

# the Westword



## IN REMEMBRANCE:

Joe McQuany passed away October 25, 2007 at 3:30 in Little Rock, AR. USA.

He was the original Joe of the Joe & Charlie Big Book Studies. There is an online memorial book to sign for Joe's family at: <http://www.aahistory.com>

It's hard to predict exactly how many thousands of people have been blessed with the knowledge of the Big Book as passed on by Joe and Charlie through their Big Book Studies in the last 30 years.

He will be greatly missed.

# 25 cents

(Suggested Donation)



## november issue/2007

## Take Step Eleven

- One Man's View -

Bill W.

AA Grapevine

June 1958

Step 11 - Sought through prayer & meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us & the power to carry that out.

When it comes to the practice of AA's Step Eleven--"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out"--I'm sure I am still very much in the beginner's class; I'm almost a case of arrested development.

Around me I see many people who make a far better job of relating themselves to God than I do. Certainly it mustn't be said I haven't made any progress at all over the years; I simply confess that I haven't made the progress that I might have made, my opportunities being what they have been, and still are.

My twenty-fourth AA anniversary is just ahead; I haven't had a drink in all this time. In fact, I've scarcely been tempted at all. This is some evidence that I must have taken and ever since maintained Step One: "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." Step One was easy for me.

Then, at the very beginning, I was fortunate enough to receive a tremendous spiritual awakening and was instantly "made conscious of the presence of God" and "restored to sanity"--at least so far as alcohol is concerned. Therefore I've had no difficulty with AA's Step Two because, in my case, its content was an outright gift. Step Four and Step Five, dealing with self-survey and confession of one's defects, have not been overly difficult, either.

Of course, my self-analysis has frequently been faulty. Sometimes I've failed to share my defects with the right people; at other times, I've confessed their defects, rather than my own; and at still other times, my confession of defects has been more in the nature of loud complaints about my circumstances and my problems.

Nevertheless, I think I've usually been able to make a fairly thorough and searching job of finding and admitting my personal defects. So far as I know, there isn't at this moment a single defect or current problem of mine which hasn't been discussed with my close advisers. Yet this pretty well-ventilated condition is nothing for self-congratulation. Long ago I was lucky enough to see that I'd have to keep up my self-analysis or else blow my top completely. Though driven by stark necessity, this continuous self-revelation--to myself and to others--was rough medicine to take. But years of repetition has made this job

far easier. Step Nine, making restitution for harms done, has fallen into much the same bracket.

In Step Twelve--carrying the AA message to others--I've found little else than great joy. We albies are folks of action and I'm no exception. When action pays off as it does in AA, it's small wonder that Step Twelve is the most popular and, for most of us, the easiest one of all.

This little sketch of my own "pilgrim's progress" is offered to illustrate where I, and maybe lots of other AAs, have still been missing something of top importance. Through lack of disciplined attention and sometimes through lack of the right kind of faith, many of us keep ourselves year after year in the rather easy spiritual kindergarten I've just described. But almost inevitably we become dissatisfied; we have to admit we have hit an uncomfortable and maybe a very painful sticking point.

Twelfth-Stepping, talking at meetings, recitals of drinking histories, confession of our defects and what progress we have made with them no longer provide us with the released and the abundant life. Our lack of growth is often revealed by an unexpected calamity or a big emotional upset. Perhaps we hit the financial jackpot and are surprised that this solves almost nothing; that we are still bored and miserable, notwithstanding.

As we usually don't get drunk on these occasions, our bright-eyed friends tell us how well we are doing.

But inside, we know better. We know we aren't doing well enough. We still can't handle life, as life is. There must be a serious flaw somewhere in our spiritual practice and development.

### What then, is it?

The chances are better than even that we shall locate our trouble in our misunderstanding or neglect of AA's Step Eleven--prayer, meditation and the guidance of God. The other Steps can keep most of us sober and somehow functioning. But Step Eleven can keep us growing, if we try hard and work at it continually. If we expend even five percent of the time on Step Eleven that we habitually (and rightly) lavish on Step Twelve, the results can be wonderfully far-reaching. That is an almost uniform experience of those who constantly practice Step Eleven.

In this article, I'd like to develop Step Eleven further--for the benefit of the complete doubter, the unlucky one who can't believe it has any real merit at all.

In lots of instances I think that people find their first great obstacle in the phrase "God as we understand Him." The doubter is apt to say, "On the face of it, nobody can understand God. I half believe that there is a First Cause, a Something, and maybe a Somebody. But I can't get any further than this. I think people are kidding themselves when they say they can. Even if there were a Somebody, why should he bother with little me, when, in making the Cosmos run, he already has plenty to do? As for those folks who claim that God tells them where to drill for oil, or when to brush their teeth--well, they just make me tired."

**continued on page 2: see "Take Step Eleven"**

*I am responsible.*

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

**Calgary AA Central Service Office**

#2, 4015 1st Street S.E.

Calgary, Alberta - T2G 4X7

Phone: (403) 777-1212 Fax: (403) 287-6540

Email: [centraloffice@telus.net](mailto:centraloffice@telus.net)

Office Hours:

Mon to Thr: 8:30am - 1:00pm, 2:00pm - 5:00pm

Fri: 8:30am - 5:30pm, Sat: 9:00am - 1:00pm

Closed Sundays and Stat Holiday Weekends

**CLOSED: Tuesday Dec. 25, Wednesday Dec. 26,  
Saturday Dec. 29 and Wednesday Jan. 1.**

# NEW MEETINGS

## Spirit Walkers (Open, Mixed)

Wednesday, 8:00pm  
Native Network

19 Erinwoods Dr. SE

Based on Native Spirituality

(Non-smoking but there will be "smudging".)

## Friends of Bill W. (Open, Discussion)

Tuesday, 12:00pm

Mount Royal College

Room Z011, lower level of Wyckham House near  
the Peer Support Centre

(While in session - until Dec 4/07)

## Beacon's Refugee Group (Open, Discussion)

Saturday, 8:00pm

Highland Community Centre  
3716 - 2nd St. NW  
(Side door)

## Women's Big Book Study (Open, Women)

Monday, 7:30pm

11419 - 8th St. SW

(Upstairs, at left)

## Came to Believe (Open, Discussion)

Sunday, 7:30pm

Rm. 200L, 200 Haddon Rd. SW

(Upstairs)

## Cedar Villa Shut-In Seniors (Open, Mixed)

Saturday, 10:00am

3330 - 8th Ave. SW

(Gord R.: 510-8680)

200 Haddon Rd. SW, Rm. 200L  
(Upstairs)

## Airdrie Sunday Morning Breakfast

Sunday 10:00am

Best Western Regency Inn

**NOW MEETS IN Rm. 226**

Edmonton Tr., Airdrie

## Rounders

Wednesday, 8:30pm

Cedarbrae Community Centre, Rm. 3

11024 Oakfield Dr. SW

(Summer ONLY)

## Strathmore Thursday Night 12 x 12

Thursday, 8:00pm

**NOW MEETS AT**

Strathmore Full Gospel Church

# MEETING CHANGES

## Sorrel Rider Group

Siksika Nation

Listing incorrect in new Meeting List!

**This meeting is held Wednesdays at**

**7:00pm.**

## Stettler Heartland Group

Stettler

Listing incorrect in new Meeting List!

**This meeting is held Tuesdays at 8:00pm.**

## Springbank Tuesday Night

**NOW STARTS AT 7:30pm**

Springbank Community Church

2nd Ave. & 181st St. NW

(South of Calaway Park entrance)

## Haddon's Journey Home

**NOW STARTS AT 5:30pm (Mon. - Fri.)**

## continued from page 1: "Take Step Eleven"

Our friend is clearly one who believes in some kind of God--"God as he understands Him." But he doesn't believe any bigger concept or better feeling about God to be possible. So he looks upon meditation, prayer and guidance as the means of a self-delusion. Now what can our hard-pressed friend do about this?

Well, he can strenuously try meditation, prayer and guidance, just as an experiment. He can address himself to whatever God he thinks there is. Or, if he thinks there is none, he can admit--just for experimental purposes--that he might be wrong. This is all-important. As soon as he is able to take this attitude, it means that he has stopped playing God himself; his mind has opened. Like any good scientist in his laboratory, our friend can assume a theory and can make an experiment. He can pray to a "higher power" that may exist and may be willing to help and guide him. He keeps on experimenting--in this case, praying--for a long time. Again he tries to behave like the scientist, an experimenter who is never supposed to give up so long as there is a vestige of any chance of success.

As he goes along with his process of prayer, he begins to add up the results. If he persists, he will almost surely find more serenity, more tolerance, less fear and less anger. He will acquire a quiet courage, the kind that doesn't strain him. He can look at so-called failure and success for what they really are. Problems and calamity will begin to mean instruction, instead of destruction. He will feel freer and saner. The idea that he may have been hypnotizing himself by auto-suggestion will become laughable. His sense of purpose and of direction will increase. His tensions and anxieties will commence to fade. His physical health is likely to improve. Wonderful and unaccountable things will start to happen.

Twisted relations in his family and on the outside will unaccountably improve.

Even if few of these things happen, he will still find himself in possession of great gifts. When he has to deal with hard circumstances he can face them and accept them. He can now accept himself and the world around him. He can do this because he now accepts a God who is All--and who loves all. When he now says, "Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name," our friend deeply and humbly means it. When in good meditation and thus freed from the clamors of the world, he knows that he is in God's hands; that his own destiny is really secure, here and hereafter.

A great theologian once declared, "The chief critics of prayer are those who have never really tried it enough." That's good advice; good advice I'm trying to take ever more seriously for myself. Many AAs have long been striving for a better conscious contact with God and I trust that many more of us will presently join with that wise company.

I've just finished re-reading the chapter on Step Eleven in our book, "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions." This was written almost five years ago. I was astonished when I realized how little time I had actually been giving to my own elementary advice on meditation, prayer and guidance--practices that I had so earnestly recommended to everybody else!

In this lack of attention I probably have plenty of company. But I do know that this is a neglect that can cause us to miss the finest experiences of life, a neglect that can seriously slacken the growth that God hopes we may achieve right here on earth; here in this great day at school, this very first of our Father's Many Mansions. ☺

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# CANCELLED MEETINGS

## Nose Creek Big Book (Big Book Study)

Monday, 7:30pm

Calgary, NW

# Joke of the Month

Tim

AA Grapevine

May 2006

“ A husband and wife were sitting in their living room. He said, "Just so you know, I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and fluids from a bottle. If that ever happens, just pull the plug.”

His wife got up, unplugged the TV, and threw out all of his beer. ☺

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# CSO NEWS!

## CENTRAL OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED:

Tuesday December 25, Wednesday  
Dec. 26, Saturday Dec. 29 and  
Wednesday January 1.

## DON'T FORGET

• CSO has 2008 Grapevine Pocket  
Planners & Calendars.

**Planners: \$7.00 Calendars: \$12.50**

# VALUABLE 12 STEP OPPORTUNITIES

“ Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.”

- Big Book, Pg. 89

Members needed to carry the message to **Bowden Institution**.

(Please note: Security clearance is required)

**More Information: Brenda G. (403) 309-8323 or email: corrections@area78.org**

Members needed to carry the message to the **Remand Centre and Calgary Youth Offenders Centre**.

(Please note: BOTH require security clearance & min. 1 yr. sobriety)

**More Information: Marilyn L. (403) 239-4923**

Calgary AA would like members for the **12 Step List**.

**More Information: Doug (403) 990-9914 or Mathew (403) 777-1212 or email: centraloffice@telus.net**

**Bridging the Gap** is looking for members willing to work in **NE Calgary** as well **Centres Outside of Calgary**.

**More Information: Mathew (403) 777-1212 or email: centraloffice@telus.net**

## Calgary & Area 78 Corrections Committees:

We are always in need of **any and all, current or old Grapevines**, for use in the jails of Southern Alberta. Drop them off in the special box at CSO and they will get read several more times & help inmates to find sobriety. You can also give them to your GSR to take to the CGSC meeting or Area Assembly.

## Calgary Archives needs your old Grapevines:

In cataloguing all of our Grapevines for Archives, we have found we are missing a few from years past. We thought, with all our AA friends out there, someone might have some of the missing issues. Specifically we are looking for donations of the following issues:

**Any Grapevine 1958 and earlier, Aug. 1961, Aug. 1965, and any issues from 2002 - 2004**

## Calgary Archives is looking for the following:

Calgary Archives is currently searching for **AA members with more than 30 years sobriety** who are willing to do oral histories.

We are also seeking groups who are **willing to submit Group Histories**.

Calgary Archives is also currently searching for **missing Banff Round-Up posters**.

Missing are the posters from 1973 to 1981 and 2002 through 2007.

If anyone has the posters and would like to donate them or even knows who the speakers were for those roundups it would be greatly appreciated.

**If you are interested in being a part of Archives or for more information: Tim (403) 273-2846**

## Join the Banff Round Up Committee!

If you are new to service there are experienced members of the committee available to mentor you.

**Next meeting: Central Office Monday, December 3rd at 6:00 PM.**

**Contact Jeff P. at 685-2012 or jdpoole@poolelawyer.com for more information.**

All submissions to be included in any upcoming editions of the Westword newsletter should be sent to westwordeditor@gmail.com no later than the first Monday of each month. Anything sent past this deadline MAY NOT be received in time to be included in the edition.

Thank you - Westword Editor

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 41st Annual Las Vegas Roundup

November 22nd - 25th, 2007

The Riviera Hotel & Casino

Las Vegas, NV

More Information:

<http://www.lasvegasroundup.com>

## Crowsnest Pass Group

Christmas Dinner & Speaker Meeting

Saturday, December 1st, 2007

Hillcrest Fish and Game Hall

10th Ave. & 28th St.

\$5.00 per Family (+ Potluck Dish)

## District 86 Annual Christmas Party

December 17th, 2007

Balzac Community Hall

\$20.00 per Ticket

More Information: Brian 948-0433

## In the Fellowship of the Spirit

6th Annual Big Book Journey

Feb. 29th - Mar. 2nd

Camp Horizon

Bragg Creek

More Information: Shelia K. 282-5138

## Chestermere Meeting?

Looking to start a new meeting in Chestermere. The room is ready and the coffee can be put on but it needs a group conscience.

All who are interested please phone:

**Charlie M.: 616-1308**

## "Back to Basics"

In the 40's & 50's, one hour meetings were held where beginners were led through all 12 steps in 4 weeks. These meetings recorded a 50% - 75% recovery rate.

For information on helping to start a similar meeting call:

Adam: 969-7672

David: 234-0839

Wayne: 389-2754

## Notice of Gratitude:

The Calgary Intergroup Archives Committee Pioneer's Dinner was held on October 22nd, 2007.

All those involved would like to thank our Central Office Staff for all their help and assistance, and the Calgary AA Community and friends of AA for making our 2007 Pioneer's Dinner a great success.

If you would like to contribute a recovery related story to be published in the Westword, simply drop it off at Central Office or email it to:  
**westwordeditor@gmail.com**

# HAPPY AA BIRTHDAY!

## October

### 272:

Gary H. 5 yrs.  
Kelly 6 yrs.  
Joe P. 23 yrs.

### ABC:

Kim M. 5 yrs.  
Sue K. 5 yrs.  
Robin R. 21 yrs.

### Crossroads:

Doug R. 23 yrs.

Tim H. 26 yrs.

### Dalhousie Mens:

Chuck C. 1 yr.  
Jim W. 6 yrs.

### Drawing Board:

Al K. 31 yrs.

### Edgemont:

Bob C. 2 yrs.  
Connie C. 3 yrs.  
Connie K. 7 yrs.

### Glenmore:

Scott L. 2 yrs.  
Jim 11 yrs.  
Rene 32 yrs.

### Highland Park:

Caesar O. 4 yrs.  
Gerry E. 23 yrs.

### Inglewood:

Lynda H. 16 yrs.

### New Beginnings:

Beth G. 3 yrs.

Rob S. 3 yrs.  
Gerry S. 4 yrs.  
Jenine 5 yrs.  
Bobbie W. 8 yrs.  
Marvis O. 10 yrs.  
Elodie G. 16 yrs.  
Maria V. 19 yrs.  
Donna S. 35 yrs.

### Recovery:

Ron K. 1 yr.  
Wington M. 1 yr.  
Jason T. 2 yrs.  
Pep 28 yrs.

Mike O'. 28 yrs.

### Sunday Morn. 11am:

Joe R. 14 yrs.  
Ken L. 24 yrs.  
Jim H. 33 yrs.

### Tues. Morning Ladies:

Marian D. 31 yrs.

## November

### 272:

John C. 2 yrs.  
Rhonda 3 yrs.  
Bruce 5 yrs.  
Laverne H. 6 yrs.  
Don K. 38 yrs.

### ABC:

Jay M. 2 yrs.  
Marilyn M. 5 yrs.  
Alex P. 13 yrs.

### Crossroads:

Steve T. 13 yrs.

### Dalhousie Mens:

Brian S. 26 yrs.

### Desperation:

Axel K. 3 yrs.

### Drawing Board:

Bill P. 1 yr.  
Buddy B. 3 yrs.

### Edgemont:

Cheryl 2 yrs.  
Ken F. 2 yrs.  
Marilyn L. 11 yrs.  
Ray S. 16 yrs.  
Bob U. 18 yrs.

Edgemont Grp. 12 yrs.

### Highland Park:

Kristin D. 5 yrs.  
Norm S. 10 yrs.  
Jane R. 19 yrs.  
Gerry B. 42 yrs.

### Irricana:

Peter D. 6 yrs.  
Sandy C. 8 yrs.  
Marlene C. 22 yrs.  
Sam C. 27 yrs.

### Northlanders:

Fran Mc.. 9 yrs.

Marsh C. 29 yrs.

### Open Door:

Carroll 17 yrs.

### Recovery:

Dana M. 1 yr.  
Margrit D. 3 yrs.  
Valerie B. 3 yrs.  
Adrienne B. 7 yrs.  
Linda G. 10 yrs.  
Irene R. 19 yrs.  
Deb C. 21 yrs.  
John R. 22 yrs.

Jim H. 17 yrs.

Leo Mc. 20 yrs.

Marion K. 42 yrs.

### Tues. Morning Ladies:

Linda B. 4 yrs.



## SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

**Downtown Ramada Inn**  
708 - 8th Ave. SW

Breakfast - 9:00am  
Speaker - 10:00am

Jacque would like to thank all who have supported the Sunday Morning Breakfast Meeting in the last few months. Why not make a group outing? You can all come and support the speaker and have some great food & fellowship!

**Come and join us for breakfast:**

\*Buffet Breakfast . . . . . \$12.00  
Healthy Start Breakfast . . . \$9.00  
Toast & Coffee . . . . . \$4.00  
Coffee . . . . . \$2.00

\*Please note recent price change.



## DOWNTOWN SATURDAY NIGHT SPEAKER

**Fortis Building**  
North Tower  
801 - 7th Ave. SW

Speaker - 8:00pm

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** There is on-street parking only. We have not been allowed in the underground lot for some time now due to verbal abuse of the security personnel. In fact, this abuse continues, and if it doesn't stop we will lose the meeting altogether.



## TELEPHONE MONITORING

This is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.

- Big Book, Pg. 89

**Thank you to all who signed up as late night monitors!**

**If you would like to serve in this capacity, please phone Doug at:**

**990-9914**