

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

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

The Point

2012
5
May

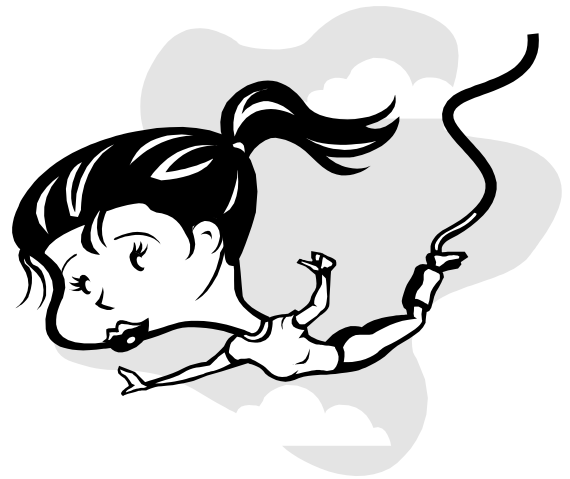
A publication
of the Intercounty Fellowship
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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.

Willing To Go To Any Lengths



-
- 8** Sobering Up
(Not Straightening Up)
- 10** "Castaway"
- 17** THIS IS AA?

May 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
		1 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office 6pm	2 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intergroup Meeting 101 Donahue St Marin City, CA Orientation 6pm Meeting 7pm
6	7	8 <u>SECOND TUE</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln San Rafael 6:15pm SF Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St 6:30pm 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) Central Office 7pm	15	16
20 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	21 <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
<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>			

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3	4	5
10	11	12 Post-Conference Assembly Pacelli Event Center 145 Lake Merced Blvd Daly City, CA www.cnca06.org for more info.
17	18	19
24	25	26 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> CNCA Meeting 320 N McDowell Petaluma, CA 12:30pm
31 <u>LAST THU:</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St, SF Orientation 7:15pm Committee Meeting 8pm		



Calendar	2
Meeting Changes	4

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor	5
Year of the 12: Tradition Five	6
How It Works	7
Pre A.A. History	11
Help@aasf.org	12
Meet the Meeting	13
Year of the 12: Concept Five	19

BUSINESS

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

“No one is too discredited or has
sunk too low to be welcomed
cordially—if he means business”

Big Book, p . 161



Meeting Changes

New Meetings:

Sat	9:30am	Hayes Valley	YOUNG AT HEART, 602 Hayes St. at Laguna
Sat	9:00pm	Castro	SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE, 4058 18th St. at Hartford: Castro Country Club

Meeting Changes:

Sat	8:00am	Marina	WILLING TO GROW, Fort Mason Bldg. C Rm. 370, Buchanan St. (Was 8:10am now 8:00am)
-----	--------	--------	---

No Longer Meeting:

Sun	5:00pm	Castro	11th STEP STRETCH & SURRENDER, 100 Diamond St. at 18th St.
Mon-Fri	7:00am	Tenderloin	WAKE UP WITH BILL, 842 Geary St. at Hyde: Café Ariana
Wed	5:30pm	Mission	OUTER MISSION GRAPEVINE, 5529 Mission St. at Guttenberg St.
Wed	7:00pm	San Anselmo	WOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 72 Kensington Rd. at Mariposa 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.** 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!***

Spring Fling

Sadie Hawkins Dance
and
A.A. Meeting

Saturday May 12, 2012

Speaker: Tara C. Of Redwood City

AA Meeting 6:30 pm

Dance 8:00PM- 11:45

Tix \$15 In Advance- \$20 at the door, City Forest Lodge

Laguna Honda Blvd SF, CA 94116

One block from Forest Hill

Information (415)218-7609 or spirit-sf.org

Tix available online at spirit-sf.org

Special Event

Potluck Dinner & Bingo!

DIAMOND HEIGHTS GROUP

SATURDAY, May 19th at 6:00 PM

395 Addison Street, SF

Shepard of the Hills Church



AA Meeting at 6:00pm

Bingo Starts at 7:00pm

Bingo Cards 2/\$5 or 1/\$3

Please join us for a night of recovery, fellowship, and fun!!! Feel free to add to our Potluck. For more info, call Rick: 415-368-8855

From the Editor

Springtime In Recovery

by Charley D.

Living in San Francisco, the city of perpetual Spring weather, can cause us to lose contact with the wonder of spring. Those of us who've endured bitter winters in less benign climates, remember having a real appreciation for the month of May, with everything finally green and growing again. A.A. promises renewal, a spiritual springtime. After a long, difficult period of cold emptiness, we have begun to grow again. How does that renewal occur?

Adrian tells us not knowing why A.A. works doesn't stand in the way of his recovery (p. 10). Ruth S. stumbled on a summary of our fellowship, as concise and touching as any we've ever seen (p. 19). She shares that with us, and in our old timer interview, tells us about the early days of her sobriety in the Bay Area of the mid-20th century (p. 8).

Anonymous shows how willingness to change, and constantly returning to that willingness, proves crucial to growing in A.A. (p. 7). We continue

our "Year of the Twelve" with two "fives" in this, the fifth month. Tradition Five establishes A.A.'s primary purpose as carrying our message to the alcoholic who still suffers. See how, according to Charley D., that purpose enables growth not just for those who haven't yet found our message but also for those still suffering within fellowship (p. 6). MEM demonstrates how A.A.'s Fifth Concept of World Service, which protects the minority's right to disagree, keeps our fellowship vibrant, even spring-like (p. 17).

A.A. itself did not sprout from barren ground. GFG gives us an excerpt from A.A.'s "pre-history" explaining how an A.A. pioneer started to stumble in the right direction. In the regular "Meet the Meeting" feature, Jody S. reveals how "Tuesday's Daily Reflections" enables her to keep growing in sobriety.

We hope this issue of The Point helps in some way to bring a little springtime of recovery to each of you.



EDITORIAL POLICY

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

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



Faithful FIVERS!

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

Alejandro D.	John G.	Penelope C.
Andrea C.	John M.	Philip B.
Andy Z.	John V.	Ralph P.
Anne C.	Karen C.	Rich G.
Barbara L.	Karen K.	Robert C.
Barbara M.	Kate R.	Ron H.
Blu F.	Kathleen C.	Samuel W.
Brian O.	Kathryn M.	Sara D.
Bruce K.	Kevin S.	Scott H.
Bruce S.	Kristina F.	Sheila H.
Carole K.	Kurt P.	Steve A.
Caroline A.	Lauren H.	Steve F.
Casey L.	Layne S.	Stu S.
Cathy P.	Lelan & Rich H.	Susan C.
Charles D.	Leo H.	Susan G.
Charlie O.	Linda L.	Teddy W.
Chris L.	Lisa M.	Tim M.
Chris S.	Lynne L.	Tom S.
Chuck S.	Mabel T.	Tony R.
CJ H.	Marit L.	Tracy F.
Dan B.	Mark B.	William M.
Dan & Sherry T.	Mark O.	
David J.	Martha S.	Your
David S.	Mary C.	Name
Dennis & Lucy O.	Mary L.	Here!
Dianne E.	Maryellen O.	
Ed H.	Mia M.	Or
Eric P.	Michael G.	Here!
Erin S.	Michael P.	
Evan K.	Michael Z.	Or
Fay K.	Michelle C.	Here!
Frederick D.	Mike M.	
Gregory G.	Molly G.	
Ian M.	Nancy W.	
James W.	Nathaniel W.	
Jane K.	Niels R.	
Janet B.	Pat R.	
Jeanne C.	Patrick M.	
Jeff B.	Paul M.	
Jodie S.	Peg L.	
John C.	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!



YEAR OF THE TWELVE

***Tradition Five: "Each group has but one primary purpose
— to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."***

by An Alcoholic

Just when you seem to get comfortable in A.A., along comes an idea like Tradition Five that seems to upset everything. I loved (and still love) the precept, expressed in Tradition Three, that "the only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking." By the time I got to A.A., after decades of uncontrollable drinking, I knew I had that desire. The fact that A.A. didn't require anything more from me – no initiation fee, no faith in a particular deity, no commitment to some set of stone-engraved commandments – suited my anti-religious, nonconformist, iconoclastic nature. I found A.A. full of nonconformist iconoclasts, some religious, some not, but all amazingly like me. Even the irony of that – a "group" of nonconformists, remarkably similar to each other, helping each other stay sober – somehow fit for me, too. From the first A.A. meeting I attended, I came to rely upon my fellows in A.A. and was glad when some of them eventually seemed even to rely on me.

Clearly then, that must be A.A.'s primary purpose: to help its already sober members stay happy and sober.

And then I found out about Tradition Five. At first, I read it to indicate A.A. was a missionary organization. The injunction to "carry the message" unsettled me. To stay in good standing would I need to proselytize? Go on a recruiting mission? Become an A.A. salesman, going door to door? I bristled at these possibilities.

Had the refreshing lack of dogma I found in Tradition Three given way to that worst religious tendency – the missionary urge to make everyone else believe exactly the same way?

I was at an A.A. meeting when I realized I had it both right and wrong about Tradition Five. Like most A.A. meetings, this one ended with a prayer. As is also common, the secretary pronounced, before praying, that we'd have a moment of silence "for the alcoholic still suffering in and out of these rooms." By then I'd heard that dozens of times. For some reason, on this day, it triggered a connection with Tradition Five. The mention of "suffering" echoed Tradition Five's statement that our primary purpose is to carry A.A.'s message to the alcoholic who still *suffers*. Until that moment, I'd assumed the tradition established A.A.'s purpose as carrying the message to non-members of A.A. who were still drinking. I saw this wasn't necessarily so.

Sober alcoholics inside 'the rooms' still suffer

Sober alcoholics inside "the rooms" still suffer. Few, if any, who've found their way to A.A. have ever reached a serene paradise of sobriety. The heartaches, headaches and bruises of life afflict the sober alcoholic. We carry A.A.'s message of hope to them first. And what about alcoholics who still suffer outside "the rooms?" We carry A.A.'s message to them, too –

but not by beating the missionary drum. As Tradition Eleven states, we "recruit" new members by attraction, not promotion. So how do we make A.A. "attractive" to non-members? First and always, by making it work for ourselves.

I remember what first attracted me so strongly to A.A. It is also what has kept me coming back. I wanted and still want what its members had. It wasn't just their ability not to drink. It was their ability not to drink and be better and happier than when they drank. I didn't believe that this was possible. My fellows, by their attractive, sober, happy existence, proved me wrong. We show in A.A. meetings, at H&I opportunities, in dealings with the public, and, indeed, by living our very lives, not just that we can live without alcohol but that we can live better without drinking. That is how we carry A.A.'s attractive message to all suffering alcoholics, members and non-members alike.

TP





by Anonymous

"Willing to go to any length" has come to have a completely different meaning now, in sobriety, than ever before. The physical pain I have felt in the past few months, but especially this recent month, has proved how willing I really am. My alcoholic brain always tells me, "you are never doing enough, it's not good enough," and on and on, then I realize it's time to hand it over to my higher power, "the universe," and let go and pray for the next right action.

I have a "complicated" spine, a curve where it should be straight and straight where there should be a curve. I was grateful to find out why I have been experiencing spasms, diarrhea, dizziness, nausea and anxiety for the past five months. And I was especially grateful that someone (a woman chiropractor) was finally taking the time to explain my X-rays and health. As the doctor explained the process of breaking up scar tissue in my neck and back to release the trauma and re-align my body, I became overwhelmed with fear.

She asked, "Is \$50 per visit reasonable for you?"

"No, I am on disability and have very minimal to live on." I expected her to say she wished that she could help me, but instead she responded, "I am going to help you and if you can pay, great. If you can't, I still want you to come, because you really need this and I'm going to give you the care you need."

I stared back at her in disbelief. "Are you serious?" A knot released from my throat when she responded, "Yes!" Wow, what a gift from my higher power.

Later that month, on the bus after an H&I commitment, I was comparing myself to the speaker. My inner conversation was about what a spoiled brat she was, growing up in an upper class family; then a loud voice interrupted, "Go have a glass of wine." Hmmmm, where did that come from? I thought. As the bus continued down the hill, past a restaurant, the voice yelled, "Get off the bus now and have a glass of wine there!"

I emailed my sponsor that I wanted to drink. The voice just kept repeating, "Drink a glass of wine," and I sat in disbelief. Never in my 25 months of sobriety had this voice continued for hours.


My sponsor called, "Are you still

sober?" With a sigh, I said, "Yes."

As we spoke, I explained my day, I spoke about my resentment of the speaker at the H&I meeting (a new friend) and how she resembled a friend I had back in my drinking days. Then as I talked about my old friend, an overwhelming emotion of sadness came over me and I began to cry hard for a few minutes. I calmed down and she said, "I'm sorry you are

We need to feel our feelings and let them pass.

going through this pain. We need to feel our feelings and let them pass." Then she shared a story with me about her current situation and cried. The voice in my head stopped as she opened up, and as she became vulnerable, my heart went out to her and a feeling of love filled my being.

I realized we are all in this together, and that if we show up and are honest and willing, the pain and desire to drink subsides. Then we can release and move on to the next phase of growth. I'm an alcoholic, the desire to drink is a normal thought, but it's the action where I have a choice to change my usual response. I must be willing to change. 

I would like to subscribe to *The Point*

\$12.00 for one year — 12 issues!!!

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: The Intercounty Fellowship of A.A.

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

Sobering Up (Not Straightening Up)

Interview with a Long Timer

by Ruth S.
(as told to the Drunk Whisperer)

Sober more than 46 years, Ruth S. was on the panel of long timers at the 65th anniversary party for Central Office in January. Her home group is "Women Who Wear Comfortable Shoes," a lesbian meeting at 7 PM on Mondays in Pacifica. Ruth grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma and moved to San Francisco in the late 1950s.

DW: How did you get to San Francisco?

RS: It was a geographic. I was living in New Orleans. We came out, three young women, camping all the way across the United States in the late 1950s, in a station wagon we had painted with polka dots.

DW: You told a story at the anniversary party about your first sponsor.

RS: I got sober for six to eight months in around 1960. The way it worked back then was, you called Central Office and they'd say, "We'll have someone call you back." And whoever called you back was at least your temporary sponsor. So Mary O. called and invited me to a meeting at her house on Sanchez Street. She advised me that I would never get sober unless I went straight. What did I know? Eventually, I got mad at her and went into a bar and drank. I was out there drinking for about four years. It was mostly miserable. I accidentally burned up a car that belonged to a friend of mine in front of the home of some nice suburban people in Mill Valley. I had been put in jail that summer when a Highway

Patrol officer found me sitting in my car with a flat at 2:30 AM in Emeryville and I told him I was too drunk to change the tire, but not too drunk to drive. I got myself into enough trouble that year that I ended up in a state mental hospital.

DW: So when was your sobriety date?

RS: On or about September 15, 1965. I went to San Francisco General Hospital for help with my alcoholism and they had given me a choice: become an inpatient there or go to Mendocino State Hospital for alcohol treatment. I took the ticket to Ukiah, which was the closest bus station to Talmage where the State Hospital was located, still seven miles away. I'm with this guy, Vince, who also had a ticket for the mental hospital, and we can't seem to find a ride there even though we asked the hospital police, the local police, and the sheriff's department. So Vince suggests that we go into the bars on Main Street and panhandle taxi fare. I'm standing here on the street with this guy who looks like a bum and I suddenly had a moment of enlightenment: if he's a bum, what does that make me? It wasn't a spiritual awakening, but it was as if I could look back at all the bad choices I had made that ended me up on that corner: all the times I had chosen the job that would allow me to drink or the school that would tolerate drinking. Anyhow, we ultimately decided to walk and we got about halfway, and a car came from the hospital direction, looking for us. All our inquiries had alerted the hospital and the doctor on duty had decided to come get us even

though he was at risk for being fired for leaving the grounds. I always tell that story because in my experience in sobriety, if you do the footwork, somebody will meet you halfway.

*if you do the footwork,
somebody will meet you halfway*

DW: How long were you there? Did you learn anything?

RS: Four months, from September 1965 through January 1966; and oh, yes, I learned some things. At the hospital, they were looking into anything that might help sober up drunks; fortunately, I got there about 15 minutes after they outlawed using LSD to experimentally treat drunks. I had a psychiatrist there who was very good and using something called carbon dioxide therapy, under which I had a hallucination of a mandala, which I later painted. It remains an important symbol of my sobriety. That hospital did me a lot of good, but there were parts that were not so great. Nonetheless, we were past the days when they turned fire hoses on people, although I got the sense that staff who had been working there a long time thought that might have been a good idea at times. (laughter)

DW: Was there a Twelve-Step approach there at all?

RS: Yes, I believe it was twice a week that H&I brought in meetings. I used to sit in those meetings and say to myself, "These are the same f*****g Twelve Steps that never kept me

(Continued on page 9)

...In the 1960s

(Continued from page 8)

sober before.” (laughter) Eventually it became clear to me that if I continued to do the steps one day at a time, maybe they *would* work for me.

DW: Mendocino State Hospital doesn't exist any more, does it?

RS: No, and I will never forgive Ronald Reagan for closing those State hospitals. If you want to know the result, just stroll down Market Street or Sixth Street.

DW: So after Mendocino State Hospital, did you move back to San Francisco?

RS: When I was there, Synanon was doing outreach to Mendocino State Hospital, trying to integrate Synanon with the alcohol treatment program. That came to nothing, but there was interest in the Synanon program. So I went into Synanon for a couple of years.

DW: What we now would call a sober living environment, then it was probably very ground-breaking? Sort of like Delancey Street?

RS: Yes. Delancey Street grew out of Synanon. When I was there, there was a guy named John Maher who ultimately left Synanon and started Delancey Street, with Mimi Silbert [current head of Delancey Street]. I believe that Mimi is still doing excellent work at Delancey Street.

DW: I have never talked to anyone [in previous interviews] who was at Synanon. But it was good for you, wasn't it?

RS: Yes. It was a disciplined environment and I needed discipline.

I needed to get up in the morning and brush my teeth and take my shower and get dressed and go to work. There were three rules at Synanon when I was there: no drugs, no alcohol, and no physical violence. Things later went very wrong in Synanon with a lot of physical violence and other ugly and illegal behavior and lawsuits and such, and the Synanon organization doesn't exist anymore. I attribute all that to the fact that they didn't have the Twelve Traditions to guide them. It's made me very aware of the importance of the traditions in our A.A. fellowship.

DW: Where did you go when you left there?

RS: I moved to Pacifica, to an unfinished extra room in a friend's basement, then started working temp jobs, then permanent. And I started going to A.A. meetings in San Francisco and Pacifica, and now my home group is here in Pacifica, a lesbian meeting called “Women Who Wear Comfortable Shoes.” At first, I was still imprinted with Mary O.'s telling me I had to be straight to be sober, but I've known I was a lesbian since I was four years old, and there's room for everyone in A.A., just as the Third Tradition tells us. Anyone who comes in the door with a desire to stop drinking belongs in the rooms of A.A. But I want to tell you about the God thing.

DW: What about the God thing?

RS: For me, when I first came around to the rooms of A.A., I could not believe in the God of my childhood. I was raised in a household where when my sister got caught shoplifting, we were assigned to go

to Sunday school. My parents didn't go, they slept in, but we had to go to the Baptist Church. My dad was a cop; I come from a long line of cops. He was cruel; he was abusive. And in Oklahoma in the '40s and '50s, things could be very difficult for anyone who was “different.”

DW: Was your dad a drunk?

RS: Yes. I always say, my father was a daily drinker, my mother was a binge drinker, so I became a daily binge drinker. (laughter) So I grew up thinking God was cruel and vengeful. Now, though, I believe that God cries when we cry. I have struggled my way in sobriety to find a Higher Power who loves us drunks, before and after we get sober. It's now very clear that I wouldn't have survived my drinking years if She hadn't been looking after me. And I've been very fortunate in my sobriety: A.A. allows room for us to grow at our own pace and find a Higher Power that works for each one of us.

TP



“Castaway”

I Don't Know Why It Works

by Adrian

To answer the question “are you willing to go to any length?,” you really have to ask another question. Why? Why do I want what you have and why would I be willing to go to any length to get it? And the honest answer is, I don't know why. I don't know why, after almost two years of being in A.A., I still go to meetings. I don't know why I still meet with my sponsor. I haven't got the faintest idea why, in the middle of the day when I have nothing to do, I find myself looking at the schedule book to find a meeting, when everything in my being says “stay home, be lazy and watch TV all day and night.” Yet I find myself getting up and going to a meeting. It's a mystery to me, so I can't explain it to you.

I know I don't show up for the coffee. Folgers instant coffee is crap coffee, and it's usually made by some newcomer whose hand still shakes. And it sure as hell isn't for the cookies, 'cause sometimes they are of the cheapest variety, hard and barely edible. The places these meetings are held in are not always the warmest, nor cool on a hot day. The bathrooms aren't clean when there *is* a bathroom. And the chairs are definitely not the softest – hard metal folding chairs is what they are. Most of the time the speakers are so boring I could call the meeting “nap time.” And the people who share usually bitch and complain about their day instead of sharing on the topic or speaking about the solution. Sure, every once in a while you hear an amazing share that makes you sit up and pay attention. But the discussion afterward is crap and the memory fades quickly. And in the

end nothing has changed and my problems haven't magically disappeared.

And after a rough day I find myself thinking of the Tom Hanks character in the movie *Castaway*, at the very end, after he found his sail and left

‘Cause all I want more than anything else in this world is to have another beer and relax. So I ask myself why I keep doing this A.A. thing when all my logic says I don't need the fellowship. And I don't have an answer. I remind myself to stop

I imagine that's me asking God why he took my booze

that godforsaken island with his only companion, Wilson. During that storm that seemed biblical in nature, the wind takes his sail and he screams at the top of his lungs “*I don't know why!*” and he does this because in his warped mind Wilson asks him why God took his sail. And I imagine that's me asking God why he took my booze and landed me in A.A. And why I keep going back and my only answer is “*I don't know why!*” That is the only answer I have to the question, “am I willing to go to any length to get what you have?”

I don't know what compels me to grab a schedule book and find a meeting during a day I have nothing to do.

asking that question and continue what I have been doing. Keep walking down this road of faith. Answers be damned. Because I might as well ask myself, is Bigfoot real? Or are we alone in the universe? The answer is, I may well never know, so day after day I keep doing the things I already have been doing. May God bless you and keep you – until then.



PRE-AA HISTORY: ROWLAND AND EBBY

Second installment of the A.A. Pre-History excerpts from a booklet by Bob S.

Rowland's Continued Search

In an effort to find the spiritual help suggested by Dr. Jung, Rowland attended the Oxford Group meetings in New York City, located in the Calvary Episcopal Parish House in the upscale Gramercy Park section of lower Manhattan. Reverend Frank Buchman started this spiritual group in 1908 under the name "A First Century Christian Fellowship." (That name was changed to Oxford Group in the late 1920s.) Reverend Samuel Shoemaker was the minister of the adjacent Calvary Church, which was the virtual American headquarters for the Oxford Group during the 1930s. Reverend Sam was known nationwide via radio and his writings.

From this group, Rowland learned about their Four Absolutes: Honesty, Unselfishness, Love and Purity, plus their practical living tenets. However, it seems that Rowland did not recover at this point. Here is an excerpt from an acquaintance's long account of Rowland Hazard's life and struggles with alcoholism.

"Since Rowland was a typical alcoholic, however, it took him seven more years of denial and misery – as he continued to refuse to take Jung's prescription seriously – before he met Courtenay Baylor from the Emmanuel Movement and began seeking a spiritual solution to his alcoholism." Rowland was on and off the wagon until the time he was fated to offer his experience and good help to the next person to set the A.A. ball rolling during the summer of 1934: Ebby Thacher.

Edwin Throckmorton Thacher

"Ebby" came from a well respected family; three members of his family

had become mayors of his hometown of Albany, NY. His eldest brother, Jack Thacher, was a 1932 Democratic nominee for governor when the incumbent governor, FDR, was making his sweep into the White House. Ebby was highly intelligent, although he had problems at school and never earned a college degree. Through the years, he became involved in the sort of high jinks of which his politically motivated family hardly approved. Ebby stated that he had been reprimanded by the local authorities because of his drinking and probably wasn't doing his brother [Jack] any good. Jack had been mayor since 1926. In the fall of 1932 (probably near election time!) Ebby moved to his family's vacation resort town of Manchester, VT.

One of Ebby's rather well known drinking episodes took place on a Saturday morning in January 1929. Ebby knew, and drank with, several "barnstormer" pilots from the Albany Airport. He and visiting Bill Wilson had learned that the Manchester Airport was about to open and it might be a fine idea if they would be the very first to land; to be certain that this feat would not go unnoticed, they phoned Manchester officials of their intention. They had been drinking all night, so consequently, when they disembarked from the plane they both fell drunkenly on the ground before the amazed crowd of well-wishers, including the town band. Bill spent the next day writing apologies.

Taking A Trip, Not Taking A Trip

Ebby's family doubtless hoped that the relative tranquility of the Manchester resort community would bring about at least some moderation

of his drinking sprees, and it did – sort of. After a few months, Ebby joined a group who spent the entire winter clearing the trails of the Green Mountains. He claimed to have drunk two pints of gin on the first day, but there was no more to be had for the next six months of pseudo-isolation. He spent the winter of 1932–33 enjoying the rugged work and doing lots of hunting on the weekends. Upon return to the village of Manchester Depot [two miles from Manchester] he continued to stay dry for a few more months; but soon thereafter his drinking bouts resumed. Ebby moved into one of the furnished rooms of the large family residence on Taconic Avenue in Manchester during the spring of 1934.

Ebby's sprees brought about two slight brushes with the Manchester authorities; he was fined only five dollars on each occasion, but with the warning that the third time it could go hard on him. Perhaps it was remorse that led Ebby to follow his brother's urging to paint the huge family summer "cottage" that summer. But not surprisingly, that task was too much for one person, so a professional helper was hired for added assistance and the job was finished that summer. He must have felt a great satisfaction, for who wouldn't be proud of such a large-scale accomplishment! There is no evidence of this, but perhaps Ebby was celebrating with a little hooch when he noticed a flock of ungrateful pigeons on the roof. Out came his shotgun – and doubtless the neighbors, as well – as loud blasts shattered the tranquility of this calm and peaceful community.

Next in the series: Off The Hook!





Dear Help,

I have a question about how to become a sponsor, and how to talk program with a potential sponsee. Do you have any suggestions?

Need More Sponsees

Dear NMS,

This is a very good question. I have never been sure what has attracted potential sponsees to me but when I had problems in recovery I always tried, when sharing, to be as honest as possible with what is going on with me and to share the solutions as they were been given to me – and, in fact, to allow people to know the process as I have gone through it. I think it is very important to let newcomers know sobriety is not immunity and that we don't magically come up with answers.

I make it a point to speak kindly with newcomers and do my best to make them feel welcome. Often, I invite them to go to coffee, especially if a group of us is going so they can begin to feel more “a part of.” Being a greeter has been another way for us to get to know each other.

I also think it is important that we like the person we are sponsoring – and I can generally tell from the first meeting whether or not this is so. I have heard people say, “I am not his

friend. I am his sponsor,” but I believe most alcoholics have antenna that extend far beyond the physical limits. We are so accustomed to rebuffs, particularly when new, that we are able to pick up any sign of personal dislike and that is painful for everyone.

I sometimes think too much emphasis is placed on becoming a sponsor. Not everyone is meant to be a sponsor but I have met people who felt they weren't working a “good” program if no one has asked them to be their sponsor. That simply may not be your role in recovery, but there are lots of other ways to be of service and to carry the message. Although I deeply respect the traditions and avoid public exposure, I have no personal anonymity. I am so grateful to Alcoholics Anonymous for the years of sobriety I have been given that I share about it whenever I am given the opportunity. I try to carry the message by the way I live my life. Sometimes that just means smiling at the bus drivers and acknowledging their existence.

I often hear people speak of being “happy, joyous and free.” I am not always happy nor joyous; that simply isn't realistic in life. But for today I am free of the tyranny of alcohol and I am always grateful.

e-Volunteer

Hi San Francisco A.A.,

It's me, grateful Tony, just checking in. I wanted to let all of you know that without the things that I went through in early recovery in San Francisco, I might not have made it through the struggles that came after. So thank you, aasf, I am stronger because of you. Please keep a little place in your heart for me.

Thanks again,

Grateful Tony

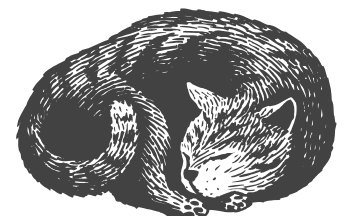
Hi, Tony,

How lovely of you to email us about your gratitude for SF A.A.

I've been particularly struck with gratitude myself lately. A week or so ago, SF A.A. Central Office had its 65th anniversary celebration. The number and variety of people who showed up was amazing, from bikers to bankers, all with a singleness of heart and purpose.

Thanks again – and I know what you mean.

e-Volunteer



Meet THE MEETING

by Jody S.

On Tuesday morning at 8 AM, there is a discussion meeting called "Tuesday's Daily Reflections." It is at the Konko-Kyo Church located at 1909 Bush Street at Laguna. Naturally, the meeting is in the church basement, with the entrance on Laguna. The format is to have an attendee read the chapter in the *Daily Reflections* book that corresponds to the current calendar date and then be the first to share.

There are no formal rules about what we can talk about, but we know that it should be somehow related to alcohol or alcoholic behavior. The thing that I like most about this meeting is that it is small – fewer than ten persons normally attend. Because it is small, you are probably going to share if you're there. Why is that good for me? Because in a large meeting I tend to "hide" and let the other people do all the sharing. Why is that bad for me? Because afterwards I sometimes feel that I did not get the most out of the meeting. Of course, this is my own fault. I could share if I put my mind to it. It's just that there are so many other hands up.

At the Daily Reflections meeting, I know the attendees well enough that I feel I can discuss my personal situation and there will be supportive ears. More than that, I might even get

Tuesday's Daily Reflections

good advice. At our last meeting, I complained that I had to sometimes drive my 90-year old husband (who no longer drives) to his meetings and appointments. Please understand that I am retired from my job, so I really have plenty of time. Nevertheless, I was complaining. After the meeting a man who has attended the meeting for eight to ten years came up to me and said, "You should be grateful that your 90-year-old husband can still be active and get around." I heartily agreed. I should count my blessings instead of complaining. Where else could I get such frank advice that is right on the money? My social (non-alcoholic) friends would not say something like that for fear that it would sound like criticism or because they might think it is none of their business.

I also regularly attend a Big Book study meeting, and from time to time I go to a step meeting, a bigger discussion meeting, or a speaker meeting. But I feel that I get the most out of this small meeting. We know each other's health issues, job issues, natal family issues and living situations. I believe that the other attendees feel as I do – that this is truly an extended family. Yet we like it when we get newcomers and



persons who attend the meeting only occasionally. In no time they are welcomed into the group. There is no exclusivity.

Well, maybe there is exclusivity, the exclusivity attributable to our common problem and enemy: alcoholism. I struggle with this enemy every day. Yesterday I attended a luncheon for a woman who had just turned 90, and the wine was flowing freely. Even after a fair number of years of sobriety, I still cast a longing eye on the wine even though wine was not my drink of choice. That is the insanity of alcoholism.

I need A.A. to stay sober and to stay centered. I can't explain exactly how it works (even though the Big Book devotes a whole chapter to it), but I do know that going to a meeting where I feel involved and "invested" is the cornerstone of how it works for me. That meeting is Tuesday's Daily Reflections.

Street parking is available.



Correction: On page 11 of our March issue, an introductory editor's note to the article "Why the Pink Cans?" mischaracterized Northern California H&I Committee history. It should

have read: "In most areas of the country, H&I is included as part of the General Service structure. Because H&I was started in California in 1942, long before there was a General Service structure, it

was and has remained an independently organized and independently funded service committee of A.A."

Intergroup meeting summary – April 2012

The following meetings (and *service entities*) have registered Intergroup Representatives who attended the last Intergroup meeting. If your meeting was not represented, consider electing an Intergroup Representative (IGR) and /or an alternate so your meeting is effectively represented

Artists & Writers	Design for Living	Living with HIV	Saturday Easy Does It	Tiburon Haven
Attitude Adjustment Hour	Embarcadero Group	Marin Stag	Sober 5150's	Too Early
Blackie's Pasture	First Place	Marina Discussion	Step Talk	Tuesday Chip
Blue Book Special	Friday Morning 12 Steppers	Miracles (Way) Off 24th St.	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc	Waterfront
Castro Discussion	High Noon	Newcomers	Sunday Rap	Wits End
Code Blue	Huntington Square	No Reservation	Sunset Speaker Step	Women's Mtg, There is a Solution
Come 'n Get It!	Join The Tribe	Noon Smokeless	Ten Years After	Women's Promises
Cow Hollow Men's Group	Keep It Simple	On Awakening Group	They Don't Know Who We Are	<i>SF General Service</i>
Cow Hollow Young People's	Live & Let Live	Saturday Beginners	Thursday Thumpers	<i>SF H&I</i>

This is an unofficial summary of the April, 2012 Intergroup 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 "Intergroup" 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 in San Francisco and Marin for the purpose of coordinating the services that individual groups cannot provide.

The monthly Intergroup meeting was held on Wednesday, April 4, 2012 at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at O'Farrell, San Francisco, CA

Officer Reports, Margaret J.; Recently participated in an agenda topics discussion with her home group for the upcoming General Service Conference. Examples of topics: Whether GSO should maintain an information only Facebook page, should the wording of the 11th Tradition be updated, should GSO continue supporting La Vina, the Spanish edition of The Grapevine. Please support your GSR's by participating in the agenda topics process.

Founder's Day coming up in June. (See new business).

Margaret thanks everyone for allowing her to be of service, shared thoughts on her 7th anniversary. New freedom and happiness especially true in being member of the COC and Intergroup.

Treasurer's Report, Michelle C.; Group contributions \$2400 under budget and Individual contributions \$566 under budget for month of February. Gratitude Month 2012 over by \$518 and Bookstore sales over by \$685. Unbudgeted revenue from Central Office 65th Anniversary event was \$2,117 after expenses. Unrestricted cash now over two months of operating expenses. Telephone service expense is up to about \$500 last month. An expected change in service should reduce to about \$210 per month.

COC Report, David S.; Discussion of Employee Manual updates and changes including multiple, part time employees. Discussed processes for upcoming elections. Will be our first elections under new by-laws.

Central Office Manager, Maury P.; Can always use CO volunteers! Marin Schedules printing schedule: have heard from several in Marin who agree to printing quarterly as opposed to every other month. Waiting for input from Marin General Service. Renegotiated phone service rates retroactive to January.

Question: Bruce K: Is there any way other than The Point to communicate a death of a member of the fellowship? Daniel P. and Gar M. both passed recently. Maury: We use the Point when possible, though timing doesn't always allow for publication, if already gone to print. Not at this time.

Perhaps continue this discussion as new business.

4th Concept Steve R. All concepts are highly technical, coming from General Service Conference. Bill's analysis encourages those who serve AA to accept the responsibility of the necessary disciplines. It comes down to the new member, and being available as an organization.

New Business

Upcoming Board Elections: Open positions on the Board of Directors. New By-laws state that two months before elections we will announce the positions that will be available. Elections in June. Will be transition from our current board elected under previous system.

2 special terms, 9 At Large terms, 2 terms carrying over, (assigned by lot to 1,2 or 3 years). 7 terms available for nomination (varying lengths). Intergroup Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary to be elected by the new Board members. Next month to poll the membership for available candidates for elections in June. Nominating committee to vet candidates. Volunteers include Michael P., Dan B. Comment, Dan B.; In the past there were three or four nights that NC met to interview candidates. Comment Rich G.; Split up interviews so that some were weekends, weeknights, spread around pretty evenly.

Founder's Day planning: Set for Saturday, June 2, 2012. Comments about timing; Mike prefers evening events. Phil L., had so much success for anniversary (evening event). Blu F. Plan overall concept down to details. Volunteers needed who are detail and operations oriented, willing to run

Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through April 15, 2012
honoring the following members:

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Jim R. 24 years, Jonathan L.

ANNIVERSARIES

High Noon:

Jaime G. 14 years, Johnny G. 14 years
Thea 1 year, Jamie G. 8 years
Blue 25 years, John E. 1 year
Susan D. 23 years, Thompson B. 2 years

errands in cars, etc. Forward email address or write to fellowship@aasf.org (the committee email address)

New literature request, Rebecca M.; Seeks to re-introduce a wallet card that was previously available, (now out of print or discontinued,) with "Acceptance is the Answer" quote, (Emotional Maturity), from page 417 of the Big Book. Discussion.

Outreach Committee Announcement; SF and Marin meetings listed that do not have Intergroup Reps. Started a signup sheet for volunteers to attend the meeting to make announcements about Intergroup.

Liaison Reports:

SF General Service, Andy T.;

Pre conference assy., April 14-15 in Lakeport. Always a good turnout from SF. Post conference assy. in May in Daly City. Agenda Topics workshop was successful in March. GSB has included the following motion: Restructure Grapevine corporate and governing structure while retaining editorial structure. Plan to be submitted to 63rd general conference for approval.

H&I, Lynn D.; Participated in Trusted Servants workshop. Suggested that H&I clarify that carrying the message through meetings at hospitals and institutions, (jails, homeless centers, etc.) mainly means that meetings are brought to those who wouldn't ordinarily have access. Literature is part of it, though provided as a service of H&I and not main function. Not

in the business of giving away literature, but of giving the message.

A one-time H&I Orientation to be held during the day on Saturday, April 28 at Mission Fellowship.

H&I Conference to be May 18-20 in Redding, CA.

PI/CPC in SF, Rich G.; Having difficulty getting people to meet the commitments.

We talk to the public about AA in DUI classes, schools, and tables at institutional events. Needs people that are interested in commitment. Tuesday April 17 at 7pm.

Meet the Meeting

Monday High Noon, Anthony S.; Monday through Sunday, M-Th 12:15, F-Sun various (See schedule for daily schedule/location) History at least to 1982, started in basement of Industrial Club, a sober club. Now at 25th and Capp.

There is a Solution (Women's Meeting) Lynn D., Wed 6:00PM, 25 Lake St. Has been around about four years. Different format than most. One person with one-year or less of sobriety shares, read from spiritual experience, then person with one or more year shares.

Next month Meet the Meeting: Say Hey, Paul; Mike B. Design for Living Saturday; Simon W. HIV AA Meeting; Aaron, Castro Discussion Thursday

Next Month's meeting in Marin at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Marin City on May 2, 2012.

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

Rich G. picpc@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Seth H. sfteleservice@aasf.org

aa *group contributions*

Fellowship Contributions	Mar. 12	YTD
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$ 26	\$ 56
Contribution Box	\$ 26	\$ 91
Gratitude in Action		\$ 658
Intergroup	\$ 120	\$ 322
Spirit of San Francisco		\$ 141
Unidentified Group		\$ 42
Fellowship Total	\$ 172	\$1,310

Marin Contributions	Mar. 12	YTD
10am Big Book W 10am		\$ 275
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	\$ 231	\$ 725
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		\$ 156
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm		\$ 250
Closed Women SS Tu 330pm		\$ 95
Crossroads Sun 12pm		\$1,000
East San Rafael Big Book		\$ 100
Girls Night Out W 815pm	\$ 47	\$ 47
High & Dry W 12pm		\$ 129
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		\$ 168
Living in the Solution F 6pm		\$ 139
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		\$ 292
Marin Stag M 8pm	\$ 487	\$ 487
Mill Valley 7D 7am		\$ 580
More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		\$ 50
Morning Attitude Adjustment		\$ 125
Nativity Monday Night BB M 8pm		\$ 100
Newcomers Step M 730pm		\$ 208
On Awakening 7D 530am	\$ 722	\$ 722
Pathfinders Tu 12pm		\$ 175
Primary Purpose W 830pm		\$ 46
Refugee Th 12pm		\$ 60
Reveille 7D 7am	\$ 200	\$ 200
San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		\$ 344
Saturday Night Sa 8pm	\$ 79	\$ 79
Sausalito 12 Step Study Group		\$ 50
Steps To The Solution W 715pm	\$ 100	\$ 100
Streetfighters Sa 9am		\$ 112
Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag 8pm		\$ 300
TGIF F 6pm		\$ 158
The Fearless Searchers F 8pm		\$ 396
Thursday Night Miracles Th 830pm		\$ 38
Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu	\$ 787	\$1,188
Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm		\$ 350
We, Us and Ours M 650pm		\$ 150
Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm		\$ 110
Wednesday Night Speaker Disc 7pm		\$ 42

Marin Contributions	Mar. 12	YTD
What's It All About F 12pm		\$ 60
Women in Unity Th 1230pm		\$ 50
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am	\$ 210	\$ 210
Marin Total	\$2,863	\$9,864

SF Contributions	Mar. 12	YTD
6am Dry Dock Sa		\$ 100
6am Dry Dock Th		\$ 60
7am As Bill Sees It Fri		\$ 104
7am Living Sober W 7am		\$ 247
7am Smokeless Su 7am		\$ 29
7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		\$ 218
830am Smokeless F 830am		\$ 165
830am Smokeless Th 830am	\$ 156	\$ 191
A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	\$ 18	\$ 140
Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		\$ 126
Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm	\$ 91	\$ 91
Amazing Grace M 7pm		\$ 84
Any Lengths Sat 930am	\$ 475	\$ 475
Artists & Writers F 630pm		\$ 161
As Bill CCs It Sun 8am		\$ 100
As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		\$ 15
Be Still AA Su 12pm	\$ 138	\$ 138
Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm		\$ 154
Bernal New Day 7D	\$ 251	\$ 866
Big Book Study Su 1130am	\$ 210	\$ 210
Blue Book Special Su 11am		\$ 68
Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		\$ 26
Brothers in Arms M 8pm		\$ 131
Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm	\$ 171	\$ 171
Came to Park Sat 7pm		\$ 120
Castro Discussion Th 8pm		\$ 11
Code Blue Big Book Study W 7pm		\$ 425
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	\$ 420	\$ 420
Cow Hollow YP Tu 730pm	\$ 85	\$ 85
Deer Park Discovery Group		\$ 29
Design for Living Sat 8am		\$ 385
Diamond Heights Tu 830pm		\$ 180
Dignitaries Sympathy W 815pm		\$ 295
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		\$ 186
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		\$ 993
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		\$ 339
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		\$ 812
Easy Does It Tu 6pm	\$ 85	\$ 85
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm	\$ 90	\$ 90
Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa 8pm		\$ 60

SF Contributions	Mar. 12	YTD
Extreme Makeover M 730pm	\$ 56	\$ 78
Federal Speaker Su 12pm	\$ 129	\$ 129
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		\$ 102
Fireside Chat Group Th 8pm		\$ 177
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		\$ 156
Friday All Groups F 830pm		\$ 458
Friday Night Blast F 630pm	\$ 50	\$ 50
Friday Night Book F 830pm		\$ 158
Friday Smokeless F 8pm		\$ 90
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm		\$ 65
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm		\$ 475
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm	\$ 103	\$ 405
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm		\$ 135
High Noon Friday 230pm		\$ 31
High Noon Saturday 1215pm	\$ 472	\$ 472
Hilldwellers M 8pm		\$ 362
How Was Your Week? Sa 10am		\$ 175
Huntington Square W 630pm		\$ 221
Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		\$ 199
Like A Prayer Su 4pm		\$ 250
Living Proof Th 630pm		\$ 113
Living Sober on Sixth St.	\$ 25	\$ 25
Living Sober W 8pm		\$ 65
Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	\$1,070	\$1,070
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am		\$ 292
Mission Fellow. No Reservations Su		\$ 30
Monday Monday M 1215pm		\$ 60
Monday Night BB Study M 8pm	\$ 60	\$ 60
No Reservation M 12pm		\$ 388
Off Broadway Book Th 730pm		\$ 31
Park Presidio M 830pm		\$ 54
Pax West Th 12pm		\$ 289
Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm		\$ 211
Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women		\$ 57
Quitting Time MWF 530pm		\$ 500
Reality Farm Th 830pm		\$ 506
Rebound W 830pm	\$ 120	\$ 120
Refugee Th 12pm	\$ 60	\$ 60
Rise N Shine Sun 10am	\$ 174	\$ 174
Rose Garden Big Book Th 1205pm	\$ 129	\$ 129
Saturday Afternoon Meditation 5pm		\$ 522
Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm	\$ 494	\$ 494
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		\$ 658
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	\$ 242	\$ 242
Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm		\$ 153
Seacliff Th 830pm		\$ 75

THIS IS AA?

At the 65th Anniversary party for Central Office in January 2012, Ruth S. read this unattributed description of Alcoholics Anonymous that she found on a card at Central Office back in the early 1960s when she fell in love with A.A.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship designed and administered by a bunch of ex-drunks whose only qualification for membership is that they can't hold their booze and don't want to learn how.

It has no rules, dues or fees; nothing that any sensible organization seems to require.

At meetings, the speaker starts on one subject and winds up talking about something entirely different and concludes by saying that he doesn't know anything about the program except that it works.

The groups are always broke, yet always seem to have money to carry on. They are always losing members but seem to grow. They claim A.A. is a selfish program but always seem to be doing something for others.

Every group passes laws, rules, edicts and pronouncements that everyone ignores. Members who disagree with anything are privileged to walk out in a huff, quitting forever, only to return as though nothing happened and be greeted accordingly.

Nothing is ever planned 24 hours ahead, yet great projects are born and survive magnificently. Nothing in A.A. is

according to Hoyle. How can it survive?

Perhaps it is because we have learned to live and laugh at ourselves.

God made men and women; he made laughter too. Perhaps he is pleased with our disorganized efforts and makes things run right no matter who pushes the wrong button. Maybe he is pleased, not with perfection, but because we are trying to be nobody but ourselves.

We don't know how it works but it does and members keep receiving their dividend checks from their A.A. investments.

group contributions, con't.

SF Contributions	Mar. 12	YTD	SF Contributions	Mar. 12	YTD	SF Contributions	Mar. 12	YTD
Serendipity Sa 11am		\$137	Sunset 11'ers Th		\$ 122	Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 8am		\$ 183
Serenity House	\$ 150	\$450	Sunset 11'ers Tu		\$ 91	Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm		\$ 72
Sesame Step Tu 730pm	\$ 35	\$173	Sunset 9'ers Sa	\$ 110	\$ 110	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$ 440	\$ 440
SFPOA Th 7pm		\$200	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		\$ 307	Walk of Shame W 8pm		\$ 88
Sinbar Su 8pm		\$101	Ten Years After Su 6pm	\$ 116	\$1,983	We Care Tu 12pm		\$ 124
Sober Saturday Sa 830am		\$ 94	The Dry Dock Fellowship		\$ 195	We Have a Solution F 7pm	\$ 91	\$ 91
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		\$306	The Leaky Cauldron Su 1030am		\$ 183	Wednesday Afternoon With Bill		\$ 50
Sought to Improve Th 715pm		\$ 60	The Pepper Group F 12pm		\$ 56	Wharfrats Th 815pm		\$ 200
Stepping Out Sat 430pm		\$ 90	There is a Solution Tu 6pm		\$ 373	Women's Came to Believe Sa 10am	\$ 60	\$ 60
Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm	\$ 109	\$109	They Stopped In Time M 8pm	\$ 54	\$ 54	Women's Promises F 7pm		\$ 538
Sunday Express Sun 6pm		\$150	Thursday Night Book Club Th 7pm		\$ 42	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		\$ 189
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	\$ 67	\$148	Thursday Thumpers Th 7pm		\$ 100	YAHOO Step Sa 1130am		\$ 357
Sunday Night Castro SD 730pm		\$454	Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm		\$ 120	San Francisco Total	\$6,717	\$28,114
Sunday Silence Su 730pm	\$ 40	\$ 40	Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm	\$ 72	\$ 72			
Sunset 11'ers Su		\$230	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		\$ 27	YTD	\$9,751	\$39,288

profit and loss statement: February 2012

	Feb 12	Budget	YTD	Budget		Feb 12	Budget	YTD	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					Postage	200	200	244	200
Income					Printing	0	-	0	-
Group Contributions	7471	9,900	29570	28,850	Paper Purchased	162	150	760	150
Individual Contributions	3795	4,361	9396	6,531	Rent - Office	3811	3,810	7622	7,620
Gratitude Month - Groups	968	450	3261	2,685	Rent - Other	75	75	75	165
Event Income	2117	-	3301	-	Security System	0	-	0	350
Sales - Bookstore	9240	8,555	20461	19,568	Repair & Maintenance	272	280	761	280
Cost of Books Sold	-6673	(6,095)	-15038	(13,650)	Payroll Expenses	0	-	824	-
Total Income	16918	\$17,171.0	50952	\$43,984.0	Telephone	507	400	931	702
Expense					Phone Book Listings	91	86	182	172
Employee Expenses	11098	11,415.00	19552	23,726	Internet Expense	93	95	187	218
Archives Committee	0	-	0	-	Travel	0	-	0	-
IFB Literature	0	-	0	-	Training	0	-	49	-
Professional Expenses	0	-	150	150	Equipment Lease	1597	1,600	1597	1,600
Access Expenses	535	708	1375	1,420	Reconciliation Discrepancies	0	-	0	-
Sunshine Club/12th Step	0	-	0	-	Total Expense	\$13,073	\$ 12,263.0	\$25,085	\$ 27,201.0
PI/CPC		15	44	15	Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 3,845	\$ 4,908.0	\$25,867	\$ 16,783.0
IFB Sponsored Events	650	-	1164		Interest Income	94	95	188	190
Insurance	0	-	1697	1,678	Depreciation/Amortization Exp	-584	(584)	-1168	(1,168)
Office Supplies	647	-	959	51	Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 3,355	\$ 4,419.0	\$24,887	\$ 15,805.0
Filing Fees	143	125	143	161					

Treasurer's Report

For the month of February, group contributions were \$2,428.67 under budget. Individual contributions were \$566 under budget. Gratitude month contributions were \$518.01 over budget. Bookstore sales were \$684.96 over budget in February.

Total Income from the 65th Central Office celebration was \$3,301.37 and expenses were \$1,164.20.

Unrestricted cash balance increased to \$45,767.23 from \$44,430.55, which represents more than two months of average operating expenses.

Correction: On page 12 of our April issue, a Help@aasf.org answer gave incorrect information regarding H&I. We received the following correspondence from a member of that committee:

As the **H&I liaison** to the Intergroup, it was brought to my attention that some misinformation was printed in the April 2012 issue (page 12) by a well-meaning volunteer responding to somebody's mother requesting help and materials for her son, who is incarcerated in a segregated section

of SF Jail #4 at 850 Bryant, 7th floor. **Jails require clearance.** H&I holds two meetings at 850 Bryant, Jail #4 - on Wednesdays at 6pm and Thursdays at 6pm for the **NON-segregated** sections of the jail - we are not invited into segregated sections of the jail at 850 Bryant. All H&I corrections / jail volunteers go through a very thorough clearance process (fingerprints, background check - paid for by the Sheriff's Office), and I assume that a 12th Step Committee visitor would be required to go through the same process.

Literature. H&I volunteers carry the message to the alcoholic who is confined (in hospitals, recovery facilities and jails). We are always there at the invitation of the facility to hold AA meetings. H&I volunteers do NOT "provide literature to hospitals and other institutions" but rather carry the message - and literature - along with them, to offer to participants who sit in on the meeting(s). This is a very important distinction.

Contacting H&I. Our good-hearted volunteer made a promise to contact H&I about getting literature to the incarcerated son - but no one on the committee has received a message or voicemail about this to my knowledge.

Is it possible to print a correction (or clarification) in May 2012 issue of The Point? I'll be at the Intergroup meeting this evening, and hope to see you there. Thank you for your service - I LOVE The Point, and read it every month cover to cover.



YEAR OF THE TWELVE

Concept Five: Group Conscience and the Rights of the Minority

by MEM

Concept V: “Throughout our world service structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.” A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service, by Bill W.

Bill’s discussion about this concept doesn’t need the overlay of my interpretation, so I’m going to share parts of it verbatim, in the hope that each of you unfamiliar with the Twelve Concepts for World Service can learn a bit more. In the chapter on this concept, he wrote:

“In light of the principle of the ‘Right of Appeal,’ all minorities – whether in our staffs, committees, corporate boards or among the Trustees – should be encouraged to file minority reports whenever they feel a majority to be in considerable error. And when a minority considers an issue to be such a grave one that a mistaken decision could seriously affect A.A. as a whole, it should then charge itself with the actual duty of presenting a minority report to the Conference.

“In granting this traditional ‘Right of Appeal,’ we recognize that minorities frequently can be right; that even when they are partly or wholly in error they still perform a most valuable service when, by asserting their ‘Right of Appeal,’ they compel a thorough-going debate on important issues. The well-heard minority, therefore, is our chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority....

“The Rights of ‘Appeal’ and ‘Petition’ of course aim at the total problem of protecting and making the best possible use of minority feeling and opinion. This has always been, and still is, a central problem of all free governments and democratic societies. In Alcoholics Anonymous individual freedom is of enormous importance. For instance, any alcoholic is a member of A.A. the moment he says so; we cannot take

“The second part of Tradition Two provides us with the answer when it describes A.A. leaders as ‘trusted servants.’ These servants must always be in readiness to do for the groups what the groups obviously cannot or should not do for themselves. Consequently the servants are bound to use their own information and judgment, sometimes to the point of disagreeing with uninformed or biased group opinion.

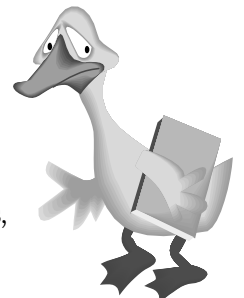
the “group conscience of A.A.” ... has certain limitations

away his right to belong. Neither can we force our members to believe anything or pay anything. Ours is indeed a large charter of minority privileges and liberties.

“When we look at our world services, we find that here we have also gone to great lengths in our trust of minority groups. Under Tradition Two, the group conscience is the final authority for A.A. world service, and it will always remain so respecting all the larger issues that confront us. Nevertheless the A.A. groups have recognized that for world service purposes the ‘group conscience of A.A.’ as a totality has certain limitations. ... It is also true that during a time of great disturbance the group conscience is not always the best possible guide because, temporarily, such an upset may prevent it from functioning efficiently or wisely. When, therefore, the group conscience cannot or should not act directly, who does act for it?

“Thus it will be seen that in world service operations A.A. often trusts a small but truly qualified minority – the hundred-odd members of its General Service Conference – to act as A.A.’s group conscience in most of our service affairs. Like other free societies, we have to trust our servants, knowing that in the unusual event that they should fail their responsibilities, we shall still have ample opportunity to recall and replace them.

“The foregoing observations illustrate, in a general way, A.A.’s concern for the freedom and protection of individual members and the whole membership’s willingness to trust able and conscientious servants to function in their several capacities, for us all.”



May 2012

ISSUE 05.12