

March 2024

Conscious Contact

Prescott Area Intergroup - Serving Central Yavapai

NEW INTERGROUP OFFICE HOURS: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 10am-4pm / **WEDNESDAY:** 10am-7pm / **SATURDAY:** 10am-2pm

240 S. Montezuma St, Ste 108, Prescott, AZ 86303 (928) 445-8691

**WHEN I CAME to the
Third Step,
it was pretty frightening for me.
It sounded so unsettling
and yet so permanent.*

*I got as far as the third word,
"decision."*

There, I was stopped cold! What was a decision, anyway? I didn't really know, so how could I make one? For all too many years, I hadn't really decided anything--I had rolled with the tide and blamed everyone else for the messes I got myself into. And now I was asked to make a decision. (Continued on Page 2)

3rd Step Prayer

God, I offer myself to
Thee - to build with me
and to do with me as
Thou wilt. Relieve me
of the bondage of self,
that I may better do Thy
will. Take away my
difficulties, that victory
over them may bear
witness to those I would
help of Thy Power, Thy
Love, and Thy Way of
life. May I do Thy will
always!

- **INSIDE:** Dan S.; Hank P. article ~ Kathie N.; Mardi Gras! ...and
The next Arizona Fellowship of the Spirit (FOTS) Conference is
coming to Prescott (maybe?)
- **NEXT MONTH:** No Newsletter. What?!? (it's April) ;^)

A warm thank you to Catherine N. for having served as our Intergroup Roving Representative, and to Kathie N. for taking over the service work of visiting and writing up short articles about the various wonderful AA groups in the Tri-City area!

Editor's Note: Welcome to YOUR Conscious Contact Newsletter. So, in that light, we WELCOME and are GRATEFUL for article contributions and ask that if you have an article for submission, please keep it under 500 words. Submit your contributing article to the following email addresses: mikes_prescott@yahoo.com & prescottaa@prescottaa.org

(Continued from Cover Page.) But I knew I needed to work all of the Twelve Steps in order to gain lasting sobriety. I had tried for nearly twelve years to gain sobriety without working all the Steps and had always found that it just couldn't be done.. I got as far as the third word, "decision." There, I was stopped cold! What was a decision, anyway? I didn't really know, so how could I make one? For all too many years, I hadn't really decided anything--I had rolled with the tide and blamed everyone else for the messes I got myself into. And now I was asked to make a decision.

The closest thing I could come up with to describe making a decision was: making a total commitment and following it through with action. Commitments hadn't been my long suit, either, and I had always considered myself a "reacter," not an "acter." But I wanted sobriety, and I thought I might be able to make my decision--at least for the next twenty-four hours, if I could do it that way.

The next problem came with the words "turn our will and our lives over," because I didn't know what my will or my life really was. I had always referred to myself as a strong-willed person, when I really meant that I was stubborn and bull-headed. But I was almost sure that wasn't the kind of will the Step was talking about or asking me to turn over.

After doing a lot of soul-searching and asking others, I decided that my will meant all of my thoughts, inner feelings, behavior, impulses, and desires, and maybe even my subconscious. My life meant my surroundings, my daily living routine, situations, events, and other people. To me, it meant I would be turning over everything in my life--not just the part of it that I was eager to give up, but all of it!

That sounded like a mighty big order. I wasn't sure that I could even attempt it, much less do it. But once again, I thought I might be able to if I could do it on just a twenty-four-hour basis. I knew I couldn't do it alone. I would need the people I knew in the program; I would need prayer; I would need meditation. Most of all, I would need to learn that it was okay for me to need!

Finally having some understanding of what the Third Step was saying, for me, I began to work on it in this way: I committed both the inside me and my outside life to God, as I understand Him. The "God" part of this Step seemed the easiest part for me. I hadn't lost my God while I was drinking. In my blurred mind, He had become a little less loving and a bit more judgmental; but I hadn't lost Him.

In only a short time, just a few twenty-four hours, I again had the loving God of my childhood, and things were beginning to improve. But, like other recovering alcoholics, I have a tendency to take back my will every now and then. It usually isn't too long before I realize my mistake. I find myself thinking about things that go against my own conscience, or my stomach lets me know that I'm not comfortable. And I have to call on God and let Him have the control again.

I like to run things; I like to control others; and I seem to enjoy making a mess out of my life. So turning it over to God sometimes takes constant effort on my part. But with time and awareness, it seems to take less and less effort, as I let life happen--instead of trying to make it happen.

My twenty-four hours are beginning to accumulate a little now. As I attend my meetings regularly, talk with my sponsor, and work my program, I find more and more time and opportunity for me to practice being myself. When I allow God to keep the control that was once so hard for me to concede, I am at long last free to be myself!

* Story: "Made a Decision to What? May 1981 ~ **AA Grapevine**
BY: M. S. | MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

HANK P.

Hank Parkhurst (1895-1954) was the first alcoholic Bill successfully helped sober up after his return from Akron, Ohio. After spending some months in with Dr. Bob in the middle of 1935, Bill met Hank at Towns Hospital in New York in September 1939. Hank wrote in his story in the Big Book "The Unbeliever" that he was in the hospital ten times for his drinking. He also wrote the chapter "To Employers".

Being a very successful businessman before being fired for drinking from his executive position at Standard Oil of New Jersey, Hank became Bill's "right-hand man". It has been said that Bill would have had far greater problems getting the Big Book published if he did not have the high pressured salesman Hank working with him. The two men worked on raising money to write the book and they discussed many of the ideas that Bill was writing. Hank being more an agnostic wanted a psychological program in the book. There were others who wanted a more Christian approach for recovery. Bill wrote what he considered a more spiritual program that people of any or no religious persuasion could follow.

One of Hank's great contributions for publishing our book was his insistence on self-publishing. Lacking funds to write the book and meet their living expenses, it was suggested to Bill to have Harpers publish the Big Book. The publishing company would give Bill an advancement against future royalties and have the book promoted. At first, Bill thought the financial problems of getting the book published were over. Upon Hank hearing of Bill's meeting with religious editor Eugene Exman about Harpers publishing the book, he explained to Bill that they, (the alcoholics), must maintain control of the book. Bill gave it thought and return and told Exman that they are refusing Harpers offer.

The editor told Bill that even though it was against the interest of Harpers he agreed that the alcoholics should kept the



publishing right. This is considered a great moment in AA history, beside the money that AA would have not gained, we would have lost control over editing and which material gets published. We thank Hank for his insight.

Hank had the idea of selling stock, not very successfully to the alcoholics to raise the money needed to have the book published at Cornwall press. They needed to borrow some cash from Charles Towns, owner of Towns Hospital, where both Bill and Hank were detoxed on multiple occasions to get pay the printer for some of the first printing on April 10, 1939. The book finally came out and 40,000,000 copies later this book Alcoholics Anonymous is still the program of recovery we use in carrying our message.

Unfortunately, Hank did not remain sober. He was drinking again by the end of 1939 and never regained sobriety. He and Bill had a falling out over the stock and other issues. Hank would be considered one of the co-founders had he remained sober. Bill was the primary author of the Big Book, but it took Hank's efforts working with Bill to get it to our members by April 1939. For this we are grateful to Hank.

Sources: "Writing the Big Book" by William Schaberg and "Alcoholics Anonymous" 1st Edition

"Hank P.", article BY DAN S., PRESCOTT VALLEY, AZ



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(928) 445-8691 www.prescottaa.org //

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(PLEASE NOTE: Meeting Schedule links are online and no longer listed here).

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!



Your Roving Reporter

Article by Kathie N.

*Some groups **really** know how to party, and the Prescott Valley Friday Night Speaker Meeting excels in this category!*

On February 16th, the group hosted a Mardi Gras potluck at the Trinity Lutheran Church located at 3950 Valorie Dr. in Prescott Valley. I pulled into the large rocky parking lot at 5:30 for the 6:00 pm event and found it already filling up. I carefully navigated my way to the open backdoor and was greeted by outstretched hands and smiling faces.

The aroma of gumbo, rice and beans pulled me into the room where long tables were set up with plates, utensils and delectable appetizers, entrees, desserts and coffee. I witnessed the manic mayhem of the committee strategically arranging things to ensure a smooth flow and seamless transition to the colorfully decorated tables adorned with shiny beads, coins and masks. A large piñata of ribbons, cones and multi-colored tissue paper crafted by the coffeemaker, Tony, stood in the back corner.

An idle bat lay nearby.



Excited children darted about. Across the room was a table filled with AA literature and a wide variety of books.

The noise level intensified as the room filled with our wonderfully diverse tribe. Laughter and hugs abounded. Soon we were lining up to partake in the feast and making our way to tables where friends and friends we hadn't met yet waited. Lively conversation and heartfelt camaraderie ensued.

As carbs and calories mellowed us the room began to quiet, and attention turned to the podium. The speaker meeting would soon begin. This particular

meeting was established in 2007 by Jack P. and was originally held at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Prescott Valley. In 2010 it moved the present location. The group has many long time members who are actively involved in service. Beth S. and Dan S. have been involved since 2009.

The group hosts 2 major events a year, one being the Mardi Gras Potluck and the other a celebration of the group's anniversary.

Beth S. approached the podium and we began the meeting in the usual manner, with a prayer for those still suffering from this disease. The secretary, Michael, gave a report. It was then time for one of the most moving parts of the meeting, giving chips to honor continuous sobriety.

Beth had the honor of presenting her husband, Dan S. with his 43 year medallion. Concrete evidence that this program works. Then a young woman was awarded her 1 year chip. An incredible milestone for those of us whose lives had been tyrannized by alcohol, and a reminder that we can't get 43 years without first getting a year. It all starts with 24 hours without a drink.

Dan S. was presented as the speaker for the evening and in his humble, honest and sincere way told us how it had worked for him. It was easy to identify the earmarks of early alcoholism as we listened to him share his story. Many could identify with his struggle in accepting the spiritual part of the program. We could easily see how the disease went from casual partying to hopeless despair. We have lived his bewilderment, confusion and pain. Inside we celebrated his victory and his successes. We heard about his history of being of service and how it gave him freedom and happiness.

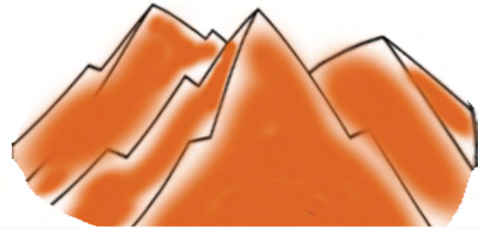
"I left with a sense of well-being and contentment. I highly recommend this Friday night meeting to anyone looking for solid sobriety and good, orderly direction." ~ Kathie N.



Arizona Fellowship of the Spirit Conference (Colorado)



Editorial: While in Sedona I attended an AA meeting and listened to Nick V. (from Evergreen, CO), share about the Fellowship Of The Spirit (FOTS) Conference that he attended *this past January* in Sedona, Arizona. I had never heard of FOTS but Nick piqued my interest to learn more. He said NEXT year's **Arizona Conference** will be held HERE in BEAUTIFUL PRESCOTT, (but I haven't read anything about this yet!). FOTS is also held in various states throughout the country each year. This was an AA/ALANON Conference that sounded exciting to me so I wanted to share with readers what I know about it, – to date. From their website: *"Each year, Colorado has their Conference in Estes Park, near the end of July, (near Rocky Mountain National Park). The weekend starts on Thursday afternoon, with separate workshops (panel presentations) on each of the 12 steps in order, and continues through Sunday morning. Mixed in with these discussions are speakers, regular AA/AL anon meetings, meditations, banquet (as well as other meals), a potluck picnic, ice cream social, and the best fellowship on God's green earth. This 'Big Book' focused four-day conference is family-friendly and open to anyone interested in gaining a deeper understanding of recovery as described in the book Alcoholics Anonymous. Hundreds of AAs and AlAnons gather to attend 12-step workshops and hear speakers from far and wide."* (NOTE: REGISTRATION FOR THE 3-DAY EVENT IS HAPPENING **NOW**. (LIMITED LODGING IS AVAILABLE). ~ IN SERVICE, MIKE S.



<https://www.fots.com>



Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the **Fellowship of the Spirit**, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.



May God bless and keep you – until then. Alcoholics Anonymous