

# BILLY TIMES

— July 2007 —

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 Board President Jim Burke

**Summertime. What do you think of when you think of this time of year?** Hot weather? Barbecues? Working on your tan? For me, I think of San Francisco fog, which I love (call me crazy), and giving directions to lost tourists on how to find Fisherman's Wharf—had two yesterday, as a matter of fact.

But I digress. For the Billy Club, summertime means the peak of our gathering season, with our two biggest ones—May Day and Midsummer (July Fourth)—happening at this time of year. May Day has come and gone, and it was quite a success. The theme of “Queer Sporting Life” resonated with many attendees, both those who consider themselves “jocks” as well as those who ordinarily run screaming out of the room at the sight of a football. I probably fall into the latter category myself. This gentle exploration of sports, competition, and our unique Billy interpretation of it all provided many hours of laughter, introspection, and just plain fun for so many. Thanks go out to our three gathering coordinators—Peter Little, Mike Drum, and Hector Palma for all of their energy, passion, and planning in pulling off this great event. Additionally, I'd like to acknowledge the hard work of the volunteer subcoordinators who played such key roles in the day-to-day running of the gathering—Alan Bergman, Brian Haley, George Anthony, Carl Minns, Jack Pilling, Jim Gilson, John Cwiakala, Nick Gill, George Bailey, Jean Sward, Scott Marley, Dave Egbert, Bruce MacDonald, J.M. Rodriguez, Leor Levin, Jamie Vermillion, Steve Rockwell, and Greg Fry. And, of course, our wonderful cook, Fatima Rigby.

**In between our May Day and July Fourth** gatherings this year was the “Poz-Neg” gathering, held over Memorial Day weekend. This is not techni-

cally an exclusive Billy Club gathering, but is instead a joint effort of the Mendocino County and Santa Cruz County Departments of Public Health, along with the Billy Foundation. Through workshops, heart circles, and casual social interaction, the Poz-Neg gathering explores the issues that impact HIV-positive and HIV-negative men's relationships to one another. This was the second year in a row that we helped put on this gathering, and it was again a successful endeavor. A special thanks goes out to Bill Blackburn, who coordinated the gathering for the Billy Club. His hard work, energy, and incredible patience were critical in dealing with the health department bureaucracies, and I doubt this gathering could have been successful without him. I'd also like to recognize the many Billys and friends of Billys who played a part as volunteers in making sure Poz-Neg was the meaningful weekend it was—Marty Carls, Greg Rowe, Dave Allen, Rico Avila, David Beckstein, Todd Phillips, Andrew Purchin, Jeff Young, Tad Crandall, and Cliff Carter.

**As I write this article, registration is wrapping up for the July gathering (July 3–8).** As a part of our ongoing effort to keep our gatherings juicy, this gathering also has a general theme—“A Reunion Rendezvous,” an effort to bring together the many of us who have been “Billy-ized” since the founding of our organization way, way back in 1988. Many events are planned, including an auction (proceeds to go to the Billy Foundation general fund), a sweat lodge, and a community building ritual, which has evolved from its original conception into an exploration of where we are as Billys, as well as future directions for the Billy community. It promises to be a busy, challenging, intense, silly, and relaxing six days—in others words, a true Billy Club gathering. I hope you're able to attend all or part of it.

Looking ahead, our Labor Day gathering this year will

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## On Community:

“Community is the spirit, the guiding light of the tribe, whereby people come together in order to fulfill a specific purpose, to help others fulfill their purpose, and to take care of one another. The goal of the community is to make sure that each member of the community is heard and is properly giving the gifts he has brought to this world. Without this giving, the community dies. And without the community, the individual is left without a place where he can contribute. The community is that grounding place where people come and share their gifts and receive from others.

“When you don’t have community you are not listened to; you don’t have a place you can go to and feel that you really belong. You don’t have people to affirm who you are and to support you in bringing forward your gifts. This disempowers the psyche, making you vulnerable to consumerism and all the things that come along with it.

“Also, it leaves many people who have wonderful contributions to make holding back their gifts, not knowing where to put them. And without the unloading of our gifts we experience a blockage inside, which affects us spiritually, mentally, and physically in many different ways. We are left without a home to go to when we need to be seen.”

—Sobonfu Some, *The Spirit of Intimacy: Ancient African Teachings in the Ways of Relationships* ☺

Our thanks to Bill Blackburn. Have you come across a passage in your reading that you’d like to share? Please send it to the editor at [dbrin@2davids.com](mailto:dbrin@2davids.com).

## The Billy Office Wish List

### The Billy Foundation office needs your help!

In order to make the nerve center of Billyland a more comfortable and functional place, the Billy Office is seeking donations of equipment, furniture, and volunteer time. Specifically, we’re looking for the following.

#### Equipment & Furniture

- Black & white laser multifunction printer/fax/copier/scanner (est. \$250+, new)
- Windows Vista-capable computer system (est. \$600+ new). Preferably something comparable to the current Billy Office computer, which has a P4 processor, 2.4 GHz, 512 MB of RAM, and a 17” LCD monitor
- Comfortable sofa for Board meeting room (est. \$500+ new, used okay)
- Chairs for Board meeting room (four upholstered, used okay)

#### Volunteers

- Office assistant—minimum: filing, reception, etc.; maximum: filling in for resource coordinator when sick, on vacation, etc.
- Librarian for Billy Library
- Interior designer for Board meeting room (nothing extensive required)
- Interior designer for shared office bathroom (nothing extensive required)

If you think you can help out with any of these, please contact Marcus Borgman at the Billy Foundation office at 707-462-0766 or [office@billyclub.org](mailto:office@billyclub.org). ☺

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## THE BILLY TIMES

is published five times per year and is included with gathering calls. To receive gathering information by regular mail, send a \$25 (sliding scale) yearly subscription fee. Short on cash? Send what you can afford. Your renewal date is noted on your address label. Getting on the email list is free. Contact us at

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Resource coordinator: Marcus Borgman  
Editor: David Brin Design: Scott Marley

**PRESIDENT'S LETTER** from page one

be held in a new location for the first time in many years. Called "Rancho Cicada," this is riverfront property in the Sierra foothills near Sacramento. The Billy Club held a gathering there back in 1997, and the old-timers tell me it was a great experience. Cicada is an ideal setting for a mellow, late summer gathering. There are tents with beds, as well as camping areas for those who bring their own gear. There is a large outdoor area overlooking the river that's covered from the sun and can be used for heart circles and other activities. The river is available for swimming, and contains wading areas where you can just relax and catch some rays. The ever-popular Chuck Collison will be providing the culinary fare. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Cicada has hot water for showers! So, if you're looking for a mellow place to enjoy the last long weekend of the summer, this could be the place for you.

As far as our New Year's gathering is concerned, we are in the process of choosing a new locale, and hopefully will have something to announce in the near future. As you may recall, the Heartwood Institute, after 18 years, will no longer be holding gatherings for non-Heartwood folks at that time of year. They have offered us another possible site to use for New Year's 2008/2009, but we need a new place for at least this year. We're looking at a number of sites in northern California, and are particularly seeking a locale that provides the needed amenities for a winter gathering (warm cabins,

heart circle space, and workshop space) as well as the kind of unique spirit and energy that Heartwood has provided over the past 18 years. Not an easy task, but we're working on it, and hope to have something to tell you soon.

**Finally, I need to make a point that I hope** resonates with at least some of you—WE NEED NEW BOARD MEMBERS!!! Here's the situation. We currently have seven Board members. Under our bylaws, we need a minimum of six in order to operate. While we could in theory lower that minimum number, the smaller the Board, the less we're able to function and do all the work required by the Billy Foundation. A majority of folks on the Board have served for three years or more. At least three of these Board members would like to step down before the end of 2007. Why? Part of it is fatigue. Long-serving Board members saw the organization through the terrible damage and hurt of the embezzlement by our former employee, and expended considerable energy and time rebuilding the organization's procedures, accounting practices, and finances. It was a ton of work, and these Board members deserve considerable credit for weathering these storms and not walking away. Part of it is a desire by some Board members to do other things, both within the Billy Club and outside of it. And part of it is perhaps the realization that any healthy organization needs new energy and ideas on a regular basis, and regular turnover of Board members allows for this.

I ask you to search your heart and consider stepping forward to join us on the Board. If you want to know more about what we Board members do, feel free to talk to us at any time. Our names are listed on page three of the *Billy Times*, and we can be reached by contacting the Billy Office. Yes, there's work involved, although nowhere near the workload we experienced during our recent difficulties. There is a great sense of camaraderie on our Board, and yes, we even have some fun from time to time. There is also the enormous satisfaction of realizing you're making a difference in a positive way on behalf of an organization you love. So again, I ask you to search your heart and consider taking this step. If you believe in the Billy Club and what it's trying to do, if you believe we offer something unique and wonderful to the gay community and the planet beyond, please consider offering your energy and talents to the organization by becoming a Board member. We are especially looking for people with financial, accounting, and fundraising skills, but that's not all by any means. Even if you think you have no particularly interesting skills or abilities to offer, come and talk to us, come to a Board meeting, think about joining us. Everyone in this community has something unique to offer this organization and this Board, and no one will be turned away for supposed lack of talent!

**With the coming of the summer solstice the Billy** Foundation moves into high gear. For those of you who are new to us, this is the time to truly discover the Billy experience for yourselves. For those of us who have left us for whatever reason, this is the time to come home and rediscover what the Billy Club is all about. I hope to see you among us in these warm and sunny months ahead. ☺

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## Billy Club Board of Directors

Board meetings are open to all Billys and Billykin on the third Sunday of each month. Meeting locations rotate among Ukiah, Sonoma County, and San Francisco. Call the Billy Office for location details.

### Board of Directors

Jim Burke, *president*  
 Bill Blackburn, *vice president*  
 Paul Mueller, *treasurer*  
 John Cwiakala, *secretary*  
 Jim Gilson  
 Mark Hoffheimer  
 Steve Rockwell

### Ongoing Board Portfolios

*Billy Emergency Support Fund*  
 Wil Gonzales, Paul Mueller, Bob Kuder  
*Fundraising*, Jim Gilson  
*Website*, Joe Kukulka  
*Gatherings*, Steve Rockwell  
*BillyFon*, Jason Bellecci-Serinus  
*Billy Times*, David Brin, Scott Marley

## The Billy Office

The Billy Foundation  
211 W. Standley Street  
Ukiah, CA 95482

Phone: 707-462-0766

Fax: 707-462-1164

Email: [office@billyclub.org](mailto:office@billyclub.org)

Office hours: Wednesday through Friday 10 AM to 1 PM and other unscheduled times. Call for information. Resource coordinator: Marcus Borgman.

## Local Socials

are unofficial get-togethers that take place monthly and usually include schmoozing, a potluck meal, and a heart circle. Here are contact information and attendance policies. Some socials welcome Billykin.

### East Bay Potlucks

Contact Alan Oakley at 510-436-3330 or [alanoakley-oakley@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alanoakley-oakley@sbcglobal.net).

### Mendocino Potlucks

*Coordinator needed!* Call Billy office.

### San Francisco Potlucks

Alternates between men only and open to all. Contact G-Fry at 415-558-0469 or [gregthebarbersf@yahoo.com](mailto:gregthebarbersf@yahoo.com).

### SonoMen

Men only. Contact Robert Cline at 707-573-9466 or [sonomenpotluck@hotmail.com](mailto:sonomenpotluck@hotmail.com).

### South San Francisco & Santa Cruz

*Coordinator needed!* Contact Lou Ceci at 650-969-9556 or [ceci\\_lga@yahoo.com](mailto:ceci_lga@yahoo.com).

## BillyFon

The BillyFon 24-hour message service offers current information on Board meetings, potluck, heart circles, hikes, and gatherings. Call (415) 289-2080 or (707) 583-2330.

## Visit Our Website

<http://www.billyclub.org>

login: billy

password: heartspace

# 2007 Gathering Schedule

## July Fourth

Billys only

Saratoga Springs, Lake County, Calif.

Tuesday, July 3, to Sunday, July 8

## Labor Day

Billys and Billykin welcome

Rancho Cicada, Plymouth, Calif.

Friday, Aug. 31, to Monday, Sept. 3

## Halloween

Billys only

Saratoga Springs, Lake County, Calif.

Friday, Oct. 26, to Monday, Oct. 29

## Billy Emails

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

## Billy Lunch

Wednesdays from 12:45 to 2 PM. Meet at the Billy Office to dine out.

## Our Apologies

to Jean Sward, whose name was not listed correctly on our list of donors in the last issue of the *Billy Times*. Jean has been a steadfast contributor to the Billy Foundation. We wish to thank Jean and all our wonderful contributors.

