



TOP SHELF

NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE OF SOUTHERN COLORADO 4035 A CLUB MANOR DRIVE, PUEBLO, CO 81008 (719)546-1173 24/7 OFFICE HOURS MONDAY-FRIDAY 10AM - 4PM. CLOSED SOME HOLIDAYS. CALL TO VERIFY



March 2026

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR NEWSLETTER MUST BE SUBMITTED TO E-MAIL BELOW BY THE 21ST OF EACH MONTH

Notable Dates

- Mar 4 CSO Steering Committee Meeting, 6:00 pm at CSO, 4035 A Club Manor Dr. and on Zoom. **CSO ELECTIONS WILL HELD**
- Mar 14 District 8 Meeting, 10:30 am at Rawlings Library 100 E Abriendo Ave. and on Zoom.
- Mar 20 - 22 Area 10 Spring Assembly, at Fort Collins Hilton.
- Mar 28 Hit N'Run dinner @6:00 - mtg @8:00 @Alano Club in Canon City 715 Elm Ave
- Apr 1 CSO Steering Committee Meeting, 6:00 pm at CSO, 4035 A Club Manor Dr. and on Zoom.
- Apr 10 - 11 Area 10 Corrections Conference, Denver United Churn, 660 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80209
- Apr 10 8 hr DOC training to go to State facilities
- Apr 11 District 8 Meeting, 10:30 am at Rawlings Library 100 E Abriendo Ave. and on Zoom.



The Blueprint and the Burning Bush

By Neil P.

For years, I attempted to "think" my way into a recovery I hadn't yet earned. As a logical, data-driven professional, I viewed the concept of God as a placeholder for those who lacked a sufficient understanding of science. I believed that enough knowledge, coupled with a high-functioning intellect, was the only tool I needed to navigate life. A Higher Power wasn't just unnecessary; it was a statistical impossibility.

My awakening didn't come through a boardroom negotiation or further academic study. It came through a total, step-by-step surrender to the Big Book, treating it not as a religious text, but as a technical manual for a soul that had run out of fuel.

The Logical Audit

Before I could look at the Steps, I had to be broken of the illusion of control. I reached a point of utter exhaustion that my desperation finally outweighed my skepticism. I became willing to heed my sponsor, Josie's, advice. He directed me to "Came to Believe" meetings, where I heard others share their personal connections with a higher power. More importantly, he challenged me to perform a "logical audit."

He asked me to document specific moments where I had survived precarious situations despite astronomical odds. Looking at those events on paper, my analytical brain could no longer ignore the data. The probability of mere "coincidence" was too small to be the only factor. The evidence suggested a Power greater than myself had been intervening long before I permitted it to do so.

Surrender in the Swamp

With that crack in my armor, the foundation for Step Three was laid in the humidity of a Florida swamp. I traveled to meet a group of men known as the "Lottie Boys." I arrived with my usual guarded heart, my "Protector" mask firmly in place. But I was met with the raw, simple faith of men who had found a solution.

On the cold tile floor of a porch in Lottie, Florida, I finally knelt. That Step Three prayer wasn't a formal ritual; it was a desperate, honest surrender. I asked to be relieved of the "bondage of self"—the crushing weight of having to run the world—so that I could finally be of service to those around me.

The "Surgical" Work

This surrender gave me the willingness to begin the "clearing" phase. In an intense five-and-a-half-hour session in a quiet lecture hall, Josie and I dissected my life as I did Step Five. We laid out every resentment, every fear, and my entire relational audit.

As we worked, the mask I had been wearing—the image management and the relentless need for control—was stripped away. I began to see that my desire to be the "protector" for everyone was often just a socially acceptable way to play God. I was trying to play a role that didn't belong to me, and that armor was the very thing holding me back from a selfless connection to others.

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March 2026

TOP SHELF, CONTINUED



IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON UPCOMING AA EVENTS, PLEASE CONTACT THE CENTRAL OFFICE AND PROVIDE US WITH A FLYER (IF AVAILABLE) AND WE WILL HELP GET THE WORD OUT. FOR FLYERS, PLEASE REMOVE ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION AS WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO POST ANYTHING WITH PERSONAL INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE TO PROTECT PERSONAL ANONYMITY.



The Hour on the Shelf

When we reached Step Six, we followed the 'manual' to the letter. Following the instructions in Into Action, I spent an hour in quiet, deep, and purposeful inquiry. I placed my Big Book on a shelf, as the text suggests, and faced the reality of my situation. I realized that my old way of life—the intellectual armor and the relentless need to manage the world—was the very thing holding me back.

This hour wasn't just a pause; it was a realization that my defects were a total barrier, blocking me from a Higher Power and preventing the spiritual awakening I so desperately sought. I had to acknowledge that my 'best thinking' had only led me to a dead end. I had to decide if I was truly ready to let go of the self-reliance that had been strangling my life. I went to bed that night feeling a strange vacuum. I didn't feel "lighter." I had followed the directions, yet the heavens hadn't opened. I learned in those dark hours that faith isn't a feeling; it's the willingness to wait on a Power that operates on its own timeline, not mine.

The Burning Bush in the Studio

At 6:00 a.m. the next morning, I stood in the heavy, 105-degree heat of a yoga studio, my body pushed to the absolute edge of its logical limits. In that humid silence, the spiritual surgery of the previous day became a searing physical truth. As the sweat poured off me, it felt as though my defects were literally being purged through my pores—the intellectual armor I had worn for decades was finally melting away.

The moment of total transformation came when I finally lay down in Savasana. As I rested on that mat, the weight of the world—a burden I had insisted on carrying alone—suddenly lifted. For the first time in my life, I felt much lighter, as if the gravity of my own self-will had finally released its grip. In that stillness, I felt a direct connection to a Higher Power, something deep emanating in my soul.

The shattering of my old reality was complete. I realized with an overwhelming sense of relief that I was no longer in control, and more importantly, that I didn't have to be. I knew then that God had my back. I walked out of that studio a free man, having experienced my 'burning bush' moment.

By treating the Big Book not as a collection of suggestions, but as a blueprint for transformation, I found a relationship with the Divine that my intellect could never have constructed. I learned that when we follow the directions, the Promises aren't just words on a page—they are a new way of life.



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CSO NEWS

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OCSOBERFEST IS IN THE WORKS

When: October 3rd

Where: Pueblo Community College

We have 3 speakers lined up, full schedule to follow.
You'll be asked to pre-register, link to follow!

CSO

Our CSO is in need of help! There are a number of positions currently vacant, along with some positions that need to be rotated. We'll be holding elections in March, please consider giving some of your time to help. For those not familiar, the CSO is a vital part of AA, as the CSO helps each group carry the message by stocking our literature, maintaining our meeting lists for our districts, and is a communication line between local groups in our 3 districts and the GSO in New York.

Our CSO is looking for an office volunteer for the TUES 1 - 4 PM shift as well as an assistant office manager. Please reach out to the CSO for more information on these.

Among the positions open, we currently don't have an Activities Chair. If this isn't filled, our July 4th picnic may not happen.

Lastly, the CSO is hoping to put together a mobile book library to bring books to the further districts it serves. This would involve a day of loading books into your car and visiting some further away meetings. Perhaps make a day of it and grab a couple of local AAers to do a mini Hit and Run! Please reach out to Kevin to coordinate.



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FINANCIAL

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MARCH 2026 CSO FINANCIAL SUMMARY

December 1, 2025, Balance	\$1067.06
Revenue	\$684.93
Expenses	(\$1332.22)
December 31, 2025, Balance	\$419.77
Revenue	\$1784.05
Expenses	(\$1163.73)
Operating Funds 2/1/2026	\$419.77
Prudent Reserve	\$2500.00
Miscellaneous Fund	\$1000.00

- Last year's revenue to this date was \$18030.59, this year it is \$13,992.28. We have taken in approximately \$4000.00 less this year than last. Our expenses so far this year are \$16,215.03 and last year they were \$16,368.86. This year's expenses are about the same as last year. Right now, we are operating \$15,30.28 in the red.
- The minimum cost to keep the office open is about \$700.00 a month. That varies based on the cost of the answering service. On top of this we have other expenses such as insurance, cost of hosting our websites, cost of software, Office supplies, and the cost of sponsoring activities.
- Our literature sales are self-supporting. We buy literature to replace what we sell.
- We provide a detailed accounting year to date at the CSO monthly business meeting. If you would like to review the details, send a representative to the meeting or come by the office when I am here.
- Important notice, AAWS raised the cost of all books. This does not include the 75th Anniversary 1st edition replica edition). To keep the price as low as possible, we will not increase our prices until we must order more books under the new prices. The prices will increase on the Big Book, the 12&12 and the Daily Reflections first with the others going up as we have to restock. An example of the prices we pay: Before the increase we were paying about \$11.50 for Hard Cover Big Books, now, with the price increase they are \$15.00.

Yours in Love and Service,
Kevin

Note: The Prudent Reserve and Miscellaneous Fund are established by The CSO Charter. The Prudent Reserve is held to support office operations for 3 months (not including literature purchases) and the Miscellaneous fund is available for emergent purchases (for example, the office must relocate).

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