



# Conscious Contact

Prescott Area Intergroup: Serving Central Yavapai County

May 2017

240 S. Montezuma St. # 108 Prescott, AZ 86303 Phone: (928) 445-8691 Open Weekdays 10:00 am - 4:00 pm  
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## Living a Selfless Life

There is so much paradox living life in AA! For example, I've found that in order to live a more selfless life, I have to continue working on myself using the 12 steps as the guide that helps me set my life in order. It's been my experience that when I reflect, take personal inventory, pray, meditate, and practice forgiveness, I tend to see, hear, and be a more compassionate human being.

So being less about self is about self-awareness, and in that discovery I have found freedom from self-centeredness. I remember the first time I discovered I had a wounded child running around inside my psyche. For years this rampant little boy was causing all kinds of havoc in my life. After I stopped drinking he began to act out in hurtful ways like lying, cheating and stealing. I remember the time I admitted to my sponsor that I was stealing all kinds of stuff from Starbucks. I'll never forget his response. I was expecting him to scold and shame me, but he kindly pointed out that this kind of behavior seemed to be a way for me to escape from what was really going on inside me. He suggested I spend some time asking myself what the "little boy" inside me really needed.

My sponsor suggested that I was stealing so I would not have to embrace the wounded part of me. He invited me into my deep feelings grief and helped me see that sometimes stealing is a behavior aimed at covering up the deeper needs that had not been met in childhood. He encouraged me to begin doing things for myself that my parents may never have done for me. He also suggested I ask GOD for help and to see what would happen. He pointed out that different behaviors, like exercise or simply going to a movie, might be more life-giving. Then he urged that I return the stolen items or go back and pay for them. These were simple things that I could do to replace the lying, stealing and cheating. I began learning about the importance of self-care as a way to serenity and peace in my life.

As I stumbled into the 4th step and began the process of taking a fearless and moral inventory of myself, I discovered that I was in fact an extreme example of self-will run riot, even though I did not think so. After step four and five it began to get harder and harder to

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## The First Gifts of Sobriety

My name is Grant A. and I am an alcoholic and drug addict. I live in Yavapai County and I have now been sober for 16 months.

I was the kind of person who slept under a bridge, ate out of trash cans and who wouldn't hesitate to beg anyone for money. I was a selfish, hard-headed scared kid who just wanted to get high and be free (so I thought). I had to experience the complete defeat of myself before I could accept help from anyone, and more importantly, to allow God into my life.

Things have changed so much in these past 16 months I can hardly fathom it. I have people in my life who love and support me. They help me reach goals and aspire to new levels in my life. Today I am going to Yavapai College, taking welding classes. I'm in my second semester and I already have my first professional certificate. I work full time at Costco. The pay is great and they also help me with life goals. One of the greatest blessings in my sober life so far is that I have a wonderful, growing relationship with my father. When I was younger I could hardly stand my father or even listen to anything he would say. Today I love hanging out with him. He could say the same things over and over again and it doesn't matter. I love listening to him. The other day we even stained his cabin together. It was great.

Recently I realized that some of my peers have started asking me for advice – if they should do this or that. I asked one of my advisors what was up with this, and he said: "Grant, if you know it or not, people are looking up to you because they see what you are doing and the things in your life you are accomplishing." What a wonderful blessing – God took a person who was selfish and didn't know how to handle life without getting high and drunk and changed him into a person others look up to for advice and encouragement!

I know all this wouldn't be possible if I didn't put in the work. I had to turn my will and my life over to people who showed me how to live. I have to give all credit to my God and the people he put into my life to show me how to work and live the twelve steps of AA.

Grant A.

*Continued from page 1*

judge others. This is when I woke up to the reality that what I saw in others was in fact the things in myself that I either detested or loved.

I remember when I first got sober I had a deep, self-centered fear of asking others if there was anything I could do for them. What if they say yes? I was surprised to find that when I did find the courage to ask that question, people would many times just say "no." And I found in that response my own fear of allowing others to help me. This was a true sign that "these people" were "my people," and it was obvious at some point we were going to have to learn how to help each other.

It has been through my daily commitment to AA that I have overcome most of these fears. I have found that it is just as helpful to extend myself to others without expectation of return as it is to "save" them. It has been in AA that I have learned to practice unconditional love. I've learned it by having it extended to me.

I've often heard that I didn't get to AA by "getting it right," but I can honestly say that I do get it right when on a daily basis I go to meetings, get direction, and participate in prayer and meditation. When I do these simple things I am living a more selfless life.

Jeffrey G.

### **Traditions Checklist from the AA Grapevine**

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

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, "I'm not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn't apply to me"?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the limitations of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
4. Am I willing to twelfth-step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
5. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
6. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?

c. THE AA GRAPEVINE INC

## **District 14 Report**

At the end of March and beginning of April I had the pleasure of attending both the Pre- Conference Area Assembly and the Sub-district 14-140 (GSOs assigned number for Prescott) monthly meeting. Other than 14-140 agreeing to host Prescott Founder's Day, there was little to report. However, there is much to report from the Pre Conference Assembly.

Those who read last month's report in Conscious Contact know that there were a number of topics to be discussed at the conference, and in fact they were discussed in depth. All the information Group Service Representatives gathered from their meetings has been passed to the Delegate who will be reporting to the General Service Office in New York.

Concerning the idea of having different Areas bid to host the Delegates' Conference in New York, overall, Arizona felt it highly unlikely that such an arrangement would be cost effective, but felt that if New York thought differently it might be worth pursuing.

Concerning the Grapevine's pursuit of greater presence on the internet, there was agreement that Grapevine should continue to look into getting a Google for Non-Profits account, which would have the effect of moving AA to the first page of Google search results when using words related to AA and recovery. But the feeling was that pursuit in other areas, such as Twitter, should be put on hold for the time being.

Finally, reaction to a proposed new pamphlet about safety in AA appeared split. Many meetings, especially those more dominated by men or lawyers, felt that further information was unnecessary or were concerned about AA being held liable in the event of further problems. The other half felt that a pamphlet that provides information regarding how a group may respond, especially as it relates to the traditions, would be a useful tool provided the pamphlet made it clear that final authority continued to rest with the AA group. Updating the Home Group pamphlet seemed to meet with approval. I will be able to report on how other areas felt after attending the Post Conference Assembly at the end of May.

Yours in Service,  
Colyn N

**Heard at a meeting:**

**I had an ego so big  
it would have killed a lesser man.**



# May AA Birthdays CONGRATULATIONS!



### Wilhoit Oasis

Susan R. 5/24/75

### Sunday Round Table

Eric D. 5/25/02

### Park Ave

Becca F. 5/18/12

### Tues. Nite Step Study

Mike S. 5/28/09

Tom S. 5/08/96

### PV Wed Night BBS

Martha J. 5/22/08

Bob F. 5/11/04

### Lushes t' Ladies

Barb B. 5/24/08

Dayana L. 5/24/80

### Girly Birds

Cheyenne C 5/10/12

Diana E. 5/26/92

Cindy G. 5/21/89

### PV Noon Group

Gene B. 5/22/12

Fred C. 5/09/98

Daniel B. 5/01/84

### Alternatives

Jerrett C. 5/27/12

Beverly L. 5/15/92

Brian A. 5/01/84

### Seniors in Sobriety

Ray W. 5/01/87

NY Jimmy 5/28/76

Carrie G. 5/19/76

### The Slice of Life

Kevin Mc. 5/15/10

Bill T. 5/01/06

David C. 5/10/00

### Serenity at Sunrise

Patrick C. 5/17/16

Greg R. 5/31/07

Dan H. 5/14/93

Lawrence Z. 5/01/91

### PV Sun. No Name Grp

John M. 5/17/11

Derek W. 5/13/09

Chris E. 5/20/08

Greg K. 5/08/07

Bob F. 5/11/04

### Humboldt Men's Stag

Matt V. 5/20/16

John M. 5/17/11

Charlie V. 5/05/90

Tim H. 5/10/88

Kevin M. 5/21/87

Rick D. 5/26/82

Ron S. 5/10/72

### The Prescott Group

Luke S. 5/15/12

Mike S. 5/21/10

Jake H. 5/16/10

Taylor R. 5/08/10

Ryan D. 5/10/09

Bill B. 5/27/95

Chris B. 5/12/88

Rick D. 5/26/82



## CELEBRATE SOBRIETY!

**Please help update our AA birthday list!**

**Does your group have a birthday chairperson?  
It's a great service opportunity!**

**Email, mail, or bring in a copy of your group's  
updated birthday list to the Intergroup Office.**

**Sign up to receive a monthly birthday update email.**

**Thank You to everyone who helps!**

**Heard at a meeting:**

**If you don't change, your sobriety date will!**

# Service Corner

**Look back and be grateful.**

**Look ahead and be hopeful.**

**Look around and be helpful.**

### **Next Intergroup Meeting:**

6:30 pm, Wednesday, May 10, 2017  
(the second Wednesday of every month)  
at the First Christian Church, 1230 Willow Creek Rd.

### **Next District 14-140 GSR Meeting**

Wednesday, May 3, 2017  
(the first Wednesday of the month)  
at the First Christian Church, 1230 Willow Creek Rd.

### **Next District 14-142 GSR Meeting**

6:30 pm, Tuesday, May 2, 2017  
(the first Tuesday of every month)  
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 7763 E. Long Look, PV

### **Prescott Shoestring Roundup Committee**

5:30 pm, Friday, May 19, 2017  
(the third Friday of the month)  
Unity Church, Corner of Arizona & Goodwin

### **PI / CPC Committee Meetings**

Meetings scheduled as needed.  
The Public Information/  
Cooperation with the Professional Community  
Committee has many opportunities to be of service.  
For information about this committee call the  
Prescott Area Intergroup Office (928) 445-8691.

The Prescott Area Intergroup's  
**Treatment Facilities Committee**  
For information on how you can be of service on this  
committee please call the Intergroup Office.

The Prescott Area Intergroup's  
**Correctional Facilities Committee**  
For Yavapai County Juvenile Justice Center AA meeting  
information call Jerry D. 928 636-9343

## Step of the Month – Step Five

Members share how they came to grips with our fifth step: "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

The Fifth Step was a liberating moment in my spiritual struggles. Being an atheist on entering AA, I had a profound spiritual awakening when completing this step. For the first time I believed in God. My Higher Power was not only the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, but a God of my understanding. The spiritual awakening happened when I was eight months sober. Thank God for the man sitting with me on that autumn day in 1981. He is gone now but will always be remembered. I have had the honor to hear some fifth steps over my years in this fellowship. Having someone trust me gives me a sense of being with God. Passing on what has been given to me takes me away from the isolation that many of us alcoholics suffer. This is not only a duty but an absolute necessity for me to grow spiritually.

Dan S.

The first time I did a REAL fifth step was about a year after I got out of rehab. (I had to do one to 'graduate' from treatment, but it wasn't very good.) I did it with my sponsor, Cindy, who not only lived in the same Newport Beach, CA neighborhood as my mother, but looked a bit like her – interesting, as a lot of my fifth step was about my resentment, guilt and shame concerning my mom. Newport Beach has a marine layer for half the day in spring and summer, and it was a cold, gray, dark morning when I got to Cindy's house. As I told her all my stuff, Cindy told me she'd done all the same things, and more! I had felt so alone, so guilty, so shameful. But she said I was very much like many other women. I felt so much better getting it all off my chest. By the time I left her house later, the sky was blue and the sun was shining. It was a metaphor for the way I felt inside -- warm, blue skies, sun shining. I felt FREE.

Stephanie V.

I made a mistake in taking my Fifth Step that you might want to avoid. I blame it all on my then-sponsor. After I had read him my fourth step inventory he suggested we burn it as a symbolic act. In a way, it marked the end of the man I had been and the transition to the one I was trying to become, and the little ceremony was valuable in that sense. But imagine my surprise when I later got to the eighth step, and read in our Big Book: "We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory." Right! Made it and then burned it!

Anonymous

Having completed my 4th Step I was anxious to share it with "another human being" before I chickened out. I didn't have a sponsor at the time, but I had looked around my meetings and decided on an older gentleman whose shares seemed well thought out and who carried himself with the serenity I was seeking. I chose someone I didn't know because I wanted to fully self-disclose all my 5th Step and was afraid if I told 1 person I knew I would always wonder if he continued to judge me by what I had told him, just as I judged myself. Although primarily a member of NA he also saw himself as alcoholic and attended meetings. I didn't care which 12 step program he was working -- I just wanted to get it done before my fear became too great. We met in the library and said the 3rd Step prayer before beginning. I then read him my 5th Step while he listened. He made no comment or judgments, nor did he ask if I'd left anything out. My 5th Step was as rigorous as I could be at that point in my sobriety. Reflecting that night, I thought, why was I so fearful? It was self-acceptance that I was struggling with -- not another's judgment. Today I'm not sure I will ever forgive myself for some of my choices but I accept that I made them and am a good, sober person doing the best I can do, one day at a time.

Don L.

And finally, an oldie but a goodie from the Step Five archive:

When doing my Fifth Step it was easy for me to admit to God and to someone else my wrongs. I was so open that I had to remember when in a meeting to talk about the 'nature' of my wrongs, and save the gory details for my sponsor. I had no real problem admitting my defects/wrongs to myself, but it took a long time and a lot of work to forgive myself.

Charles Y, May, 2002

### Concept Five:

"Throughout our world services 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."

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### Heard at a meeting:

**When you take alcohol away from the alcoholic, all you're left with is the ic.**

## Meeting of the Month:

The Round Table Group meets on Sundays at 7p.m. at the Church of Spiritual Living on Willow Creek Road near the Embry-Riddle campus in Prescott. It's an open, participation meeting, running an hour long. About 75 attendees is common, which just happens to be the fire marshal's limit for the building. The meeting has to turn members away if the fire limit has been reached, so arrive early to get your seat!

Round Table is a ticket meeting, where the first person drawn shares and picks the topic for the night - unless there has been a birthday the previous week in which case the celebrant picks the topic. Each week the topics can range widely, but shares are always focused on the problems and solutions of alcoholism. Dan F. notes one of the liveliest meetings he attended there was when Patrick H. led and chose as the topic sex -- both before and after sobriety! Another favorite moment was when Jerry D. talked about running into Charles Manson in the hall during one of his incarcerations.

When the meeting started over 15 years ago the room featured several round tables at which the members sat - thus the name. Now, long tables are set up in a rectangle with folding chairs in the front, back, and sides of the room. About 30 people sit around the tables and the rest are in chairs on the periphery. It's an open participation meeting, but anyone not identifying as an AA member is asked to introduce themselves and pass if their ticket is drawn. With 5 minutes to go in the meeting the leader invites anyone who fears they may drink that night to share.

John L., a long-time member of the group, says it got started because at the time there was a shortage of meetings in this part of town (the near northwest side, I guess you'd call it). It's a spinoff from what for a time at least was thought to be the biggest group in Prescott -- the Rarely group. (It was started by the late-Ken H. and Daniel B.)

Lots of old timers attend regularly. Jerry says he continues to attend Round Table because it's at a convenient time and place, and also because newcomers are well served and welcomed there. Typically, anywhere from two or three up to a dozen newcomers identify themselves. Linda F., another home group member, says she appreciates the amount of long term sobriety present in the room, as well as the attention to the traditions. She says the treatment of newcomers is gentle, and the meetings are well run. I concur! Thanks to Dan, Jerry, and Linda for all the input I received compiling this Meeting of the Month report.

Cathy N.

## Some AA 'Blasts from the Past'

I enjoy learning about the history of our fellowship and occasionally like to share some interesting tidbits. Here are several I lump under the heading "Did You Know?"

- Edwin Throckmorton "Ebby" Thacher was sober only six weeks and staying at Reverend Shoemaker's Calvary Rescue Mission in New York when he made the Twelve Step call on Bill W. memorialized in our co-founder's story in the Big Book. He had only 20 cents - the subway and pay phone cost a nickel each at the time, as did a beer. Thacher was well read, a fact that is often overlooked. He spent a great deal of time with Bill W. from December 1934 through April 1937, even staying in Bill's home at times. He shared several books with Bill, including William James' Varieties of Religious Experience and The Common Sense of Drinking by Richard Rogers Peabody. At one point in the 1950s and early 1960s, Thacher put together seven years sober in Texas. Then he relapsed over a relationship and a job. He later moved to the McPike Farm in upstate New York. He had two years sober when he died from severe emphysema on March 21, 1966. Bill, who had known Ebby since boarding school days in Vermont, eulogized him as "my friend and sponsor," adding that Ebby "had pushed ajar that great gate through which all in AA have since passed to find their freedom under God."

- AA had an interesting wartime history. On Feb. 18, 1943 during World War II gas rationing, Alcoholics Anonymous members were given special access to fuel for use in Twelfth Step work in cases of emergency. And in Southeast Michigan there was a period of time during the war when AA groups had a service position for members to make sure that blackout curtains were up and drawn tightly. This was required because of the fear that as "the arsenal of democracy," Detroit might be bombed.

- In the wake of the success of "The Lost Weekend," the Oscar-winning 1945 film about a struggling alcoholic, three Hollywood studios offered AA as much as \$100,000 for the rights to the Fellowship's story. The Alcoholic Foundation, fearing such films would amount to a violation of privacy, refused the offers on behalf of AA members.

New York Jimmy

## Heard at a meeting:

**The second you realize that you are not in control is the beginning of real freedom.**

## Ending the War Within

I was at a meeting the other day where the topic centered on the quote from our Big Book about how “we have ceased fighting anything or anyone.” As the sharing went around the room it occurred to me that I haven’t had that much of a problem fighting things and other people. I didn’t pick physical fights, because I was never very good at fighting anyway! And I don’t really enjoy arguing. The much more challenging war for me was the one within – the conflict between how I saw myself and how I thought I was supposed to be or how I thought you expected me to be. Try as I might, I couldn’t shake the feeling that the gap between those two was impossibly large. I just couldn’t seem to make it all fit together!

I can’t remember a time when I was not in that war, from early childhood onward. When I wrote my first inventory in AA I began it at the urging of my then-sponsor by writing down my first memory and how I felt about it. That memory was of an Easter when I was about four and living on a farm. The adults in the house dyed some eggs and hid them in the barn for my cousin, then nearly six, and me to find. But I was afraid to go in the barn because of the animals kept there, so my cousin wound up finding all the eggs. How did I feel? I felt afraid, I was ashamed that I was afraid, and I resented my cousin because he didn’t seem to be afraid -- or if he was, it didn’t paralyze him. How come I wasn’t like that?

Not long after that I recall searching through the closet in my parents’ bedroom looking for the adoption certificate I was sure must be there. I couldn’t possibly belong to these people! As a freshman in high school I went out for the football team – as an 89 pound would-be quarterback. Great idea, in keeping with what I thought boys should do. But way too painful! So ended my football career. And during my drinking years I was constantly struggling to lower the standards with which I had been raised in order to better accommodate my alcoholic behavior. I even went on a concerted campaign to kill my conscience, convinced that would somehow bring me relief from the internal turmoil I felt.

I’m happy to report that years of trying to practice AA’s principles in all my affairs have slowly quieted this internal battle. I’m not always at peace with myself these days, but I am SO much closer to that goal. I am not as self-centered as I once was, so I spend a lot less time navel gazing. I’m more concerned with my actions than my image. I’ve learned through the program that what other people think of me is none of my business, and that in any event, the only standards that really count are the

ones I have embraced for myself – standards based on the principles of the AA program. I now look at my conscience not as the enemy, but as my friend. My sponsor talks about his feelings as like the “idiot lights” in a modern car. They let him know when something is amiss and help him figure out how to fix it. That’s the same way I now see my conscience working.

It is no doubt one of the greatest gifts I have received from our program. As the book I use for my morning meditation put it a while back: “Today, I am grateful for the growing feeling within that who I am and what I believe is acceptable to me.”

Dan F.

## Birthdays, Medallions, Coins and Chips

It’s that time of the year for me, with an AA birthday coming in May. Back in New York we called them anniversaries. We also celebrated Group anniversaries. Some groups had a speaker, food and a dance on their anniversary night. If you listen to tapes of Bill Wilson speaking, a lot of the time he was speaking at a group anniversary.

Sister Ignatia, the nun who helped Dr. Bob get the hospitalization program started at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, was reportedly the first person to hand out a token to commemorate sobriety time in AA. She used a religious medallion, which was to be returned in case of a relapse. A group in Elmira, N.Y. is said to have begun the practice of giving plastic AA sobriety chips in 1947.

The first birthday token I got was a regular plastic poker chip, as AA chips and anniversary coins were still not all that available at the time. I bought my first AA coin at a Catholic book store in Westchester. Some groups had plastic chips imprinted with the group name. Some even included a phone number and a slot for a dime – the cost of a phone call back then. I have one like that from a group in Connecticut.

In New York when I was new they asked anyone with less than 90 days to stand and tell the group how many days they had. You did this for 90 days and then you spoke at your home group. It scared the hell out of some newcomers. Some even changed their home group as they were not yet ready to speak.

If I don’t die or drink, I will have 14,975 days this May 28 – 11 days after the 12th anniversary of my home group, Seniors in Sobriety, which meets on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. at the Prescott Community Adult Center on Rosser Street. Come on by – all AAs are welcome, no matter what their age.

New York Jimmy

## Carrying the Message to Russia

The recent international news about Russia brings to mind my experience in the old Soviet Union in the late 1980's. An organization called "Creating a Sober World" was formed with the purpose of taking AA behind the Iron Curtain and I was fortunate enough to go on four of the trips that they sponsored.

We flew into Helsinki, Finland, and met our "fellow travelers" for the first time. We were two dozen AA's and Al-Anons from all over the U.S. We had no official literature to pass out because it was all new territory for the GSO in New York. However, someone had the foresight to at least have the Twelve Steps and the Serenity Prayer translated and typed out on an old IBM ball typewriter with a Cyrillic font. We weren't going empty-handed.

The first leg of our trip was to Leningrad by train and I was reminded of the movie "Doctor Zhivago" as we crossed the border and the world seemed to change from color to black-and-white. Soviet guards boarded the train and checked our passports and visas and went through our luggage. We were apprehensive that our meager hand-copied Russian literature and our English Big Books might be confiscated because they contained talk of "God." Ironically, all that they took were copies of Time and Newsweek and one issue of Playboy, in which the guards seemed particularly interested.

We rallied as a group in our Leningrad hotel and discussed our game plan. It occurs to me now that we were really a traveling microcosm of AA's First Tradition: "Our common welfare should come first. Personal recovery depends upon AA unity." We were reminded not to do anything illegal, especially not to exchange dollars for rubles or indulge in any black market activities. (There were plenty of offers from young Russians to exchange stuff for our blue jeans.) We were aware that our Intourist hotel rooms were certainly bugged and we talked and acted accordingly. Throughout the trip, we were accompanied by an Intourist guide/translator whom everyone knew was a member of the Communist party and possibly an agent for the KGB. We simply could not jeopardize our mission, so everyone was on their best behavior.

Our first impression of the Russian alcohol problem was the blocks-long queues at the state-owned liquor stores. Then we made personal contact at a bleak "narcological" hospital on the outskirts of the city. Over 300 patients and staff packed the hospital's auditorium to hear the foreigners and there was excitement in the air. Our American speakers quickly learned to speak in short sentences in order to make the translators' jobs easier. We told of our own drinking experiences and of broken promises, self-loathing, domestic violence and "pitiful, incomprehensible demoralization," and watched as the similarities dawned upon our audience. When we were through they clamored to have an AA meeting with us, especially when we told them about "closed meetings" for alcoholics only. (One of the big problems over there was

the reluctance to speak publicly, because of the spies.) Since that would have meant excluding the non-alcoholic staff, we weren't allowed to have a meeting.

In Moscow we were invited to show a small group of young alcoholics how to set up a meeting at one of their apartments. My sponsor had obtained a marking pen and a writing pad (both rare commodities there at the time), and prepared for the lesson by printing three large words in Russian on the paper. They were "Nachinaya, Seredina and Konets." He held up the first sheet and said that in America the "beginning (nachinaya)" of the meeting is marked by asking if there are any newcomers. The Russians giggled nervously as they held up their hands. Then he asked if there were any visitors and we held up our hands as they giggled again. Then we read the twelve steps, one by one. An American would read in English and a Russian would read the translated version. Then he said in the "middle (seredina)" we told our stories. It was not surprising how similar the stories were -- accounts of heartbreak, broken vows, torn-up families, drunken driving, jail time, lost jobs and obsessive behavior. The big difference was that our stories ended with a note of hope and theirs were tales of despair.

We concluded by saying the "ending (konets)" was usually marked by saying a prayer. We said the Serenity Prayer and asked one of them to read the typed Russian version. Very simple! Then we celebrated our successful lesson with sweet pastries and tea from an ornate silver samovar along with lots of laughter and good will.

Afterwards our hosts accompanied us back to our hotel on the subway. We were laughing and showing them photos of our friends and families back home, and were conspicuous, because of our speech and western clothes. A little old lady who had been watching all of this tugged on one of the Russian's coats and asked: "Who are these people?" The proud answer was, "Oh, these are American alcoholics." Responded the lady: "My husband is an alcoholic, too."

The spontaneous reaction was wonderful! The lady got off at the next stop and the whole group followed and surrounded her. They said that there was going to be a Russian-speaking meeting in Moscow the next day. Inspired by our format, they organized an impromptu meeting, complete with literature (which they had already borrowed from us). They set a time and location and invited the woman to tell her husband about it. I can only imagine the man's reaction when she arrived home and told him how he was going to get sober! Maybe he did or maybe he didn't, but the point is that a new Russian AA meeting was created that afternoon because of those five young alcoholics. They had begun to carry the message of recovery. A year later four of those five were still attending the meeting they had founded, and one them even came to the World Convention in Seattle in 1990.

Isn't it beautiful how it works? Just one drunk helping another. God bless.

Merrill G., Bellevue, WA

## Prescott Area Intergroup's March 2017 Treasurer's Report

GROUP DONATIONS	YTD
4 Directions Grp	\$200.00
Afterwards Group	\$600.00
Bradshaw Seniors Meeting	\$168.30
Carry This Message	\$307.04
Crazy Birds	\$360.00
Free Thinkers BBS	\$100.00
Friday Big Book Solutions	\$50.00
Girlye Birds	\$163.45
God Sticks Group	\$50.00
Healing the Hole in the Soul	\$176.50
Intergroup Meeting	\$89.00
Mayer Higher Power Hour	\$29.00
Noon BB Discussion	\$483.50
Old Shoe (Skull Valley)	\$78.00
Open AA Meeting	\$320.00
Park Avenue Group	\$246.54
PV As Bill Sees It	\$226.00
PV Gut Rap Group	\$180.06
PV Keep It Simple	\$225.00
PV No Name Group	\$112.50
PV Noon Group	\$280.00
PV Reflections	\$120.00
PV Roadmap To Recovery	\$60.00
PV There Is a Solution	\$20.00
PV Wed Step Study	\$150.00
Saturday Night Live Prescott	\$263.50
Serenity At Sunrise	\$332.46
Step Sisters	\$198.60
Sunny Days	\$298.76
The Slice Of Life	\$250.00
Thurs Men's Stag	\$120.00
Toolbox Group	\$217.20
Witch's Hat Book Study	\$239.52
Young Peoples Meeting	\$200.00
<b>TOTAL GROUP DONATIONS</b>	<b>\$6,914.93</b>
OTHER INCOME	YTD
AA Birthday Gratitude	\$40.00
Anonymous IG Donation	\$29.50
Literature Sales	\$4,969.30
Chips Etc.	\$846.45
Meeting Directory Sales	\$84.00
Newsletter Sales	\$100.00
<b>TOTAL OTHER INCOME</b>	<b>\$6,069.25</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$12,984.18</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$13,379.58</b>
<b>INCOME LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>-\$395.40</b>
<b>Total Monies 3/31/17</b>	<b>\$29,045.36</b>
<b>Literature &amp; Chips 3/8/17</b>	<b>\$10,467.00</b>

## Finding the Ability to Forgive

Our literature points out in several ways and several places that the recovering alcoholic cannot afford to hold on to resentments. The word resentment literally means "to re-feel" or "to feel again." The cost could be relapse. We talk about "letting go" but can we truly forgive others? Do we even know how?

My father was an alcoholic and my feelings were hurt often as a boy. Mind you, this resentment stayed alive through an inventory and amends process as laid out in the Steps. I had included this relationship in my step work and I had made a direct amend to my father. I thought it was over...that I was done with it.

But just before my father passed away I offered him some advice, which he ignored. The wound, so carefully hidden away, burst open and I was once again filled with anger, hurt, and lots of negative thinking. It was time to forgive and heal, now a few decades into my sobriety.

I had to pray for it -- the ability to find this forgiveness. Perhaps the age and depth of the wound was the challenge since I had seemingly been able to forgive others. This was a situation that "baffled me" and I needed help. Then one day, while someone was asking me to forgive them, I could feel all that pain related to my father just blow away. It was a spiritual experience. I can't fully explain why being asked for forgiveness that day allowed me to "let go" of my father. One was tied to the other. I was ready and my Higher Power agreed.

Today I no longer feel the bitterness. I either have warm thoughts or no thoughts about my father. I feel sad at times, but mostly grateful. I claim spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection.

Hugh H.

## 'Dancing' the 3rd Step

When I think about receiving guidance from my Higher Power, I always see the word "dance." Doping God's will is a lot like dancing. When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement is jerky and uncomfortable.

When one person lets go and lets the other lead, both begin to flow with the music. It's as if the two become one, moving beautifully, effortlessly. This dance takes trust, willingness, and attentiveness from one to the gentle guidance and skill of the other.

Cynthia S., Grass Valley, CA

From "Beginners' Book:  
Getting and Staying Sober in AA," page 102.

### **2017 Memorial Day Spring Fling**

Hosted by The Prescott Shoestring Roundup Committee

Monday, May 29th

Picnic/Potluck - 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Speakers Meeting - 2:00 pm

50/50 Raffle following speakers

Granite Creek Park Ramada

554 W. 6th St.

**Please bring food to share!**

District 14-140's

### **Founders' Day 2017**

This year's Founders' Day celebration in Prescott will take place at the Light & Life Free Methodist Church, 2797 Willow Creek Road, on Saturday June 10 from noon to 4 p.m. This will be the 12th annual celebration event in Prescott, celebrating the 82nd anniversary of Alcoholic's Anonymous. There will be speakers, a potluck lunch, music and entertainment. The Arizona AA Archives will be on display, as well as our 200 year time-line on the history of alcoholism.

We are looking for people to help with set-up/clean-up, the potluck lunch, a 50/50 drawing, security, greeting, entertainment, etc...

Please contact Paul B. at 928-308-6647 if you are interested in helping with the event.

### **33rd Annual Tri-State Round-Up**

May 18-21, 2017

Riverside Resort Hotel & Casino  
Laughlin, Nevada

Speakers, Marathon Meetings, Ice Cream  
Socials, Golf, Bowling, Poker Run

tristateroundup@hotmail.com

www.tristate-roundup.com



### **Second Annual Arizona AA Women's Conference**

About Women, By Women, For Women

July 7 - 9, 2017

Prescott Resort and Conference Center  
1500 Highway 69, Prescott, Arizona

Details at **AZAAWC.org**

Flyers available at the office.

Reminder: Many of our local events and flyers are on our website [www.prescottaa.org](http://www.prescottaa.org)

You are invited to join us for our District 14-142

### **Founders' Day - 82nd Anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous Celebration**

Saturday, June 10th - 10am to 2pm

Trinity Lutheran Church

3950 Valorie Dr., Prescott Valley

Entrance on Lakeshore between Robert Rd. & Navajo

BBQ Hamburgers & Hot Dogs & Potluck

Speakers, Trivia Game, Recovery Music,  
Archives Displays, Raffle and More!

### **Spring Banquet!!**

Come and celebrate Spring with us!  
There will be a potluck, a speaker, and raffles!!

**Friday May 5th, 2017**

First Congregational Church

216 E. Gurley St

Prescott, AZ 86301

From 5-8pm

Dinner at 5:30pm

Raffle starts at 6pm

15min speaker at 6:45pm

7pm Main speaker

(Bob C. from Flagstaff)

All proceeds go to the  
Spiritual Experience 2018 Convention

### **Kickball Tournament**

**Spiritual Experience 2018 Convention  
will be hosting a Kickball Tournament!!  
We will have food, prizes and a meeting**

**Join us Saturday June 17th, 2017**

At Flynn Park 280 Josephine St

**Prescott, AZ 86305**

Meeting from 12pm to 1pm

Game/ food start at 1:15pm

(\$30 for a team of six)

**Fellowship, food and fun!!**

**\*Please bring your own chair\***

Contact 928-266-8090 for any questions



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