



## **Willamette Valley Central Office**

687 Cottage Street NE

Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturdays 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

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### **February, The 2nd Month**

#### **Step 2**

*"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves  
could restore us to sanity."*

#### **Tradition 2**

*"For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience."*

### ***Step Two: I Didn't Drink And I Didn't Run***

When I came to Alcoholics Anonymous, all I wanted was to drink a little less. I did not want to find God, get spiritual, become a better person, or stop drinking. I did not have the power to change anything about my drinking, however. That's why I decided to try AA. That is also the summary of my twenty-five year experience with Step One.

Step Two baffled me. I understood all of the words in the Step but could not comprehend how or why any benevolent force would ever have any connection with me. I had no real religious background, and what I did know made me skeptical. I was taught by my parents, teachers, and popular thought that I could control my destiny and achieve whatever I wanted--if I was willing to work hard enough. If I wanted something done, I should do it myself, they told me. There was no room for the divine in the picture I developed of the world. In fact, there wasn't room for anything or anyone but me.

My alcoholism helped me fail at everything important to me. I failed to achieve the status and recognition I thought was due me in my profession. I withdrew from my family. I had no close relationships--drinking buddies were the best I could do. Worst of all, I felt the emptiness that many of us know. Life had no meaning for me. I had nothing to connect with, nothing to engage me, nothing to make my life worth living. This is the state I found myself in when I joined AA, a condition that turned out to be fortunate because it made me willing to consider ideas that I otherwise would have rejected immediately.

In the beginning, all I could do was not drink and not run away. When I listened to people talk about God at meetings, I didn't drink and I didn't run away. When I heard discussions at meetings about how God--or a higher power, or something--had come into the lives of members and done for them what they could not do for themselves, I didn't drink and didn't run away. I thought it was all nonsense but was afraid to dismiss it entirely. I had been beaten up enough to know that I would die if I drank again.

Because I did not drink and did not run away, I heard a lot of ideas about a power greater than myself that I considered--in spite of myself. I also saw that other alcoholics, who had been as desperate as I was, had stopped drinking and, as a result, their lives had changed. Even if I did not identify with whatever power they said worked for them, I saw that something had happened to them. This gave me just enough hope to keep coming back to one more meeting, to listen to one more story, and to talk to one more alcoholic.

Because this program did not dictate the name, size, shape, or color of the power that works here, I was forced to find my own. My experience has been a gradual one. It was not anything specific that happened, because nothing really happened. It was not something special that someone said, because I don't remember much of what anyone says. I cannot point to a day or meeting or person or book that changed my thinking. That's not how I experienced it.

But little by little, over months and years, my thinking about other people changed. I started seeing them less in relation to myself--more than or less than me, useful or useless to me, or doing something to me--and more as

people struggling just like I was to find a way to live. I lost many fears and some insecurities, and that has made it possible for me to do things, say things, and go places I never would have considered. I can now think about something other than myself, and I don't complain that life is not interesting or engaging.

In those instances when I give up my idea of how something should work, my life changes in a profound and wonderful way. The most powerful example, is my marriage. It is nothing like I thought it should be, and yet it works quite well. When something really difficult has happened in sobriety--despite my feelings of grief or loss or hurt--I have behaved in a way that made me feel good about myself and at peace with the outcome.

God is the name I call this power I have found, because that is the easiest way to express it to other people. If pressed to describe it, I say that I have found a power greater than myself that enables me to get out of myself and experience that rare and wonderful miracle of change.

Nancy C. Coral Gables, Florida

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sion. [February 2007](#) Vol. 63 No. 9

## *Second Tradition: Out of the Hat*

During the first year I was sober in AA, about a half dozen regular members abandoned my home group over a dispute about the group conscience. The process was frightening; the outcome reassuring.

At issue was the fate of one of our members who had lost a considerable chunk of the group treasury on a slow pony. The group decided that he must pay the money back, but--as the weeks went by--he didn't.

Then followed a business meeting. Tempers flared, friends fought, order barely prevailed. Finally the group conscience followed the wisdom of those who said that it was not a requirement that our members stop gambling and pay their debts: We voted not to expel the liable one.

However, there were those who felt the group unity was threatened, that we were renegeing on a responsibility to be self-supporting, that we were enabling a member to continue non-sober behavior. And some of them took their resentments and left the group. I was reassured by the fact that the gambler stayed sober, AA proved big enough to welcome the wanderers into other rooms, and the group survived.

Ours is a rambunctious group, not for everyone. We're one of our city's

"intake" meetings and newcomers are encouraged to share there. We have a two-part plan to deal with disruptions--both parts depend on a vote by the group. First, the group conscience decides whether or not to warn the person causing the disturbance. Then, if the disruption continues, the group conscience is called again to vote on temporary expulsion, usually for the length of the meeting.

And what *is* a disruption in a large meeting where business as usual includes people talking in the kitchen, at least one active drunk, a couple of regulars who can't or won't, sit still and be quiet? Well, throwing a coffeepot once merited expulsion. Refusing to stop yelling at the speaker did too. Of course the very few times one person laid a hand on another he or she got booted, but so did the person who launched a verbal attack.

Lest a reader get the idea that there is a free-for-all going on, I must say that--no matter how out of control the offender--rarely in ten years have I known people to try to stay after the group conscience decided they must leave. Most leave with no more than a parting word or two.

And it was at my home group that I learned to trust the experiences of the early groups with meetings. We have a Traditions meeting once a month and when I was new and heard the Traditions read out loud, the experiences of the early AA meetings gave me the first notion that real people--drunks like me--started this program.

In fact, it was easier at first to accept a higher power for my personal recovery in the form of a "Group of Drunks." Until very much later, turning over my individual will to a caring God was difficult (and often still is). But I knew that our coming together to stay sober was a spiritual act. When I rotated into service beyond the group and became a district committee member I was once present at a large meeting that expanded my understanding of "spiritual leadership."

We fought through three ballots trying to agree on the person who would represent our area at the General Service Conference. All of the candidates had put in many years of service and had their champions. Tempers were getting warm. Then the secretary announced that it was time for the Higher Power to decide and the three names went into a hat. Some of us were flabbergasted. This really was too silly, we said to each other.

However, the name drawn out of the treasurer's fedora was accepted at once. And the huge hall hushed for a long moment before hundreds of us boomed out the Serenity Prayer. We modern folks were not even embarrassed to be moved by that process.

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Angela D. New York, New York

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## Tradition Two Checklist

*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.*

1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees, and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers?
2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibility?
3. Do I look for credit in my AA jobs? Praise for my AA ideas?
4. Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
5. Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
6. In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?

**Look to this day, for it is life, the very life of life.**

**In it's brief course lies all the realities  
and verities of existence,  
The bliss of growth, the splendor of  
action, the glory of power.**

**For yesterday is but a dream, and  
tomorrow is only a vision.  
But today, well lived, makes every  
yesterday a dream of happiness,  
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.**

**Look well, therefore, to this day.**

*Sanskrit Proverb*

WVI CASH FLOW REPORT  
1/1/2008 THROUGH 12/31/2008

<b>INFLOWS</b>	
Deposit Adjustment	99.00
<b>GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	
7 AM Downtown Group	2,862.28
Alanon Friday Night	15.00
Capitol Discussion	600.00
Conscious Contact	500.00
Daily Reprieve Group	1,341.46
Dallas Speakers Meeting	100.00
District 4	30.00
Friday Night Speaker Meeting	25.00
Good To Be Here	77.00
Group *I*	353.96
Independence Monday Night Step Study	55.00
KIS-S Group	37.55
Ladies Luncheon	394.00
Living Sober Group	101.79
Mt. Angel Group	175.00
North Santiam Group of AA	253.00
Pioneer Group	204.31
Rebellion Dogs	100.00
Recovery at Noon	525.00
Scio Open AA	97.95
Scotts Mills Daily Reprieve	450.00
Second Chance Group	526.03
Silverton Group	340.00
Soberfest	3,000.00
Sunday Morning BB & Disc Keizer	80.00
Tuesday Night Step Study	344.76
Unity Groupo	50.00
<u>Way Home Group</u>	<u>2,000.00</u>
TOTAL GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS	14,639.09
OTHER INCOME	Total Individual Contributions 278.27
	Interest Income 1.05
	Copier Use 160.80
	Cash Overage 5.10
	<u>Payment for NSF Check 70.00</u>
	TOTAL OTHER INCOME 515.22

SALES

Book Cover	420.70
Calendar	33.00
CDs	26.00
Greeting Cards	168.00
Literature	8,592.09
Medallions	4,469.35
Misc.	225.40
Special Orders	68.80
Stickers-Decals	103.25
<u>Tapes &amp; CDs</u>	<u>74.00</u>
<b>TOTAL SALES</b>	<b>14,180.59</b>

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**TOTAL INFLOWS** 29,433.90

**OUTFLOWS**

	ASL	1,980.00
BANK CHARGES		
	NSF CHECKS	69.45
	Other BANK CHARGES	5.00
	Cash Shortage	0.15
	check cleared over	99.00
	COMPUTER	173.98
	COPIER Supplies	65.98
	INSURANCE	350.00

INVENTORY PURCHASE

AI-Anon Literature	51.95
Big Book Covers	303.09
Greeting Cards	96.00
Literature	7,736.43
Medallions	2,265.31
Misc.	144.70
Special Orders	33.44
Stickers-Decals	20.73
<u>Wall Calendar</u>	<u>28.50</u>
<b>TOTAL INVENTORY PURCHASE</b>	<b>10,680.15</b>

	LICENSES & PERMITS	91.00
	MAINTENANCE	55.00
	OFFICE SUPPLIES	468.14
PAYROLL		
	Payroll Taxes	3,583.79
	<u>Payroll</u>	<u>9,239.60</u>
	TOTAL PAYROLL	12,823.39
	Postage & Delivery	33.60
	RENT	5,748.88
	TELEPHONE	714.52
	<b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>	<b>33,358.24</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>		<b>-3924.34</b>

**WVI Account Balances - As of 1/19/2009**

Checking	1,267.92
<u>Savings</u>	<u>9,515.48</u>
	10,783.40

**END OF ANNUAL REPORT**

**Have something you'd like to see in the Eye Opener?  
Send all suggestions and/or information to:**

**Roger.L@comcast.net**

The watermark logo this month on page one represents one alcoholic helping another alcoholic. As stated in the Responsibility Declaration: "I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."

# February 2009 Calendar

## KIS-S Committee Meeting

When Mon, Feb 2, 5:30pm – 6:30pm Where Central Office, 687 Cottage NE,

## Grapevine Speakers Meeting

When Sat, Feb 7, 7:30pm – 9:30pm Where First Congregational Church, 700 Marion St. NE, Description Monthly AA Speaker Meeting

## H&I Committee Meeting

When Mon, Feb 9, 7pm – 8pm Where Central Office, 687 Cottage NE, Salem, OR

## District 4 GSR's Meeting

When Thu Feb 12, 7pm – 8pm Where St Paul's Episcopal Church, 1444 Liberty St. SE, Salem, OR

## SOBERFEST!!!!

Where Chemeketa Community College 4000 Lancaster Drive NE

When Friday 4:30 to Sunday noon

## TTCO Speakers Meeting

When Sat Feb 14, 7pm – 9pm Where St Paul's Episcopal Church, 1444 Liberty St. , Salem, OR

Description Take The Cotton Out Speakers Meeting. AA, Al-Anon Speakers Meeting.

## WVI Committee Meeting

When Mon, Feb 16 7pm – 8pm Where Central Office, 687 Cottage NE, Salem, OR, 97301

## TTCO Committee

When Tue, Feb 24, 7pm – 8pm Where Central Office, 687 Cottage NE, Salem, OR

## Soberfest Committee

When Fri, Feb 27, 7pm – 8pm Where St Paul's Episcopal Church, 1444 Liberty St. , Salem, OR

## KIS-S Speakers Meeting

When Sat, Feb 28, 7:00pm – 9:30pm Where Morningside Methodist Church, Salem, OR Description Keep It Simple Speakers Meeting. AA, Al-Anon Speakers Meeting.



## **Responsibility Declaration**

**"I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."**

### **Serving as a channel for God's spirit**

**Allowing too much resentment and fear to upset my soul prevents me from living my life as it ought properly to be lived -- *serving as a channel for God's spirit* -- and doing God's work in the world :**

**I will try to keep my life calm and unruffled. This is my great task, to find peace and acquire serenity. I must not harbor disturbing thoughts.**

**No matter what fear, worries and resentments I may have, I must try to think of constructive things, until calmness comes. Only when I am calm can I act as a channel for God's spirit.**

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!**

**Marcy L Feb 4th**

**Roger L Feb 25th**

**Suzie L Feb 4th**

**(Suzie says "I'm "21" and havin' fun!!!)**

### **Attention Motorcycle Riders!!**

**Weather permitting, we would like to get a group of riders together on a Saturday or Sunday fro a "day ride" and some "throttle therapy".**

**Spend a great day in the wind and have some fun with us.**

**For Info Call:**

**Ben 503 375 0382 or Woody 208 634 6462**

**NEW MEETING: SALVATION ARMY CANDLE LIGHT  
TIME: 10- 11 PM  
DAYS: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday AND Sunday  
PLACE: FRONT STREET IN WAREHOUSE**

### **Ed and Jean T. Legacy**

Many years ago, a dearly loved couple came into Oregon and was instrumental in starting the Woodland Chapel meeting. They had giant service hearts, and many of the people in the area have been recipients of their generosity and kind sponsorship.

When Jean got sick, several of the women from that group gave their time and energy to assist the couple in making her passage over as easy as possible. Ed nicknamed the gals his A.A. Angels. The name stuck, and these women went on to produce two calendars as a fundraiser for Central Office and create a dance routine performed at various conferences for the A.A. community enjoyment.

The group of girls has changed since 2003, but the purpose and love of the program have not. We continue the legacy of these two wonderful people. Ed T. passed at the beginning of this year and he will be sorely missed especially his jokes, but he is remembered every time someone claps and laughs and sings along with A.A. Angels. I know he and Jean are clapping too! See you at Soberfest!

### **Making my recovery work**

To make my recovery work, I must take time alone with God on a regular, scheduled basis.

I must keep a time apart with God every day. Gradually I will be transformed mentally and spiritually. It is not the praying so much as just being in God's presence. The strengthening and curative powers of this I cannot understand, because such knowledge is beyond human understanding, but I can experience them . . . . My greatest spiritual growth occurs in this time apart with God.



## **Lois Burnham Wilson**

**March 4, 1891- October 6, 1988**

Lois Burnham, the co-founder of The Al-Anon Family Groups, was born on March 4, 1891 at 182 Clinton Street, Brooklyn Heights, New York. Lois was a graduate of The Packer Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn. Lois' primary interests were mostly artistic. She would later become interested in interior

decoration, but also showed interest in fine art. One of the children the Burnham's played with was a boy who came each summer with his prominent family from Albany, New York. His name was Edwin or "Ebby" T. who would also become a close friend of Lois' future husband, Bill W., and be instrumental in Bill's getting sober.

Lois younger brother, Rogers, introduced Lois to his friend, Bill Wilson, in 1913. Lois was over four years older than Bill. In 1915, the couple became secretly engaged and married on January 24, 1918, just days before young officer Bill W. shipped off to Europe in the First World War.

In 1951, Lois followed the suggestion made by her husband who had crafted the 12 steps of recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous to create a similar 12-step program for the family and friends of alcoholics. It now has over 29,000 groups worldwide and a membership of over 387,000.

Lois W. died on October 6, 1988 at 97 years old. She was present and energetic throughout her latter years and enjoyed good health for most of them. She wanted to live to be 100 and almost did.

Lois was one of the 20th century's most important women. Her life has been somewhat overshadowed by that of her husband, but, in recent years, she has emerged more visible than before for her unique contribution to humanity. It is through her tireless efforts and vision that Al-Anon is the strong organization it is today and why it continues to attract members through its message of hope and renewal.