6pm		\$ 200	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		\$ 988
More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		\$ 200	What's It All About F 12pm		\$ 450	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		\$ 300
Morning Attitude Adjustment		\$ 90	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		\$ 680	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		\$ 101
Nativity Monday Night BB M 8pm		\$ 400	Women's Lunch Bunch F 12pm		\$ 100	Be Still AA Su 12pm		\$ 611
Newcomers Step M 730pm		\$ 330	Women's Step Study Group M 12pm		\$ 75	Beginners 12 x 12 F 7pm	\$ 392	\$ 692
Noon Hope F 12pm		\$ 152	Working Dogs W 1205pm	\$ 250	\$ 750	Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		\$ 382
Noon Small Room 5D 12pm		\$ 130	Young People's Chopsticks Sa 1030pm		\$ 44	Beginners Tu 630PM		\$ 20
Noon Tu 12pm		\$ 100	Memorial Group Contribution		\$ 267	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm	\$ 240	\$ 379
North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm		\$ 170	Marin Total	\$ 1,999	\$36,785	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	\$ 336	\$ 1,107

SF Contributions	Nov. 11	YTD	SF Contributions	Nov. 11	YTD	SF Contributions	Nov. 11	YTD
Bernal New Day 7D		\$ 2,711	Gold Mine Group M 8pm	\$ 137	\$ 938	Once An Alcoholic Th 715pm		\$ 35
Big Book Basics F 8pm		\$ 569	Goodlands Su 2pm		\$ 316	One Liners Th 830pm	\$ 187	\$ 459
Big Book Study Su 1130am	\$ 40	\$ 676	Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm		\$ 418	Parkside Th 830pm		\$ 397
Blue Book Special Su 11am		\$ 223	Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm		\$ 160	Pax West M 12pm		\$ 2,098
Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		\$ 225	Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm		\$ 103	Pax West Th 12pm	\$ 229	\$ 1,352
Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm		\$ 71	High Noon Friday 1215pm	\$ 40	\$ 302	Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm		\$ 150
Bushwackers Sa 9am	\$ 26	\$ 26	High Noon Monday 1215pm		\$ 293	Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm		\$ 183
By the Book Sa 10am	\$ 67	\$ 96	High Noon Saturday 1215pm		\$ 516	Raising the Bottom W 9pm		\$ 228
Came to Believe 830am M 830am		\$ 60	High Noon Sunday 1215p		\$ 292	Reality Farm Th 830pm		\$ 487
Came To Believe Su 830am		\$ 134	High Noon Thursday 1215pm		\$ 488	Rebound W 830pm		\$ 60
Came to Park Sat 7pm		\$ 510	High Noon Tuesday 1215pm		\$ 190	Refugee Th 12pm		\$ 60
Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows)		\$ 466	High Noon Wednesday 1215pm		\$ 25	Relapses/Rebounds/Retread...Tu	\$ 12	\$ 82
Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm		\$ 48	Hilldwellers M 8pm		\$ 407	Richmond Big Book Study Th 730pm		\$ 6
Castro Nooners F 12pm		\$ 85	How Was Your Week? Sa 10am		\$ 151	Richmond Step Study M 730pm	\$ 23	\$ 23
Cocoanuts Su 9am		\$ 484	Huntington Square W 630pm		\$ 776	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm		\$ 90
Code Blue Big Book Study W 7pm		\$ 178	Into The Sun Meditation Th 12pm	\$ 60	\$ 60	Room to Grow F 8pm	\$ 223	\$ 223
Come N Get It F 630pm	\$ 10	\$ 10	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		\$ 1,602	Saturday Afternoon Meditation 5pm		\$ 495
Common Welfare Th 8pm		\$ 368	Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm	\$ 37	\$ 37	Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm		\$ 1,313
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm		\$ 798	K.I.S.S. M 6pm		\$ 114	Saturday Big Book Sa 2pm		\$ 21
Creative Alcoholics M 630pm		\$ 195	Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		\$ 684	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		\$ 1,003
Dark Secrets F 10pm		\$ 19	Let It Be Now F 6pm	\$ 60	\$ 169	Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm		\$ 40
Design For Living BB 5D 730am		\$ 33	Light Steppers Su 7pm		\$ 60	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	\$ 303	\$ 1,586
Design For Living BB Tu/Th 730am	\$ 70	\$ 190	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		\$ 199	Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm		\$ 376
Design for Living Sat 8am		\$ 218	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm		\$ 40	Second Chance Th 215pm		\$ 35
Diamond Heights Tu 830pm		\$ 125	Live and Let Live Su 8pm		\$ 150	Serenity House	\$ 150	\$ 1,650
Dignitaries Sympathy W 815pm		\$ 180	Living Proof Th 630pm		\$ 80	Serenity Seekers M 730pm		\$ 494
Doin' the Deal Sun 10pm		\$ 60	Living Sober W 8pm		\$ 254	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		\$ 28
Dry Dock Discussion M 830pm		\$ 24	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		\$ 1,186	Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm		\$ 927
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		\$ 1,765	Lots Of Parking Su 6pm		\$ 20	Sinbar Su 830pm		\$ 127
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		\$ 1,292	Luke's Group W 7pm		\$ 124	Sisters Circle Su 6pm		\$ 562
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am	\$1,114	\$ 2,453	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		\$ 209	Sober at State MW 1210pm		\$ 400
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		\$ 868	Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		\$ 604	Sober Saturday Sa 830am		\$ 404
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		\$ 900	Mid Week Sanity W 630pm		\$ 11	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		\$ 139
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		\$ 1,244	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am		\$ 1,162	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		\$ 321
Early Start F 6pm		\$ 2,372	Midnight Meditation Sat 12am		\$ 129	Sought to Improve Th 715pm		\$ 132
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		\$ 96	Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm		\$ 41	SFPOA Th 7pm		\$ 371
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	\$ 240	\$ 1,582	Mission Terrace W 8pm		\$ 124	Spirit of San Francisco		\$ 90
Epiphany Group Th 8pm		\$ 180	Monday Beginners M 8pm		\$ 741	St. Francis Men's F 830pm		\$ 240
Eureka Step Tu 6pm		\$ 76	Monday Monday M 1215pm		\$ 248	Step Talk Su 830am	\$ 454	\$ 789
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		\$ 213	Moving Toward Serenity W 830pm		\$ 202	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		\$ 614
Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa 8pm		\$ 168	New Friday Big Book F 12pm		\$ 116	Stonestown M 8pm		\$ 148
Extreme Makeover M 730pm		\$ 51	New Life W 7pm		\$ 150	Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm		\$ 442
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		\$ 279	Newcomers Group Tu 7pm		\$ 20	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag		\$ 902
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		\$ 296	Newcomers Step M 730pm		\$ 360	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm		\$ 334
Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm		\$ 37	Newcomers Tu 8pm		\$ 469	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc		\$ 219
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		\$ 103	No Reservation M 12pm		\$ 257	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm	\$ 197	\$ 504
Franciscan Noon Discussion M 12pm		\$ 80	Noon Smokeless F 12pm		\$ 65	Sunday Silence Su 730pm	\$ 25	\$ 197
Friday All Groups F 830pm		\$ 1,864	Noon Smokeless M 12pm		\$ 144	Sundown W 7pm		\$ 668
Friday at Five F 5pm		\$ 85	Noon Smokeless Su 12pm		\$ 10	Sunset 11'ers Su		\$ 100
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		\$ 223	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		\$ 8	Sunset 11'ers Tu		\$ 285
Friday Night Women's MtgF 630pm		\$ 42	Noon Smokeless W 12pm	\$ 50	\$ 81	Sunset 9'ers Sa		\$ 265
Friday Smokeless F 8pm		\$ 240	Off Broadway Book Th 730pm		\$ 55			

Continued on p. 19

Profit and Loss Statement: October 2011

	Oct 11	Budget	Jan - Oct 11	Budget
Income/Expense				
Group Contributions				
Group Contributions	12448	13,000	124020	136,500
Honors	8	-	60	-
Total Group Contributions	\$12,456	\$13,000	\$ 124,080	\$136,500
Individual Contributions				
Individual - Unrestricted	1525	1,000	15553	10,000
Faithful Fiver	705	1,140	11795	11,400
Honorary Contributions	526	370	3540	3,700
Total Individual Contributions	\$ 2,756	\$ 2,510	\$ 30,887	\$ 25,100
Gratitude Month				
Groups	0	-	4128	10,400
Individual	0	-	0	-
Total Gratitude Month	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,128	\$ 10,400
Sales - Bookstore	8757	9,500	93475	95,000
Newsletter Subscript.	11	30	318	300
Total Income	\$23,981	\$25,040	\$ 252,888	\$267,300
Cost of Goods Sold				
Cost of Books Sold	6377	6,425	66,632.58	64,250
Inventory Adjustments	0		40	-
COGS - Shipping	248	31	593	310
CC Processing Fees	302	291	3231	2,910
Total COGS	\$ 6,927	\$ 6,747	\$ 70,496	\$ 67,470
Gross Income	\$17,054	\$18,293	\$ 182,393	\$199,830
Expense				
Employee Expenses				
Wages & Salaries	13929	9,430	97499	93,605
Employer Tax Expenses	2818	780	10590	8,740
Health Benefits	2504	1,550	14753	13,750
Deferred Comp	0	-	7809	7,809
Workers Comp Ins.	0	-	799	792
Total Employee Expenses	\$19,251	\$11,760	\$ 131,450	\$124,696
Professional Fees				
Accounting	0	-	1515	1,750
Computer Consulting	150	50	788	1,180
Total Professional Fees	\$ 150	\$ 50	\$ 2,303	\$ 2,930
Postage				
Non-Bulk Postage	0	-	144	131
Bulk Mail	0	231	600	831
Total Postage	\$ -	\$ 231	\$ 744	\$ 962

	Oct 11	Budget	Jan - Oct 11	Budget
Rent - Office	3664	4,664	39643	46,640
Rent - Other	0	75	675	750
Access Expenses	60	675	420	6,750
IFB Literature	0	-	0	-
Sunshine Club	0	47	0	152
IFB Literature - Other	0	15	83	165
Total IFB Literature	\$ -	\$ 62	\$ 83	\$ 317
PI/CPC	0	20	49	200
Sunshine Club / 12th Step	0	20	0	200
Archives Committee	0	15	0	165
IFB Sponsored Events	225	-	933	1,000
Filing/Fees	0	-	93	80
Insurance	0	-	2383	2,915
Internet Expense	93	120	1062	1,200
Office Supplies	36	135	1372	1,950
Paper Purchased	269	170	2713	2,240
Software Purchased	0	-	145	-
Printing	0	-	38	-
Equipment Lease	0	207	4969	4,938
Repair & Maintenance	262	262	5158	2,816
Security System	0		354	354
Payroll Expenses	23337	40	23786	395
Telephone	252	250	2407	2,500
Phone Book Listings	87	86	865	865
Travel	583	30	655	990
Training	0	-	25	25
Bad Checks	0	-	0	45
Miscellaneous Expense	0	-	0	-
Total Expense	\$ 48,269	\$18,872	\$ 222,326	\$205,923
Net Ordinary Income	\$(31,215)	\$(579)	\$(39,933)	\$(6,093)
Other Income/Expense				
Interest Income	171	205	1780	2,040
Depreciation				-
Dep. Exp.-Comp&Office Equip	207	207.00	2070	2,070
Dep. Exp.-Furniture&Fixtures	6	6.00	60	60
Dep. Exp.-Leasehold Improv	371	165.00	3710	1,650
Total Depreciation Expense	\$ 584	\$ 378	\$ 5,840	\$ 3,780
Net Other Income	\$ (413)	\$ (173)	\$ (4,060)	\$ (1,740)
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(31,628)	\$(752)	\$(43,993)	\$(7,833)

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Treasurer's Report

In October 2011, group contributions were \$544 under budget. Individual contributions were \$246 over budget. Year-to-date, total contributions are \$6,633 lower than budget.

Bookstore sales were \$762 under budget in October, and are \$1,507 (or 1.6%) under budget year-to-date.

Expenses for October were \$29,397 over budget. Employee wages & salaries were \$7,491 over budget due to final paycheck and vacation payout for the Central Office Special Worker. Please note, that the Special Worker position will not be filled until next year. Therefore, the payroll expenses for the months of November and December will make up the overage for the month of October. Deferred compensation expense was \$23,297 over budget due to payment to the Central Office Special Worker from the accrued deferred compensation plan. This \$23K was held in a special account for the Central Office Worker, so this expense does not impact our cash flow. Travel expense was \$553 over budget due to the timing of the payment for the Central Office Manager Conference (in Tucson)

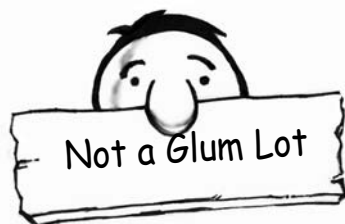
expenses which were paid in October but budgeted for September. Lastly, IFB sponsored events was \$225 over budget due to the timing of the budgeted volunteer appreciation evening. Total operating expenses year to date are 8.0% over budget

We had a deficit of \$31,627 for October, compared to a budgeted deficit of \$752. Year-to-date net deficit is \$43,993.36.

Unrestricted cash balance increased \$11,521.22 to \$30,166.06, which represents a month and a half of average operating expenses.

The trend of lower than budgeted income (group contributions and bookstore sales) has continued in October. Ongoing communication to groups on the meaning of self support continues to be important. Timely distribution of Gratitude Month contributions to Central Office should also be emphasized to groups, as well as individual contributions via the Central Office website.

OVERALL RATING: FAIR



A drunk staggered into a hotel late one Saturday night and checked in. He awoke severely hung over and summoned a

bellboy to fetch him a bottle of whiskey and a Sunday newspaper. The bellhop was gone a long time.

When the bellboy returned, the man remarked, "It must be hard to buy a bottle in this town on Sunday."

"There was no trouble with the liquor, sir," replied the bellboy, "but it's tough finding a Sunday paper on Tuesday."

SF Contributions	Nov. 11	YTD
Sunset 9'ers Su	\$ 1	\$ 182
Sunset 9'ers Th	\$	64
Sunset 9'ers Tu	\$	110
Sunset BB Step Study Sa 730pm	\$	74
Sunset Early Morning W 7am	\$	83
Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm	\$ 100	\$ 870
Surf Tu 8pm	\$	636
Ten Years After Su 6pm	\$	1,831
The Drive Thru W 1215pm	\$ 102	\$ 586
The Dry Dock Fellowship	\$	119
The Lads Fr 730pm	\$	259
The Leaky Cauldron Su 1030am	\$	80
The Parent Trap 2 Wed. 430pm	\$ 31	\$ 58
The Parent Trap M 1230pm	\$ 180	\$ 180
The Pepper Group F 12pm	\$	198
There is a Solution Tu 6pm	\$	214
They Don't Know Who We Are Sat 7pm	\$	100
They Stopped In Time M 8pm	\$	76
Thursday Downtown Th 630am	\$	62
Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm	\$ 195	\$ 844
Thursday Thumpers Th 7pm	\$	100
Too Early Sat 8am	\$	1,344
Too Young Su 830pm	\$	16
Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm	\$	360
TSWC	\$	26
Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm	\$ 90	\$ 218
Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm	\$	14
Tuesday Men's Pax Tu 12pm	\$	509
Tuesday Night Step Tu 7pm	\$	89
Tuesday Women's Tu 630pm	\$	15
Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am	\$	285
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$	530
Walk of Shame W 8pm	\$ 63	\$ 346
Waterfront Sun 8pm	\$ 47	\$ 551
We Care Tu 12pm	\$	162
Wednesday Morning Men's Mtg 6am	\$	100
Wednesday Noon Steps W 12pm	\$	37
Weekend Worker Sat 7am	\$	90
West Portal W 8pm	\$	83
Wharfrats Th 815pm	\$	381
What It's Like Now M 6pm	\$	300
Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	\$	322
Women Living Sober Sa 10am	\$	240
Women Who Drank Too Much Tu	\$ 5	\$ 5
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	\$	1,120
Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm	\$	67
Women's Meeting There is a Solution	\$ 128	\$ 527
Women's Promises F 7pm	\$	794
Work In Progress Sat 7pm	\$	450
YAHOO Step Sa 1130am	\$	277
San Francisco Total	\$6,223	\$ 92,029
YTD	\$8,433	\$132,513

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