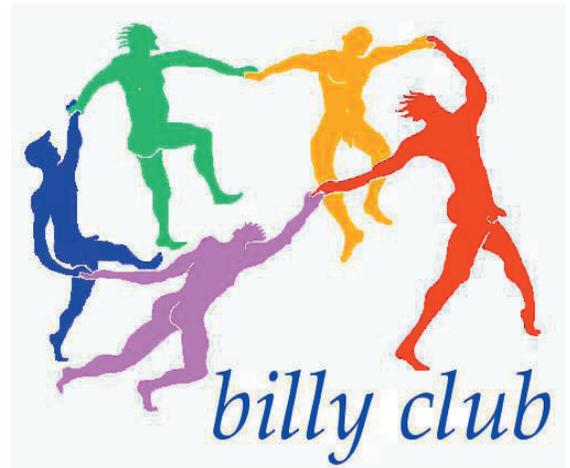


# BILLY TIMES

March 2006

**The mission of the Billy Club is to promote intimacy and community among gay and bisexual men, and to build bridges with supportive communities.**



## Letter from the board President, Charlie Seltzer

Dear Billies,

This is my first *Billy Times* letter to you since becoming board prez. For those who don't know me, let me start by saying how honored I am to be a Billy and to serve as your board president. I've been coming to Billy gatherings since 1992. Since that time, I've seen us grow from a grass roots organization run entirely by volunteers to a non-profit organization with a paid staff. I've seen AIDS rear its ugly head, claim far too many of us Billies, and retreat into a "manageable condition." I've seen crisis in our community and watched us recover. I think we are a remarkable group.

Organizations are a lot like people. We change over time. Sometimes our energy moves outward and we expand. Other times, we pull our energy back in, and we contract. Right now, the Billy Club seems to be contracting. Gathering attendance is down. It's hard to find volunteer coordinators for gatherings. The number of board members is shrinking, and no one new has joined the board in over a year. I don't think this is necessarily bad. Like I said, times of contraction are natural in the life of any organization.

But I do think that as an organization, we need new direction. We had a crisis 16 months ago that came very close to breaking us. We were almost bankrupted by our former office manager. Our membership seemed to split into camps. BilleNet flamed. Tensions were high, and trust was low.

Miracle of miracles, we survived. There is nothing like a good crisis to pull us all together. Whether that crisis is AIDS or

an embezzling office manager, dealing with crisis unites us, gives us a sense of purpose. But now what? AIDS is manageable, and the office crisis is resolved. What do we grow *toward* when we don't have to be responding to a crisis?

Recently, Jack Pilling posted 3 questions to BilleNet. They are great questions, and speak to our need for new direction. For those of you not on BilleNet, here are Jack's questions.

1. Do YOU wish the Billy Club to continue to exist?
2. In what particular directions could the Billy Club be of most value to YOU?
3. In what capacity can YOUR leadership be relied upon?

One Billy answered Jack's third question by making a \$10,000 matching pledge. Any donations you make to any of our funds in 2006 will be matched by our anonymous donor. I know that few of us can afford to make \$10,000 pledges, but money is only one way to contribute.

Yes, we need money. But even more, we need people to volunteer to be gathering coordinators and sub-coordinators, to lead workshops at gatherings, to *come* to gatherings, to join the Board... These are only some of the many ways to contribute.

I have every faith that the Billy Club will turn around and grow again. All it takes is you, and you, and you – each of us contributing in the ways we can.

# Visions From and On BillyNet

by Marcus Borgman

The not-official but related anyway email list spelled BilleNet but known also as BillyNet, BileNet, and “that email list” has been awash lately with visions about and for the Billy Club. David Carroll started the dialogue and Jack Pilling continued with three specific questions. In case you’ve missed out on the musings of some thoughtful members of the list, here is just a sample of the responses regarding David’s and Jack’s questions.

David stated, “I would like to start a dialogue on BillyNet and in the community about the Billy Club, spirituality, mind, and healing. And what is the Billy Club about, where is it going? ... The Billy club seems to be floundering, looking for a direction. It is evident in the lack of interest in volunteering and participation. The gatherings are becoming more about partying, getting away, and who wants to volunteer when you’re at a party and trying to ‘get away.’ Although getting away is healing. There doesn’t seem to be a purpose!!”

Jack asked:

1. Do YOU wish the Billy Club to continue to exist?
2. In what particular directions could the Billy Club be of most value to YOU?
3. In what capacity can YOUR leadership be relied upon?

Mitch said, “Personally, it’s the heartspace that’s been most valuable: heartspace in heart circle (though breaches of confidentiality have made this uncomfortable for me) and also heartspace throughout a gathering, from the dish room to the snack’n’snuggle. Almost regardless of the activity, if it’s in heartspace, I find it worthwhile. I would love to see a subgroup of Billies get together to pursue things like retirement cohousing, and to investigate how we can take care of one another as we age. I also think the Billies could somehow help us in our political lives, though I’m not sure what form that would take.”

Rob said, “The Billy Club has always been a place of nurturance and healing: healing of the body and of the soul. Workshops were designed to hold us in love and to encourage us to stay connected with our sexuality rather than run from it in fear. In the face of death, we came to Billy gatherings to play and to love. We learned to be shameless about our bodies and who we are. We learned to love ourselves and each other.”

Scott said, “... I prefer the gatherings that are weighted a bit more toward ritual and spiritual exploration. I also like a lot of quiet time to meditate, think, read, write in my journal. I almost always seem to be shying away from the noisier activities. It’s not that I’m completely against the disco dances and the talent shows, but they aren’t a main attraction for me and I find that they can take me out of the slower, more meditative headspace

that I come to the gatherings to get into, and tempt me back into the noisy, jangly, chattery headspace I try to leave behind me whenever I leave the Bay Area for the weekend. I would enjoy the dances and shows more and be able to give myself to them more wholeheartedly if there were fewer of them in a year ... I am very much drawn to exploring the connections between sex and spirit, and would welcome more of that ... I have already drawn enormous energy from finding these connections and nurturing them in myself and in some of my close relationships. I know there are others in the Billy Club who are very interested in this, and we’ve had several workshops in the year and a half I’ve been coming to gatherings, and I would love it if we might find a way to bring even more of it into the gatherings.”

Peter said, “What are some of the qualities that make us ‘us’? I.e., What makes someone a Billy? (I think the Billy Club is above all a set of shared personal values and qualities, not its particular activities in any given epoch.)

- \* Compassion -- the ability to ‘feel with’ another person.

- \* Humaneness -- the ability to see others as humans like ourselves, and to treat them as we want to be treated.

- \* Emotional fearlessness / openheartedness -- the ability to share our own feelings without losing sight of ourselves, and to accept that from others.

- \* Generosity both emotional and practical.

- \* A desire for the spiritual, which for me is simply any deeply significant relationship or belief that transcends the individual, whether or not it involves entities beyond the customarily observable physical world.

- \* A positive relationship to physical intimacy with other men.

- \* The ability not to take ourselves too seriously.

- \* The desire and practice of translating our values into action.”

Will said, “I would be enthusiastic about cheap gatherings where we could go play in the woods and not fuss about kitchens and talent shows.”

Greg said, “What the Billy Club does today is extremely valuable to me socially, emotionally, spiritually and physically. I believe it also does these valuable things for my community (queer men) ... **NOTA BENE:** As far as I’m concerned, the Billy Club can be a sort of heart-entered travel agency that simply organizes events through the work of volunteers. That in itself is very healing. I personally would like to see us take a role nationally in the queer men’s health movement by being present at conferences, publishing articles, sharing our Best Practices with other communities, partnering with the likes of Body Electric, the White Crane, Eric Rofes’s group, etc. That of course means realizing the power of what we’ve created, plus fundraising, publicity campaigns, time, people, etc.”

Jim said, “I love the challenges of heart space, opening, growing, sharing, changing and considering the needs and views of others as well as myself. I don’t see the Billy Club becoming a geriatric ward or retirement community, though I love the idea of a group of Billies creating a co-housing / retirement community somewhere ... The club itself almost feels like a dream ... I believe we definitely need new blood in the club

## Poz/Neg Gathering Update

by Rick Nevitt-Lamantia and Marcus Borgman

The late May gathering with the HIV positive and HIV negative theme is continuing to be developed and now we have some details about it. We want to remind you this will also be a real Billy gathering, with most if not all regular Billy activities like circles, hugs, great food, rituals, puppy piles, friendship-making and hanging out, in addition to the structured workshops. The gathering is being held this May 26-29, Friday to Monday, Memorial Weekend at Saratoga Springs Resort, with a possible option to arrive earlier Thursday and/or stay Monday night.

Friday night will be an opening circle/ritual, and workshops will start Saturday morning. Groups will be formed. Body Electric will hold a workshop in the afternoon, limited to 60 participants, at no extra cost. **That's right, your registration fee will include a free Body Electric workshop!** Alternate activities will be scheduled at the same time. Some workshops will be given by professional Billies, and wonderful Burt Cohen is cooking up fabulous delights.

State funds will be paying for this gathering for about 40 Mendocino county residents, and 20 Santa Cruz county residents. Contact the Billy office for details on that program, or contact coordinator Rick Nevitt-Lamantia, billytrickster@yahoo.com, 831-464-1801, for Santa Cruz county residents.

Other Billies not living in Santa Cruz or Mendocino county will be able to attend of course but the cost is \$85 per night. Don't forget to ask for a Richard Locke scholarship if that's a bit steep for you, and please pay attention to the scholarship deadline. For example, since we are used to paying \$60 per night, think about asking for a \$25 per night scholarship. That can help keep scholarship funds available for more Billies.

The Billy office will be handling the location and cook contracts, and process registrations. **This is a new animal; it is and it is not a Billy gathering as we have known them.** Please contact the Billy office with your specific comments and concerns, and stay tuned for more information.

### ...What is Billy and Where is He Going

and welcome outreach in whatever form it takes ... But, a big question I have is, 'What's a Billy?' I get asked this a lot and I kind of jokingly say Billies are Faeries with jobs or careers! But, I really don't think it fully describes what are Billies. So, I'd LOVE to host a workshop / discussion / group meeting to brainstorm ideas on 'What's a Billy?' at the May Day Gathering. Anyone interested in helping?"

Rick said, "When talking about going to a gathering among friends I usually say 'I am going to see 100 or so of my lovers.' They generally respond by saying You have sex with 100 men? I just say ... not all at once. Then I explain that these are men that I love and that love me. It is not the perfect family, but a damn good one. Enough blathering from me ... Love, Light, and Hugs to all."

### The Billy Foundation Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual February 2005 through February 2006

	Feb '05...	Budget	\$ Over ...	% of Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
Earned Income	112,329	131,600	-19,271	85%
RL Scholarship Fund	4,259	5,000	-741	85%
Merchandise Sales	2,222	2,500	-278	89%
Contributed Income	31,785	29,900	1,885	106%
Fundraising Events	403	2,500	-2,097	16%
BESF	3,134	3,700	-566	85%
Government Contracts	23,278			
Suspense income	671			
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>178,082</b>	<b>175,200</b>	<b>2,882</b>	<b>102%</b>
Expense				
Bank Charges	1,196	1,485	-289	81%
Communications	2,327	1,650	677	141%
Event Costs	70,989	108,250	-37,261	66%
Independent Contractors	-1,085	2,925	-4,010	-37%
Insurance	2,336	1,076	1,260	217%
Payroll Expenses and Taxes	22,822	32,017	-9,195	71%
Publications	0	1,800	-1,800	0%
Repairs & Maintenance	874	1,610	-736	54%
Cost of Merchandise	1,232	500	732	246%
Advertising	317	450	-133	70%
BESF disbursements	2,002	2,200	-198	91%
Postage	1,715	3,400	-1,685	50%
Conferences and Meetings	0	225	-225	0%
Board Expenses	2,339	1,250	1,089	187%
Donations Given	0	500	-500	0%
Fees & Licenses	45	25	20	180%
Printing and Copying	3,185	3,750	-565	85%
Hospitality	82	180	-98	45%
Miscellaneous Expenses	244			
Office Rental	8,800	7,600	1,200	116%
Supplies	1,235	2,000	-765	62%
Travel & Lodging	610	756	-146	81%
Utilities	2,027	1,815	212	112%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>123,291</b>	<b>175,464</b>	<b>-52,173</b>	<b>70%</b>
Net Ordinary Income	54,791	-264	55,055	-20,794%
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income				
CHOW Grant	3,398	4,770	-1,372	71%
Total Other Income	3,398	4,770	-1,372	71%
Other Expense				
CHOW Expense	6,430			
Capital Equipment	0	500	-500	0%
Total Other Expense	6,430	500	5,930	1,286%
Net Other Income	-3,032	4,270	-7,302	-71%
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>51,759</b>	<b>4,007</b>	<b>47,752</b>	<b>1,292%</b>

-----cut here and mail with donation-----

### Matching Donation Program Now In Effect!

**Yes dear Billies, we need donations to carry us forward and keep gathering fees reasonable. Send your tax-deductible donation to the Billy Foundation, 210 S. Main St, Ukiah CA 95482.**

**Allocate my donation thusly:**

**General Fund**  \_\_\_\_\_

**Billy EMergency Support Fund**  \_\_\_\_\_

**Richard Locke Scholarship Fund**  \_\_\_\_\_

**We expect your check to have your correct name and address on it, right? If not, please supply your correct contact information. Thanks!**

## Billy Club Gatherings

typically start with a potluck dinner the first day and end after lunch on the last day. Please contact the coordinators, when known, to volunteer for any of the many positions necessary to make gatherings a success. Contact the office if you wish either to coordinate a gathering or work with its future coordinators.

## 2006 Gatherings

### May Day

Billys and Billykin  
Scott Marley, Jim Williams  
Thursday, April 27 - Monday, May 1  
Saratoga Springs, Lake County

### HIV Poz/Neg

Billys Only  
Rick Nevitt-Lamantia, Dan Driessche  
Friday, May 26 - Monday, May 29  
Saratoga Springs, Lake County

### Independence Day

Billys Only  
David Carroll  
Thursday, June 29 - Tuesday, July 4  
Saratoga Springs, Lake County

### Labor Day

Billys and Billykin  
Coordinators Needed  
Thursday, Aug. 31 - Monday, Sept. 4  
Camp and Sons, Mendocino County

### Halloween

Billys Only  
Coordinators Needed  
Thursday, Oct. 26 - Monday, Oct. 30  
Saratoga Springs, Lake County

### New Years

Billys and Billykin  
Coordinators Needed  
Dates Pending  
Heartwood, Humboldt County

### Billy Email

Billy Board minutes, agendas and other information are available via email. If you're interested in receiving them, email [office@billyclub.org](mailto:office@billyclub.org).

## The Billy Office

Office Open: Wednesday - Friday  
10am - 1pm and other times Wed -  
Fri unscheduled, call for information.

## Game Nights

1st and 3rd Saturdays  
At the Billy office from 7pm to 10pm.  
Bring games, snacks and non-  
alcoholic drinks.

## Billy Lunch

Wednesdays at 12:45pm  
Meet at the office. We dine locally.

## Local Socials

are unofficial get-togethers that happen monthly and usually include schmoozing, a potluck meal and heart circle. Here's contact information and their attendance policy. Some socials welcome Billykin.

## East Bay Potlucks

Contact Alan Oakley at  
510.436.3330  
or at [alanoakley@aol.com](mailto:alanoakley@aol.com)

## Mendo Potluck

Coordinator Needed! Call Billy office.

## San Francisco Billy Potlucks

Alternates men only/open to all  
Contact G-Fry at  
[gregthebarbersf@yahoo.com](mailto:gregthebarbersf@yahoo.com)

## SonoMen

(Men only)  
Contact Jack at 707.838.4193  
or at [jack@touchforlife.com](mailto:jack@touchforlife.com)

## South San Francisco & Santa Cruz Area

Coordinator Needed!  
Contact Lou Ceci at 650.969.9556  
or at [ceci\\_lga@yahoo.com](mailto:ceci_lga@yahoo.com)

## The Billy Times

should be published four times per year and included with gathering calls. We need a regular editor. Please contact the office if you can help! To subscribe to the Billy Club's mailing list, send a \$25 sliding scale yearly subscription fee. If you can't afford that, send what you can afford. Your renewal date is noted on your address label. Contact us at:

The Billy Foundation  
210 South Main Street  
Ukiah, CA 95482  
Voice 707.462.0766  
Fax 707.462.0827  
[office@billyclub.org](mailto:office@billyclub.org)  
Resource Coordinator:  
Marcus Borgman

## The Billy Times

Temporary Editor: Marcus Borgman

## Board Meetings

Are open to all Billys and Billykin on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Two meetings a quarter are at the Billy Office with the third month in Sonoma County. Call office for location details.

## Board of Directors

President: Charlie Seltzer  
Vice President: Paul Mueller  
Treasurer: Robert "Goat" Conrad  
Secretary: Jim Burke  
with Bill Blackburn, John Cwiakala,  
Karen Ottoboni, Mitch Trachtenberg

## Ongoing Board Portfolios

BESF: Wil Gonzales, Paul Mueller,  
Bob Kuder  
Gatherings: Rick Nevitt-Lamantia  
BillyFon: Jason Bellecci-Serinus  
Billy Boutique: Bill Murphy  
Website: Ruven Hannah, Joe Kukulka

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