

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Hi, Everyone! Meet the newest Ala-Tot, Millicent Lenore! Millie was born on June 8th at Saint Alphonsus in Boise. On July 22nd I celebrated 4 years sobriety, and I want to thank all of you for being a part of that. This service position has brought me an abundance of gratitude and appreciation for the AA service structure, and being given the opportunity to serve along side so many amazing people is a blessing in my life. Thank you to everyone on the committee who contributed to this Wagon Wheel edition. Please feel free to email me any articles, art, reports, or suggestions! It sure is a beautiful day to be sober!!!
-Angela D.



UPCOMING EVENTS

17th Annual Teton Canyon Campout

August 24-26, 2018

Reunion Flats Campground #C, Alta, WY

Idaho Falls Intergroup Campout

August 31 – September 3, 2018

Green Canyon Hot Springs
Campground
Newdale, ID

Pacific Regional Forum

September 7-9, 2018

San Jose, CA

2018 Area 18 Fall Assembly/ Convention

October 5-7, 2018

McCall, ID

Western Area Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous

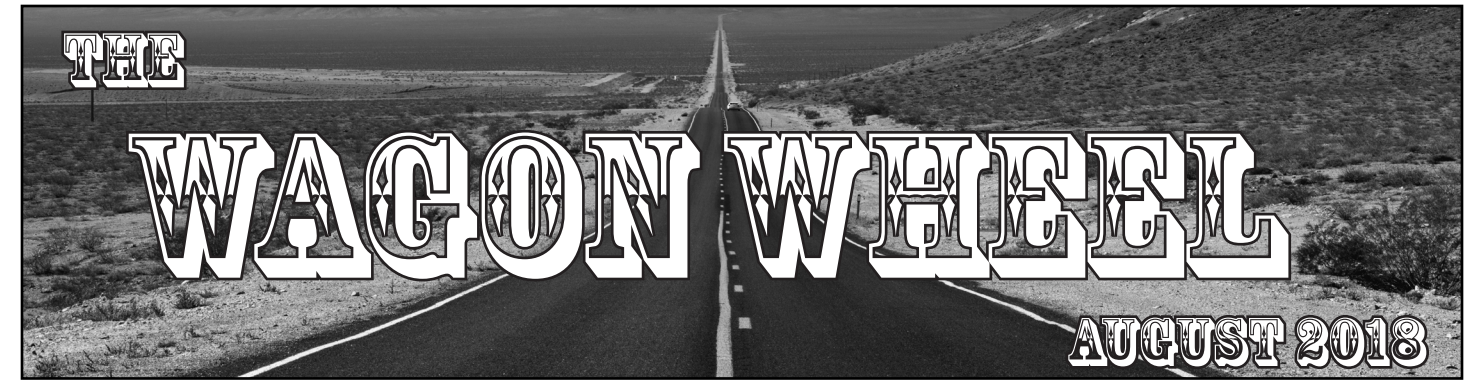
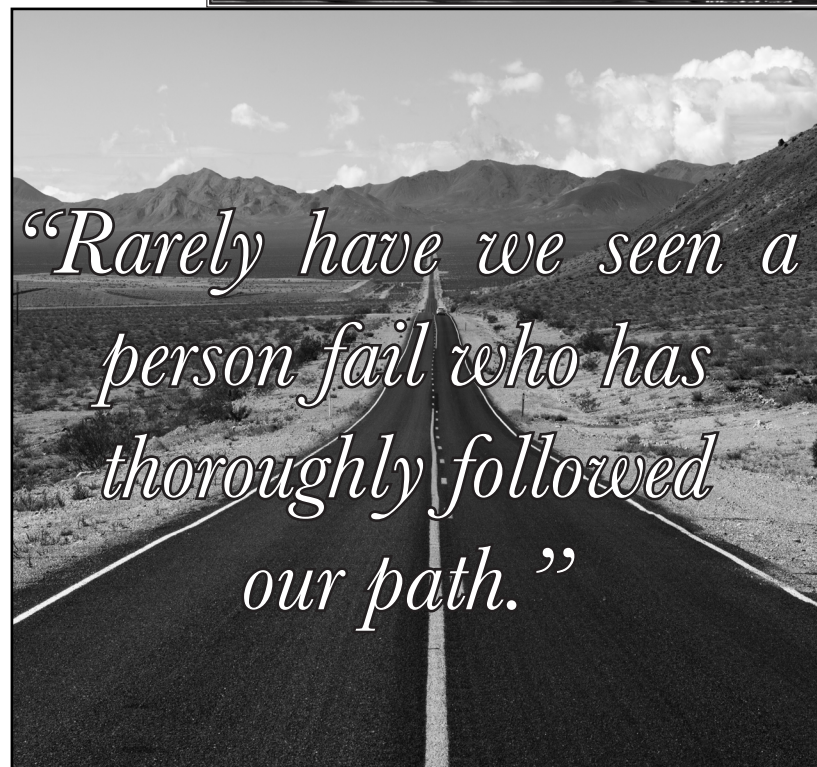
January 3-6, 2019

245 S Capitol Blvd, Boise, ID

AA History Symposium

February 1-3, 2019

Los Altos, CA



Idaho Area 18 Newsletter

Editor, Angela D.

THE ROAD OF HAPPY DESTINY

“Our book is meant to be suggestive only. We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. 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 you and keep you - until then.”

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous pg.164

The Gift of Relationships

Barry S.

My first PRAASA was in 1995 in Tacoma, WA. Each PRAASA that I have been to since has made a lasting impression upon me. This year's event was very much the same. Watching our Panel 68 Delegate, Shannon C. taking leadership of A.A. and listen to the Twelve Steps read in Navajo were a couple of timeless moments we all got to be witness to.

My personal highlight of the weekend was all about relationships. In the depths of my alcoholism I was not a relationship type of person. If there was nothing to be gained immediately from another person, I was not willing to put any effort into creating and keeping a relationship. This tended to leave me isolated and angry. Why didn't people just do... Wait a minute, this isn't about that. Early in sobriety I was gently nudged into being of service to my fellow man and woman. At first, I opened the meeting room, set it up, and cleaned it up at the end. Looking back, I wish I had the ability to stay in the moment better because I am sure I missed a lot. Again, this isn't about that. Let's talk relationships.

After a couple of rotations, I was able to travel with two of the best people I know, to Sparks. Over the years Ken and Margie P. have been traveling companions to many recovery and sporting events. We have done some amazing things together and been able to share sobriety and friendship through it all. If you haven't traveled extensively with someone before you are missing a huge gift. What a gift.

Making new friends and starting new relationships is such a blessing. This year's example of this idea would have to be Andre from Pocatello. It is awesome to meet new people in sobriety that are absolutely on fire. I was able to spend some time with him there and have kept in touch from that moment to this. This guy goes everywhere. I joke with him that when I am in his hometown he is in mine. Well that really isn't a joke, it has actually happened. Andre reminds me not to rest on what I have. Be aware for a new gift.

During the 23-year span that I have attended PRAASA there have been many wonderful people that have served as Delegate and Trustee in the Pacific Region. Most of these people have been leaders that I have willingly wished to follow. This year I was welcomed into their group with open arms. The Past Delegate's roundtable on Friday night was like getting to sit at the grownup table for Thanksgiving dinner. These wonderful people made me feel at home just like a loving family always does. I am so excited to be able to serve with this group from here on out and cannot wait to welcome the Panel 67 Delegates next year. What a gift!

What a pleasure it has been to get close to and travel to many of the same locations as Joel C. our now past Pacific Region Trustee. Who would have ever guessed that I would have a love and show compassion to others in too many ways to count. Sock sponsors are a gift.

I will mention just a few other names: Shannon C., Thad N., Neil W., Candice and Joe, Bob H., Steve C., Andrew and Tina L., Wally, Mark P., Vicky, Reilly, all the people at the meeting Sunday afternoon in Reno, and all the rest of you. And the three men that have allowed me to call them sponsor- Tony T., Bert P. and Garren T. I could name you all but who wants to read that. Thank you for the gift of you.

“In the depths of my alcoholism I was not a relationship type of person.”

In closing, general service is all about relationships. In order to stay sober, we must stick together, or we will die alone. We each need to look inside and find the cause of our own suffering and ask to have those defects removed to build a relationship with ourselves. After and even while doing that we can start to help others to remove their suffering building relationships with those around us. Each of us can make a positive difference in the lives of those around us by building relationships.

- Add a section on anonymity to the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship”: **PASSED**
- Change subtitle of pamphlet “G.S.R. General Service Representative: May be the Most Important Job in AA” to G.S.R. General Service Representative: Your Group's Link to A.A. as a Whole”: **PASSED**
- Add removed text regarding medication to Living Sober: **PASSED**
- Update the video “Your General Service Office, The Grapevine and the General Service Structure”: DVD: **PASSED**
- Publish with minor edits, the Britain Pamphlet “The God Word”: **PASSED**
- Develop a pamphlet based upon A.A.'s Three Legacies: **PASSED**
- Develop a new book combining Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions with Twelve Concepts for World Services: **FAILED**
- Develop a pamphlet for Spanish speaking women alcoholics: **PASSED**

POLICY / ADMISSIONS

- The 71st GSC be held April 25-May 1, 2021
- Process for polling the General Service Conference between Conference meetings: **PASSED**

PUBLIC INFORMATION

- Consider the proposed video PSA “Changes”: **PASSED**, as amended
- Consider centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of PSA “Changes” not to exceed \$42,000: **PASSED**
- Consider a Young People's Video: **PASSED**
- Consider revisions to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity” which expand content on Tradition Eleven and Twelve and adds information on safety: **PASSED**
- Consider revisions to the pamphlet “A Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous” which update language, contact information and information on the prevalence and severity of alcoholism and add information related to safety in A.A.: **PASSED**

REPORT AND CHARTER

- Consider changes to chapters 2, 3, and 5: **TOOK NO ACTION**
- Add “Panel” to the Glossary of General Service Terms: **PASSED**
- Add graphics on page S75, above the section A.A World Services, Inc. that visually display positions on each of the 3 corporate boards: **PASSED**
- Add text regarding standing committees from “The A.A. Group pamphlet”: **TOOK NO ACTION**
- Remove statement from the section Area Newspapers or Bulletins re: use of circle and triangle by groups and districts: **TOOK NO ACTION**
- Publish Committee Additional Considerations entirely in the printed Conference Final Report and the anonymity-protected version: **PASSED**

TREATMENT AND ACCESSIBILITIES

- Title of pamphlet Accessibility for all Alcoholics be changed to “Access to AA: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers & approved with add'l revisions.
- Scope of Committee expanded to include remote communities.

TRUSTEES

- Review proposal to censure the General Service Board: **TOOK NO ACTION**
- Review proposal to reorganize A.A. World Services and General Service Boards: **TOOK NO ACTION**

ARCHIVES

- Develop a policy on distribution of audio recording of General Service Conference presentations:

INT'L CONVENTIONS / REGIONAL FORUMS

- Possible sites for 2030: Indianapolis, Indiana & St. Louis, Missouri. Cities will have site visits.

AAWS / GSO REPORTS

- 2017 Contributions record of 8.4 Million, up 6% from 2016 Cost of Services-10.2 Million, up 3%, shortfall: 1.8 Million. Literature sales up 6%, covering shortfall. Reserve Fund is at 9.5 months.
- Cost of services/member: \$7.40, group: \$152.90.
- Grapevine subscriptions continue to decline but GV ended the year positive at \$126,000 with cost of La Viña \$126,000, vs \$152,000 in 2016.
- In 2017 GSO: 71 Big Books translated –more to come. 90 employees daily respond to more than 90,000 emails.

Corrections answers over 65,000 letters annually. Archives receives over 1,300 requests. 8 Million books, pamphlets & audio materials shipped daily & receive over 73,000 contributions (received 8,000 in Dec. alone) Big Books sold: 905,000, eBooks - 54,790 units sold. Website: received over 12 million visits, 1000 visits a day for “Need Help with a Drinking Problem?”

SAVE THE DATE!

THE NEXT PACIFIC REGIONAL FORUM

Sept 7-9, 2018 in San Jose CA

Not only do I have a say in where the money goes, I have a responsibility to serve when it gets there. I am currently blessed with serving as the Panel 68 Idaho Area 18 Chairperson and am grateful for the time I get to spend serving in that capacity. Sometimes that time means I don't get to spend as much time with my three remarkable children or get away for a weekend with my amazing partner. Sometimes the frantic call from a sponsee interrupts work. And sometimes I just don't want to go spend the evening at the jail. But this is AA in action. My responsibility today is not to keep AA alive for me but for those not yet even born. I do that through the spirit of sacrifice of my dollars and my time.

I encourage us all to talk about the 7th Tradition in meetings. Not only by reading the green self-support card at the beginning of the meeting but bringing it up as a topic. Read a Grapevine article about the 7th Tradition, or better yet, about where 7th Tradition money goes. Early in my sobriety, I didn't see anything beyond the four walls of my homegroup. Today I love to hear the stories of how the message is reaching alcoholics around the world. For those of you who attended PRAASA this year, you know one of those stories. We had the amazing opportunity to hear the 12 Steps read in Navajo, a project years in the making. The importance of this vital service was made crystal clear when we heard from the young woman, who shared from the floor with tears how grateful she was that this life-saving message in her native language will serve to help her people. Share those stories. Share your own 7th Tradition experiences and let's keep AA in action.

In Grateful Service,
Candice C.

Conference Advisory Actions of the 68th General Service Conference

AGENDA

- 69th GSC Theme will be "Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages"
- Presentation Topics: Yesterday's World – Our Legacies Begin, Today's World – Integrity, Anonymity and Service, Tomorrow's World – Courage to be Vigilant.
- Workshop Topic: Clarity of Purpose – Addressing the needs of our meetings

COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC)

- Changes to "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional": **PASSED**
- Changes to "Members of the Clergy Ask Alcoholics Anonymous": **PASSED**
- Changes to "If you are a Professional": **PASSED**
- Review of trustees' report regarding LinkedIn resulted in recommendation to develop a company page on LinkedIn: **PASSED**

CORRECTIONS

- Create a Pamphlet for inmates who are to be released after long term incarceration: **TOOK NO ACTION**

FINANCE

- Develop a method to standardize increases to the limits on individual contributions and bequests to the General Service Board: **TOOK NO ACTION**

GRAPEVINE

- Consider allowing outside sales of Grapevine books and single issue magazines: **PASSED**
- Reconsider the 2014 Conference Advisory Action regarding La Viña: **PASSED**
- Approve revised pamphlet "A.A. Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meeting in Print" and change title to "A.A. Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meeting in Print and Other Media": **PASSED**

LITERATURE

- Approve changes to "A.A. for the Woman" and retitled "Experience, Strength and Hope: Women in A.A.": **PASSED**
- Approve changes to "A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic" retitled Experience, Strength and Hope: LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.": **PASSED**
- Approve changes to "Inside AA.: Understanding the Fellowship and its Services": **PASSED**
- Approve draft pamphlet "A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues – and Those Who Sponsor Them": retitled to "Experience, Strength and Hope: A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health issues – and Their Sponsors": **PASSED**
- Proposed revisions to Alcoholics Anonymous-
Add appendix reflecting Library of Congress recognition: **FAILED**
Add the A.A. Preamble and Responsibility Statement: **TOOK NO ACTION**
Add endnote to Bill W.'s story acknowledging co-founder, Bob S.: **TOOK NO ACTION**

CONT'D

Tradition Five - Our Primary Purpose

B. L., Manhattan, N. Y.

From *The Grapevine* - June 1970 Edition

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

On my fourth sober AA day, I was sitting alone in one of our musty old meeting rooms, very sad and very broke. All the AAs had seemed very kind in their desire to help, but none of them had mentioned money. And, like thousands of other new members, I believed my biggest problems were financial. Yet not one person had offered a loan.

Then, suddenly, one of those big, handsome, gray templed, well-dressed old-timers strode in with a friendly smile widening his face. He stuck out his hand and squeezed mine. "If I can help you any way at all, just say so, and I'll do it!" he declared heartily. Trying to sound as if I were merely asking for a match, I said, "I hope so. You see, I need to borrow two thousand dollars."

His silence was total.

But finally he spoke. "You're in the wrong place," he said firmly. "We don't lend money here, my friend. That's not what this place is for."

I froze, but he went on and on. "We won't help you with a money problem. We won't help you with a family problem or a job or clothes or a medical problem or food or a place to spend the night. All we will do in AA is help you stay sober," he explained. "Then you can take care of these other problems yourself. You can take care of yourself, can't you, if you're sober?"

I hated that word "sober?" But what could I say? "Certainly," I snapped, humiliated that, in my ignorance of AA folkways, I had been caught in a faux pas, as if someone had found me eating peas with my fingers. What the man had said made perfectly good sense. I had been sober a few days and could take care of things. So I put my gradually clearing mind to it, remembered a cousin I had not tapped for months, sent a wire, and got some dough.

To my astonishment and sorrow, I almost instantly found myself drunk.

Within a few hours, my new AA benefactor had given me in very blunt words a sharp summary of Traditions Five, Six, and Seven. And, by getting drunk, I had illustrated perfectly the special sense behind Five. What I needed most was not money, obviously. After getting it, I still had the drinking problem that had made me think of approaching AA in the first place.

This happened in January 1945, and the first hint of the Twelve Traditions was not to appear anywhere in AA until the July 1945 issue of the Grapevine, when Bill W. wrote, "I would like to discuss in coming issues such topics as anonymity, leadership, public relations, the use of money in AA, and the like."

Therefore, what I encountered in AA during my first few months, before the Traditions were formalized, were customs of AA behavior followed by members who had learned that some AA ways would work and others would not.

That is the authority of the Traditions in my personal life. I honor them, not solely because of their authorship or their having the mystical number twelve or their being adopted by the Fellowship at the First International Convention in Cleveland in 1950. I cherish them because they work. They enable me and my fellow AAs to stay sober, together, and to carry our message to other alcoholics.

CONT'D

But I did not like the Traditions at first, especially when they conflicted with what I wanted. I was a suspicious character, often turning phony operator to get what I wanted. During those first weeks, I kept wondering what “those AAs” were really up to or out for, and what I could get out of them.

The real miracle is that most of them acted with extraordinary kindness. No matter what I tried to maneuver out of them, they tried just to give me the message.

In subsequent years, I tried to misuse AA in two ways; that is, I tried to get more out of it than the sobriety message. Once I wangled a part-time job from a fellow member, then took advantage of him. Coming in late, I would excuse myself by thinking, “After all, we’re both alcoholics; he ought to excuse my little weaknesses.” He exploited me, too, expecting long hours of unpaid work simply because I was a fellow AA. We began to concentrate on what we were owed, not on what we as AAs owed each other. Neither of us got drunk, but our friendship did not survive. Another time I tried to use AA for romance, and really did find balm for a lonely heart with an AA partner. We found romance, all right, but we lost our sobriety.

Years have gone by since I had my infancy in AA as an excuse for my “gimme” tendencies. Today I try to look at the Fifth Tradition as a giver, not as a taker. But the picture is not pretty enough to brag about. It isn’t always easy, even now, to keep my personal wants out of the way when I try to carry the message. I want applause as an AA speaker, compliments as a Grapevine writer. I want to be a “success” as a sponsor - that is, I want to be the one who sobered somebody up!

I have found I prefer to carry the message to pleasant, attractive, grateful alcoholics who do what I say and give me full credit for their sobriety. Sometimes I wish I did not even have to carry the message at all; I wish I could just wait where I am for people to come and pick it up.

On the other hand, I rejoice that I can now participate in so many good ways of fulfilling our primary purpose. I can help put on public meetings and other public information activities to carry the message to the alcoholics who are still out there drinking sick, scared, completely unaware that we want them, and completely wrong in their notion of what our sober life is like. I can be on our hospital and jail visiting committees. I can serve on my group’s hospitality committee, to welcome the ill at ease newcomer. I can attend or lead beginners meetings. I can help support our local intergroup office and the AA General Service Office, which reach drunks in places I cannot get to. I can have coffee with the new AA after the meeting, instead of running off to chin and gossip with my old friends.

Yes, my group (made up of individual AAs, including me) has improved a lot in its respect for our Fifth Tradition - in its ways of carrying the message. My own AA history has lengthened considerably since I first caught glimpses of the sobriety-preserving wisdom in the AA way of doing things, summed up in our Traditions. But I have recently discovered something else quite wonderful about the Fifth: It does not say that AAs should help only newcomers.

I do not agree that the newcomer is the most important member at any meeting. In my opinion, equally important are those old-timers who showed me the way, and any middle-timer who may today be suffering. If newcomers are indeed the lifeblood of AA, old and middle-timers are its skin and backbone. What a bewildered mess we would be in without them!

So in your next meeting, when that Tradition about carrying the message “to the alcoholic who still suffers” is mentioned, please give a thought, not only to newcomers, but also to the alcoholics older in AA who are sitting there. One of them might be me. I still suffer, sometimes. I still need to hear the message, always.

B. L., Manhattan, N. Y.

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Supporting our Fellowship: the 7th Tradition

Candice C.

In thinking about what I might contribute to the Wagon Wheel on this topic, and in looking at the hundreds of Grapevine articles written on the subject, I realized I felt like there was nothing original I could contribute. It brought to mind one of the gems I brought home from the past trustees’ panel at PRAASA: “If you don’t have anything to say, don’t try to put it into words”. But then I thought about how we carry the message in Alcoholics Anonymous and how comfortingly repetitive the message is. When we share about the principles, we become disciplined in those principles. I realized that though I may not share a whole lot of original information, it’s information we need to continuously share to keep alive the principles which breathe life into our fellowship. I love the Traditions, the living, breathing principles upon which our fellowship depends for survival.

My experience with the Traditions began well before I realized their impact upon me. The old-timers in my home group in the small town where I got sober didn’t quite know what to do with this obnoxious 16-year-old kid who showed up in their meeting room. I had the attention span of a flea and bounced off the walls. This was in a community of old farmers who weren’t quite ready for what I had to bring. Thank God for the Traditions! They couldn’t kick me out (though I think there may have been a couple who wanted to)!

My experience with the 7th Tradition has been that of the “learning variety”. Early in my sobriety, I put money in the basket as it was passed so could “look good” (Isn’t that just like an alcoholic, thinking 25 cents makes you “look good”?). It wasn’t until later in sobriety that I began to “donate” out of a vague understanding that the group had expenses to cover and I needed to help pay for my coffee. I truly thought the basket being passed was to pay only for the group’s expenses.

I belonged to a group who was deciding what to do with our money that was above and beyond our expenses. We were a very young group with young-in-sobriety members who weren’t very schooled in the Traditions, which was very evident when we decided we should contribute our extra money to a community ‘Secret Santa’ program. Word got out. The DCM came knocking at the door. In all of our infinite wisdom, we told him he couldn’t attend our women’s meeting because he was a man and told him to come back for our business meeting. My sponsor at the time, who had started the meeting, donned her armor and was ready for a fight. I’m so grateful for Tom M., who was serving as our DCM at the time. He was very soft-spoken and had eaten his spiritual Wheaties that morning because he came not to thump the tub for contributions to District, but to share the message of service in Alcoholics Anonymous. He shared how the AA dollar works in service. He didn’t quite have us until he shared about how some groups will buy literature for the prison. Well that one hit home. One of our home group members had just been released from prison and it made it real for us. I honestly don’t remember what we did with the money. I do, however, remember the valuable lesson I learned about our 7th Tradition dollars. I will be forever grateful to Tom.

In ‘Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age’, Bill talks about Ebby and his sacrifices of the cost of a phone call and ride on the subway to come and see Bill in Brooklyn. He writes, “At the level of the telephone booth and the subway turnstile, spirituality and money began to mix. One without the other would have amounted to nothing at all. Right then and there, Ebby established the principle that AA in action calls for the sacrifice of much time and a little money.” I like this description, as it holds us accountable to be self-supporting both with our time and our money. In the spirit of self-sacrifice, I offer my contribution to the basket in my home group. But my responsibility does not stop there. I am responsible to attend my group’s conscience to have a say in where the money goes (lesson learned on that one!).

CONT’D