

STA REPORT FOR AUGUST 27, 2015

From Tina:

So, with forest fires off in the near distance (more later) there was much calm and clear air in the bus station. I assumed my hour and half of the three hour shift and am pleased to report a very special interaction:

A clean-cut fellow walked his bike up to the table and asked where the nearest Reading Room was located. I gave directions and asked him if he knew about Science and Health. "I read all of it in jail." He added that he has been free of addictions since reading it, except for one. I asked him how he knew about Reading Rooms and he said, "The lady in Olympia told me there was one in Spokane." Off he went with his bike to the RR. I called the attending librarian and told her she was about to get a visitor - and she did!

Then two lovely ladies all sparkly in make-up and nice attire walked past. One of them looked quizzically at the display and they kept going. Shortly they returned and asked if there was a connection with Scientology. We got that confusion cleared up right away and I explained a bit about Mrs. Eddy's tumultuous life, which led her to write her Bible-based book. They liked hearing about her because they appeared to have experienced some personal tumult themselves. One was contemplating leaving her alcoholic fiancé. While not counseling, I did remind her that she had the spiritual tools at hand to be lifted out of a difficult relationship or to experience healing. It didn't occur to me until the middle of the night that I could have directed her to the chapter on marriage. If it came to me, then I can trust it came to her attention too.

I appreciate all the conversations I have had with my teammates when we staffed the outreach table together. I appreciate focusing my sole/soul attention on my STA 'mates' from now on.

Regarding the massive forest fires in Eastern Washington and nearby states, yesterday I received a lovely email from a CS acquaintance who lives in Olympia. Yay Olympia! I would like to share it. It helped me much, because many relatives who live on the Spokane Reservation and nearby Colville Rez have been affected by the fires:

Dear friends and family,

Some time ago, I was in a bar in Northeast Oregon. No, as most of you would know, I wasn't "drinking". But while eating a meal, I had a meaningful visit with a very calm and articulate American Indian man who was sitting alone when I came in. I learned that he was on a fire-fighting crew -- which got my attention, after having been on a wildfire line, myself, one summer in Wyoming. I also had worked with another Native American wildfire fighter who among other things had carried an injured 200-pound white man up the side of a mountain.

In the course of our visit, he compared the raging forest fires he proudly stood up to as the sum total of typically white societal racism he felt toward him and his people. His confidence and dignity were being expressed by facing this inflamed ignorance and hatred represented in his thought by the destructiveness of the fire. He also knew that it was difficult for anyone to discriminate against the evidence of sacrifice his battle with fire represented. It was clearly therapeutic for him in facing the even more destructive forces of hatred and ignorance. He was unimpressed by them and able to be very calm when "in town" in the presence of such attitudes.

Right now, I am joining many others while praying to support the motivation, discipline, creative problem solving intelligence,

endurance, clear communication, athleticism, properly working machinery, safety, evacuations, courageous stands, needed supplies, funding and bigger perspectives that are essential to this work. I believe that God makes these qualities available continuously. There is such a wonderful unity that is often felt in confronting a challenge that affects everyone -- a unity that can and should be sustained.

Can a oneness of mind with positive expectations make a difference? Can a prayer go beyond "hope" to make a difference and change such "unintelligent" forces as fire and weather into more favorable conditions? Is the universe only or primarily controlled by chance, physical forces and chemical reactions?

Prayer to me implies a Great Spirit centered perspective -- an intelligent Life and Love centered source of inspiration and creation. Good ideas become substantial in this spiritual view and in my experience they have resulted in clearly improved physical conditions.

I've linked, below, to a July 5th, 2013 article titled "Prayer for Firefighters" from the Christian Science Monitor, which was written by my friend Nathan Talbot. I think that he makes a good case that is still relevant, for standing up to fear and hatred in effort to help fire fighters.

As I feel empowered to care about my neighbors at home and around the world more and reduce hatred, racism, sexism, nationalism, sensationalism and many other forms of ignorance in my thought even a little, I am convinced that I tap into the same Principle, Love that will bless all of us as firefighters!

With love and gratitude for your engagement, Ross

Feel free to share.

Prayers for firefighters by Nathan A. Talbot - CSMonitor.com

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/A-Christian-Science-Perspective/2013/0705/Prayers-for-firefighters>

From Bob:

This was our first planned time to work solo at the outreach table---not that it inadvertently hasn't happened on several occasions in the past---and work 1-1/2 hour shifts instead of 2 hours as a test. We wanted to see if the table is more approachable with just one person standing there; and also we're wondering if we might have been distracted from keeping our thoughts clear by talking with each other. So this new schedule is a test case for a while.

The first shift was very quiet (no pun intended!) with about six books gifted. Two people did stop by to say they really enjoyed reading S&H. One, a young woman, said she then passed it on to her mother. I offered her another copy for herself and she was delighted. A gentleman also said he got the book several weeks ago, read most of it, and likewise thought it was quite good. Building on that I gave him a copy of *The Ultimate Freedom* to show how the concepts in S&H were employed during very stressful times.

While I, and our practitioner team were keeping our thoughts on peace and harmony around us, an interesting example of protection occurred. A young

man coming up the typically busy escalator tried to hop on his long skateboard just as he reached the top...he fell forward and the quite heavy skateboard accelerated backward by the force of his propelling feet. It smashed its way backwards down the escalator and across the mezzanine to crash into a wall. It was loud the whole way. But...no one was on the escalator at the time coming up and no one was hit on the lower floor. That was wonderful.