



STEP TWO

Came to believe that a Power Greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.



I am an atheist. A sober, alcoholic atheist. I reject god on an ecumenical level as an equal opportunity dissenter. Although I heed the call of love and tolerance, I am indifferent and dismissive of all higher powers, heavens, supreme beings, celestial spirits, empyreal ghosts, supernatural entities, angels, prophets, and religious miracles. I renounce healing crystals, rocks, trees, and oceans as higher powers. I heard once that a door handle can be a higher power. No, it can't. To be fair, I repudiate astral travelers, poltergeists, psychokinesis, channeling the dead, Ouija boards, Lucifer, lower powers, hell, possessions, exorcists, and The Flying Spaghetti Monster as well.

Now that we got that straight, how does an atheist work Step Two and the other god-filled steps? In this piece, I will share how I identified a personal power to help solve my problems. My motivation is NOT to debate or negate anyone's version of god. Conversely, I appreciate there are as many concepts of a higher power as there are people. My motivation is to show other skeptics, humanists, agnostics, and atheists that godless sobriety is

divinely practical.

Newcomers often find this an inconceivable proposition and resume their addictions, as I did. It need not be that way for them. My hypocrisy encumbered my ability to stay sober.

I overtly conformed to the "godly" overtone of the steps and program, but covertly shrouded my atheism under the veil of fitting in. I was not true to myself. I was an unwary actor, thrust into an audition ad libitum, to perform under the proscenium arch of recovery. I didn't get the part and I didn't stay sober. I considered recovery groups like AA -- Beyond Belief, AA Agnostica, SMART Recovery, and Rational Recovery. Regrettably, besides the lack of meetings, these organizations embody the core principles of which they claim caused their defection from AA. They are separatists. They segregate, not integrate. AA is inclusive, not exclusive.

So, I found a sponsor and tried to follow good orderly direction. But prostrating myself during the Third-Step prayer felt like poison oak was creeping toward my most tender parts. But I proceeded, because that's what was suggested. I adhered to the Big Book's emphasis on finding a god of my own understanding. That is, until chapter four, which implies how irrational we are to doubt a superintending deity. "Actually we were fooling ourselves, for deep down in every man, woman, and child is the fundamental understanding of God." This persuasive recovery parlance reminded me of the proselytizing "Good News" of which I heard from fundamentalist family members and door-knockers alike. More chicanery, and another

Continued on page 11

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc. It is about, by, and for groups and members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or St. Paul Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition or Concept, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome original cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of A.A. experience.

Please email your article to Lifeline@aastpaul.org or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355. W. St. Paul, MN 55118-3431. Materials or articles mailed to us cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length, and content that might violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc.

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc.

33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355, West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

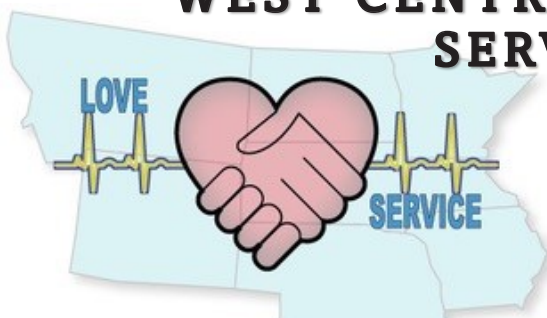
Website: www.aastpaul.org e-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org Fax: 651-290-0209
Office Hours: Monday through Friday — 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM; Closed weekends and holidays

WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL A.A. SERVICE CONFERENCE

MARCH 4,5,6, 2022

Hosted by Area 36

DoubleTree Minneapolis-Park Place
1500 Park Place Blvd, St Louis Park, MN



A.A. COMES OF AGE 2.0

FRIDAY MARCH 4, 2022

PAST & PRESENT DELEGATES ONLY MEETINGS

10:00am—3:00pm SHARING SESSIONS; LUNCH (ON YOUR OWN)

EVENTS FOR ALL WCRAASC ATTENDEES BEGIN

2:30pm REGISTRATION OPENS
3:30pm EARLY BIRD MEETING
7:-00pm WELCOME
7:15pm—8:00pm *Presented by Area 63: HOW DO A.A.S GO TO ANY LENGTHS TO RECOVER, UNIFY, & SERVE?*
8:15pm—8:45pm MEET THE DELEGATES
8:45pm—10:00pm GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS

SATURDAY MARCH 5, 2022

7:30am EARLY BIRD MEETING
8:00am WELCOME
9:00am—10:30am GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS
10:45am—11:30am *Presented by Area 76: THE WARRANTIES: OUR PROMISE TO THE FELLOWSHIP & THE WORLD*
11:30am LUNCH (ON YOUR OWN)
12:45pm—2:00pm GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS
2:00pm—2:45pm *Presented by Area 41: GOING BEYOND FEAR*
3:00pm—3:45pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS
4:00pm—5:30pm GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS
5:30pm DINNER (ON YOUR OWN)
7:00pm—8:30pm *Open Speaker Meeting*
BOB W., NEW YORK, NY
8:45pm—10:00pm GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE AGENDA ITEMS

SUNDAY MARCH 6, 2022

7:00am EARLY BIRD MEETING
8:00am WELCOME
8:15am—9:00am *Presented by Area 35: HOW TO REACH ANYONE, ANYWHERE*
9:00am—10:30am PAST TRUSTEE SHARING & ASK IT BASKET
MIKE L., WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL TRUSTEE
10:30am CONFERENCE CLOSES

EVENT DETAILS & UPDATES AT WESTCENTRALREGION.ORG

HOTEL & REGISTRATION INFORMATION

HOTEL RESERVATIONS—\$99 / NIGHT

ONLINE: Go to [Bit.ly/WCR22Hotel](https://bit.ly/WCR22Hotel)

CALL DOUBLETREE: 952-542-8600; ask for WCRAASC rate

EVENT REGISTRATION—\$20

REGISTER ONLINE: Go to Eventbrite at www.wcraasc2022.eventbrite.com

REGISTER AT CONFERENCE: \$20.00; cash and credit cards accepted

MAIL-IN: Complete the registration form below and mail with your check by February 15, 2022

69 ASL INTERPRETER WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ALL SESSIONS, EXCEPT BREAKOUT SESSIONS

VISIT WESTCENTRALREGION.ORG FOR ACCESSIBILITIES UPDATES & INFO

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGISTRATION, GREETERS, COFFEE SALES! *Sign up at:* [Bit.ly/WCRAASC](https://bit.ly/WCRAASC)

PLEASE MAIL YOUR PRE-REGISTRATION BY FEBRUARY 15, 2022. Complete, cut and mail with your \$20.00 check payable to WCRAASC. MAIL TO: WCRAASC, PO BOX 5041, Hopkins, MN 55343

NAME: _____ HOME GROUP: _____

CITY: _____ SERVICE POSITION: _____

SELF-SUPPORT SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUPS

“Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”
The Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” offers the following suggestions for the distribution of group funds after group expenses have been paid:

50% St. Paul Intergroup

.....
33 Wentworth Ave E.
Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

30% General Service Office

.....
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN Area 36

.....
Southern Minnesota Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402-0812

10% District Committee

Ramsey County:

District 8, P.O. Box 131523
St. Paul, MN 55113

Dakota County:

District 19, P.O. Box 1466
Burnsville, MN 55337

Washington County:

District 15, P.O. Box 181
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

LOOKING FOR A SERVICE OPPORTUNITY?

Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl

If you are interested - Contact:
Nightowl@aastpaul.org
to schedule training.

St. Paul Intergroup Office
33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431
To RSVP - please call 651-227-5502

2022 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Advisor to the Board (non voting) | Rachel P. |
| Chairperson | Robyn W. |
| Alternate Chairperson | Brian M. |
| Secretary | Kelly K. |
| Treasurer | Lindsey D. |
| Alternate Treasurer | Bill C. |
| 2022 Member-At-Large | Jennifer G. |
| 2022 Member-At-Large | Elly C. |
| 2021 Member-At-Large | Renee B. |
| 2021 Member-At-Large | Roger E. |
| Manager | Dennis B. |
| Web Servant (non voting) | Jonathan L. |
| Web Servant (non voting) | Sergey K. |
| Night Owl Coordinator (non voting) | Robyn W. |



Office Volunteers:

Mary D, Lynn, Nancy T,
Roger, Debbie L.,
David D, Frank D, Niella M,

Becoming “A Part Of . . .”



Service Opportunities at the West Central Regional AA Service Conference

We could use your help with

- coffee sales (2 hour shifts)
- registration (2 hour shifts)
- greeting (half hour shifts)

When:

Friday March 4 -
Sunday March 6

Where:

Doubletree Hilton
1500 Park Place Blvd
St. Louis Park 55416

Why:

Service helps us stay
sober!

How:

bit.ly/WCRAASC

or



or

westcentralregion.org

TRADITION TWO

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Editors Note: Although this article was written in 2010 - one would think it points to experiences from the current world around and within A.A. From this, we can see that principles are timeless—they don't have an 'expiration date.'

AFTER reading the news, I sometimes conclude that the world needs a meeting. Frequently, I am struck by the failure of leadership—corruption in fledgling governments, self-dealing in the highest economic circles, legislators beholden to donors rather than constituents.

I often conclude the only societies that have effective leadership are Alcoholics Anonymous and wild horses. Tradition Two tells us “. . .our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.” This works well for us, because alcoholics have a natural inclination toward grandiosity. Hand one of us a scepter and we'll be pounding it on the table in no time.



Perhaps we are like wild horses and that is why we emulate their model of leadership. The leader of a herd of horses is not the largest animal with the biggest hooves. He or she is, rather, mild-mannered; a no-drama, wise decision-maker who finds food

for the herd and keeps the peace. There are some alpha horses that go around snorting and prancing dramatically. They are known as “lieutenants” and work as bouncers if the leader needs them.

The purpose of A.A. meetings is to help us stay sober and to introduce newcomers to our way of life. Our leaders help us work together to achieve this goal by a) sticking to a basic routine that emphasizes the fundamental program principles at each meeting; b) supporting an atmosphere of sharing that avoids cross talk and time monopolization; c) welcoming and encouraging newcomers and visitors; and d) recognizing birthdays, so that everyone feels appreciated and celebrated. *Our leaders keep the program working for everyone's benefit.*

Leadership is about cultivating an atmosphere of respect and accountability. The horse in charge of the mustang herd knows that. The other horses respect it because it is not a bully and because it shows good judgment. I once read a list of 100 qualities in a good leader. One of them essentially said that a leader handles grievances privately if possible, and without going overboard in any case. This is true of the horse leader. If one of the herd members steps out of line, the leader gives the naughty horse several private warning signals—a disapproving look, a squaring off posture, and finally a menacing look with ears laid flat back.

Rarely in A.A. meetings is there any equivalent of “horseplay,” but occasionally people have to be admonished to stick to the program, shorten their shares, not criticize other shares, and similar matters. I have been very impressed with the leadership I have witnessed in these cases.

Oftentimes, the offender is not directly admonished. Rather, the rule is stated or repeated, and the leader commits that it will be enforced. I have seen people forcibly removed from meetings, though rarely. In most cases, these people appeared mentally ill and on that particular day could not function in society. I have not seen A.A. leaders use other peoples' misbehavior as a chance to play the superhero. Rather, the leaders' actions have shown exemplary restraint. That's the result of focusing on service—helping the meeting work as intended, for the good of our herd.

*Susan C.
The POINT
San Francisco/Maroin County Intergroup*

50th Annual Iron Range Get-Together

May 6th, 7th, 8th
The Courage to Change

Location: Grand Rapids Eagles
1776 S Pokegama Ave. • Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 326-4845

Friday, May 6th

Join In
"Tropical Shirt Night"

6:30 pm - Registration Opens
8:00 pm - Speaker: Steve L., Biwabic, MN

Saturday, May 7th

10:00 am - Outstate Panel
1:00 pm - AFG Speaker: Sharon B., Grand Forks, ND
3:00 pm - Call-up Meeting
7:00 pm - AFG Speaker: Eloy M., Fort Collins, CO
8:00 pm - AA Speaker: Ole B., Grand Forks, ND
??? till 11:00 pm - 7th Tradition Ice Cream Social

Sunday, May 8th

8:00 am - (Open) BB Meeting
10:00 am - AA Speaker: Steve S., Saint Joseph, MN

IRGT Pre-Registration Form

A.A. \$18.00 A.F.G. \$18.00
 Alateen \$6.00 Other \$18.00

Name _____

City/State/Zip _____

Group Name _____

IRGT Pre-Registration Form

A.A. \$18.00 A.F.G. \$18.00
 Alateen \$6.00 Other \$18.00

Name _____

City/State/Zip _____

Group Name _____

Check It Out!!

AAGRAPEVINE
The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



Our new podcast, the **AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour** can be heard anywhere you listen to podcasts. We release a new episode every Monday. Tune in to hear funny, poignant, and always inspiring **“meeting after the meeting”** conversation about getting sober and staying sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Available for free wherever you listen to podcast or you can also find it on our website, at www.aagrapevine.org/podcast.

THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD

HI EVERYONE! I recently finished up my term as Secretary to the Board of Intergroup for 2021. As I was telling the other Board Members at my last meeting with the group, serving in this capacity has proven instrumental to my recovery. I felt like I had a purpose, a way to serve and help others, and another reason to stay sober, because I knew people were counting on me!

For me, attaining sobriety was very difficult, facilitated only by a “nudge from the judge” with the hope of ever seeing my children again! I had been heartbroken when I wasn’t allowed to see, or even speak with them, throughout my 90-day court ordered treatment program. Sadly, I missed all three of their birthdays that year. By the grace of God, the professional help and guidance I received at treatment, following the process outlined in the Big Book and the fellowship of AA, I have remained happily sober for over three-and-a-half years now! I have been reunited with my family and am grateful everyday that I have been blessed with the gift of sobriety and a mindset of recovery. I feel a sense of lightness, hope, and freedom that I haven’t felt since I was a child. I love all of my “sober friends” who have turned into just “friends” and I appreciate all of the wisdom I have gleaned from those in the rooms, as well as working the steps with my awesome, patient sponsor!

I have many reasons to remain healthy and spiritually fit in my recovery: for God, my higher power; for my own health, sanity and peace of mind; for my marriage and family; my relationships with not only my husband, and children, but all of my other relatives who have always believed in me; for all of my friends; for the treatment center to prove that I can be a “success story” in the midst of unfavorable statistics; and for the fellowship of AA in general, to be a living example that this program works! I knew early on that I needed to serve and give back.

In the very beginning of my recovery journey, before I had worked the steps or truly understood the program, I volunteered three days a week at the Intergroup Office back while it was still on West Seventh. At first, I volunteered as merely a way to

gain some freedom privileges from Fellowship Club, where I was a resident of their medically supervised sober living facility. Then, as I watched, learned, and listened to all of the wisdom and guidance from the “old-timers” at the office, including employees, other volunteers, or folks just dropping by for literature, a medallion, or simply a chat; I knew I needed to be an integral part of Intergroup, embrace all it had to offer, and help carry the mission.

At first, I went to all of the monthly Representatives Meetings as the Intergroup Rep for my home group. I brought back the “news” to my group, and encouraged our group to support Intergroup through our contributions. Later on, after I was two years sober, I was elected into the Secretary position. Not only did I feel a part of something bigger than myself, but I also practiced the valuable skills I had learned in treatment that I had abandoned during my drinking days: becoming organized and more responsible as I typed up the Minutes from both the Board and Reps meeting each month. I know at times, Dennis had to send me a few reminder emails, but I faithfully served and loved doing it! Although I will miss everyone on the Board, I genuinely welcome the new members in the spirit of rotation!

Though the Board Members are in place for 2022, I would highly recommend considering serving in this way sometime in the future and hope you would as well enjoy a meaningful experience. However, there are still so many other ways Intergroup could use your support at the moment! We always need volunteers for helping out around the Office, for speaking engagements, doing Outreach, answering the Night Owl phones, becoming a web servant, and supporting Intergroup through purchases and donations either in house or online! We would love to see more groups represented at our monthly meetings!

Although my service term has ended at Intergroup, that does not indicate my recovery program will! I look forward to stopping by the Office now and then, continuing my relationships with my sponsor and friends, reading the Big Book and other recovery literature, answering phones for my Night-Owl shift, and enjoying the rejuvenating fellowship that I find with my fellow AA’s in the rooms! Hopefully I will see you all in a meeting sometime soon!

With gratitude and love,

Jodie T

St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, December 21st, 2021 7:30 pm

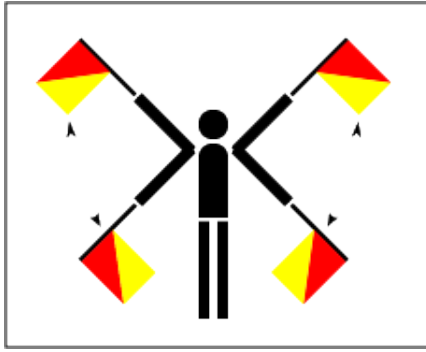
1. **Opened** with the Serenity Prayer, Introductions, and read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
2. **Gopher State Roundup Report, Ben M**, Gopher State Board Member (*Gopher State is a separate nonprofit entity*). Explained contract dispute, settlement agreement with hotel due to Covid cancellations, working budget, low Prudent Reserve, their contributions to AA and Alanon entities. Plans are on for this Memorial Day Weekend 2022!
3. **Approved** prior month's minutes (motion: Tom W, 2nd: Renee B).
4. **Treasurer's Report, Lindsey D** – *See Treasurer's Report for complete financial details.*
Group contributions were down the past month, but offset by the increase in individual donations and online contributions/sales. We are not in the red as compared to last year, yet still hope to put another 10K into the Prudent Reserves; additional contributions are appreciated. Thank you to all who have donated! It's so convenient to practice the 7th tradition & support our online Intergroup store at aastpaul.org!
5. **Office Report, Dennis B** – *Please see Manager's Report for more info or contact the office at lifeline@aastpaul.org*
 - New volunteers are needed! Our current group is shrinking due work conflicts, etc.
 - Sales are good; we need to carry a larger inventory due to fluctuations in volume of sales.
 - We anticipate sales increases on most items in the inventory due to supply chain costs, etc., in 2022.
 - Registered Reps with a mailing address will receive a booklet written by members from the '70s and '80s.
 - The Office has been rearranged for better traffic flow and a more open feel, with medallions sold by the door.
6. **Night Owl Report, Robyn W** – There is one open shift: 4th Tuesdays overnight. Orientation training is offered on the third Saturdays at 10 am via Zoom or individually as requested. *Please email Robyn at nightowl@aastpaul.org.*
7. **Website Report, Jonathan L** – There are 781 regular weekly meetings supported by 294 groups in the area served by Intergroup. The MIA meetings are listed on the website. If you have web development skills, are interested in serving, or have any special group AA announcements, **please contact webservant@aastpaul.org.**
8. **Outreach Program, Lindsey D** – Shout out to Tom W for his help! Volunteers are needed to visit meetings on the MIA list for accuracy, encourage more Rep involvement, and increase contributions. **Please contact outreach@aastpaul.org.**
9. **Update from the Board, Rachel** – *Welcome to our new incoming Board Members for 2022:*
 - ❖ Brian M, Alt Chair, Bill C, Alt Treasurer; Kelly K; Secretary; Renee B and Roger E, Members-at-Large.*Thank you to our outgoing members for their service: Lisa L, Treasurer; Jodie W, Secretary; John K, Member-at-Large. Transitioning to new Positions in January: Robyn W, Chair; Lindsey D, Treasurer; Rachel P, Advisor to the Board.*
10. **Liaison Reports:**
 - a. **District 8** (Ramsey County): **Lindsey D** – “Literature Blitz” - handed out AA info to detoxes and treatment centers.
 - b. **District 15** (Washington County): **Melana M** – Consider visiting the Archives! Sponsorship Forum in Lake Elmo at the Christ Lutheran Church the 2nd Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. There is a flyer posted on the Intergroup website.
 - c. **District 19** (Dakota County): **Brian M** – *Please contact Brian M at madhouse0143@gmail.com for more info.*
11. **Intergroup Events:**
 - a. **Recap, John K** – Gratitude Night last month on Zoom was a nice time. Less turn-out than last year.
 - b. **Upcoming, Rachel P** – Intergroup will not be hosting a New Year's Eve Party this year, but please visit Minneapolis' Intergroup event from 8:30 - 10:00 pm on New Year's Eve for a spirit of fellowship, fun, raffles, etc.!
12. **Old Business:** No Old Business
13. **New Business:** No New Business
14. **Group AA Announcements:**

OMD has a medallion night the first Friday of the month.
Main Idea is hosting a potluck and fellowship group meeting on Dec. 24th from 5 to 7 pm.
Summit Hill (Mon. @ 6 pm) celebrated 778 collective years of sobriety at their last medallion night.
15. **Suggestions for next month's agenda:** *Please contact the secretary at secretary@aastpaul.org.*
16. **Grapevine Report**, Tom W; *Volunteer for January:* Brian M
16. **Concept XI review**, Lisa L; **Concept XII review**, Emily H; *Volunteer for Concept I:* Melana M
17. **Mock Rep Report**, Brian M; *Volunteer for January:* Lisa L
18. **Closed** with the Responsibility Statement

Attendance:

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Elliot W - OMD | Christian C - SPOSM | Kelly K - Incoming Secretary |
| Rachel P - Chair | Ken S - Como Big Book | Paul C - Night Owl Committee |
| Emily H - Rule 62 | Jonathan L - Webservant | Camille K - A New Light Women's |
| Chris A - Main Idea | Lindsey D - Board Advisor | Gary B - No Time Like the Present |
| Dave M - Main Idea | Tom S - Maplewood Alano | Bill C - Rule 62, Incoming Alt Treasurer |
| Robyn W - Alt Chair | John K - Member at Large | Melana M - 12X12 By the Book, Mahtomedi |
| Bob H - 3rd Edition | Renee B - Member-at-Large | Brian M - Meeting of the Waters, Mendota |
| Dennis B - Manager | Mike C - New Brighton Alano | Ryan B - One More Was Added to the Fellowship |
| Jodie W - Secretary | Jennifer G - Member at Large | Roger E - Basic Text, Incoming Member-at-Large |
| Tom W - Firing Line | Amy G - Pocketing Our Pride | Elly C - Summit Hill, Mondays @ 6 pm, Member-at-Large |
| Marie D - Not listed | Lisa L - WBL Women's AA | |

Next Meeting: January 18th, 2022 7:30pm



Attention!!

There is a NEW PO Box for mailing your contributions in to the General Service Office in New York.

General Service Office
 Post Office Box 2407
 James A Farley Station
 New York, NY 10116-2407

Be sure to use this address for **ALL contributions**.
 Use the Box 459 address for only for general correspondence.



12th Step
Calls

2



Website
Visits

8,791



Office Calls

223



Night
Owl Calls

242



Meeting
Info Calls

49



Speakers
Calls

2



Literature
Purchased

182 Books

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, MEMBERS AND FAITHFUL FIVER MEMBERS MADE THE ABOVE SERVICES POSSIBLE:

- 11 West Bernard
- Children of Chaos Plus
- Cliffhangers Thursday Night
- CRC Friends of Bill W
- Forest Lake Alano
- Friday Night Hope - Lakeville
- Friends in Recovery
- Grovers Thursday Night
- Hastings Club
- Highland Park Groups
- Hillside AA
- Hole in the Donut Group
- Island Lake Group
- Lindstrom Group
- Little Canada AA
- Midway Club

- North Dale Group
- Pages of Wisdom
- Rally Point AA
- Ringmaster's Group
- Rivertown Big Book
- Rosemount Groups
- Roseville Centennial Group
- Safe Haven fo Women Grp.
- Shoreview 12x12
- SOS - Sharing Our Sobriety
- Summit Hill
- Third Tradition-Nfld
- Thursday Night BB - Nfld
- Uptown
- White Bear Lake - Monday Night
- White Bear Lake Sat Women's

- White Bear Lake Wed AM Woman's
- Widening Circle
- Woodbury Primary Purpose

- 35 A.A. Groups contributed \$ 5,019
- 8 Gratitude Contributions totaled \$ 2,641
- 26 Faithful Fivers contributed \$ 708
- 17 Digital Contributions \$ 1,482

Thank You So Very Much!

DISTRICT SERVICE MEETINGS

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)

Fairview Community Center
1910 Cty. Rd B West, Rm 108
Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:00 PM
Email: dist8@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 15 (Wash. Co.)

Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St.
Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM
Email: dist15@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 19 (Dakota Co.)

Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
Rosemount
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM
dist19@area36.org
Email: dist19@area36.org (for Zoom info)

Step Two - continued from page 1

intoxicating departure from AA.

But I wanted to stay sober. As an insurance policy to avoid the highway to hell-fire in perpetuity, I placed a Pascal's Wager. Pascal argued that a rational person should live as if god exists, and forgo temporal worldly pleasures in order to receive eternal life in heaven. Tragically, this bet guarantees a losing hand. Because if there exists the triple-Omni-god, he would know of my inauthenticity. Regardless of my submission and conformity, I would sizzle like a ribeye on Satan's Weber forever. I might as well devolve and enjoy life as a debaucherous wretch. But that wasn't an appealing option either. My only choice was to transform how I viewed the paradigm of recovery if I earnestly desired lasting sobriety, happiness, and relationships – but without god.

First, I got a new sponsor, who inquired, "Are you the most important being in the universe?" "No!"

I admitted. "I am one of the smallest beings. Galactically speaking, I barely exist. My existence is a spark between the vacuity before birth, and the void upon my death."

"And you believe there is a power outside yourself?" I agreed. "OK. I can work with that."

Second, we augmented the steps and literature to eliminate all forms or pronouns of god and a higher power. The Big Book avows, "We have ceased fighting anything or anyone – even alcohol." Like alcohol, we need not fight the concept of god or a higher power if we don't have that "fundamental understanding." Simply dismiss "The God Thing." Fugettaboutit!

Third, I had to create my own inspirational, yet godless, power if I sought permanent sobriety. I am not Theist, Deist, or Pantheist, so who was I to be? How could I define my power? When I drank and used, my sole purpose was to stay anesthetized, unaccountable to myself and others, unable to work and function. My purpose was to feed my addictions with not only substances, but pride, greed, gluttony, envy, lust, gluttony, anger, and sloth. Yes, I overindulged on gluttony. (It's not a typo.) I had no purpose. I was detached. I was a Me-ist.

In contrast, I named that power my "Higher Purpose." With Purpose, I am connected. With Purpose, I am a We-ist. I can do all things with Purpose that strengthens me. My purpose is to be humble not prideful, generous not greedy, temperate not gluttonous; complimentary not envious, loving not lustful, peaceful not angry, and ambitious not slothful. With Purpose, I utilize my strengths in the service of others in the program, in my personal endeavors, and in my professional interactions. Outing myself as an atheist in AA was a liberating act. Staying true to my disbelieving self makes me fully responsible for my sobriety. I believe that within every man, woman, and child are fundamental morals, ethics, and virtues that deteriorate with addiction. I have faith in our collective healing, but not faith healers. I don't participate in meeting prayers. Instead, I mediate and visualize with our hands clasped in unity. Without god, I purposefully practice mindfulness, loving kindness, empathy, equanimity, and compassion.

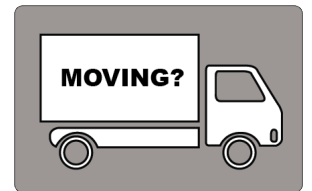
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