

the Westword



25 cents
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january issue/2008

Into the Fellowship

- One Step at a Time -

Larry L.

Coeur d'Alene, ID
AA Grapevine
January 2003

Step 1: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.

In my home group, we made a group conscience decision that whenever anyone new showed up or returned, we would focus on that person and the topic would be the First Step.

The First Step, as described in the Big Book, asks me to admit and accept that I am an alcoholic to my innermost self. That was not easy for me to do. My life, since I was a child, was geared at running the show according to Larry. I was the director. I was the stage manager. I was the prop guy. I was always the one in charge.

There was no room for debate. I had the last word. I knew everything about everything, and it was my job to let everyone know this. No one could penetrate the defenses that I'd carefully constructed ever since I left my mother's body. I knew that the world was unfriendly and even hostile. That first drunk, not the first drink, convinced me that I was Superman—bulletproof and someone everyone should know and admire. I was above the law, moral behavior, and people.

I chased that first drunken magic into the gates of hell—through failed relationships, jails, blackouts, seizures, job losses, moves from one city to another city to another state, car crashes, emergency rooms, violence, and rage. My only emotions were rage and sullen silence. I crashed and burned. In a blackout, I called Alcoholics Anonymous one early morning after the bars were closed. I had run out of alcohol again. And I was desperate not to drink again.

Someone came over to my empty apartment, picked me up,

fed me, and cleaned me up. Then he took me to a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. He asked me no questions. He just listened as I tried to explain how and why my apartment was destroyed. He just nodded. He didn't judge me. He didn't preach. He just nodded. He took me to meetings for what seemed a long time. He never told me his full name. He introduced me to a man he called his sponsor. I was asked if I wanted to be sober. I mumbled, "Yes." I was not talking coherently at the time. I was asked if I believed in anything. I mumbled, "Yes." I was asked what I believed in. I answered, "A drink." They all laughed. Not at me. With me. They understood. That was my First Step, into Alcoholics Anonymous. Laughter was foreign to me at the time. Now I can laugh from the bottom of my toes to the top of my skull.

The Steps follow one another, One through Twelve. There are also Twelve Traditions. There are also Twelve Concepts of service. But the First Step means I don't take the first drink, no matter what. And there have been times when it seemed absolutely necessary to take that first drink. I'm an alcoholic. My body craves alcohol. It aches for alcohol. And my body is allergic to it. That's the baffling part of my disease. My mind tells me to take a drink. I always did. Always.

So meetings took the place of the bar. Then meetings took the place of my family. Then meetings took the place of my car. Then meetings took the place of my way. Then meetings took the place of my will. Then meetings took the place of my sponsor. Then meetings took the place of my disease. Then meetings. . . . Am I to live as the hole in the donut? Am I consigned to live in darkness and black and white? It turned out that the answer was no. Color returned. Balance arrived in areas of my life, by surprise. Without my permission. Love filtered in a bit at a time, until that hole inside me, empty so long, was filled with joy, kindness, caring, and passion, and the Promises started coming true in my daily life.

I'm an alcoholic. I'm powerless over alcohol. That's my truth today. And it's alright with me. ☺

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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

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: Saturday Feb. 16 & Monday Feb. 18.

NEW MEETINGS

Knocking on Heaven's Door Group (Open, Mixed, Discussion)

2nd & 4th Sunday of the Month @ 2:00pm
NCFC
4620A - Bowness Rd. N.W.
Music Jam follows meeting: 3:00pm - 5:00pm

Chestermere Group (Open, Mixed)

Sunday, 7:00pm
Canal Room
Chestermere Town Hall
105 Marina Rd.

Saturday Sunrise Group (Closed, Mixed, Discussion)

Saturday, 9:00am
Salvation Army Church
242 - 1 St. W
Drumheller

"Back to Basics"
(Closed, Mixed)
Monday, 6:00pm AND 8:00pm
Trinity Lutheran Church
840 3rd Ave. SW
Beginners/12-Step
(Intense, 12 steps in 4 weeks!)

Spirit Walkers (Open, Mixed)

Wednesday, 7:00pm
Native Network
19 Erinwoods Dr. SE
Based on Native Spirituality
(Non-smoking but there will be "smudging".)

Beacon's Refugee Group (Open, Discussion)

Saturday, 8:00pm
Highland Community Centre
3716 - 2nd St. NW
(Side door)

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)

Rounders

Wednesday, 8:30pm
Cedarbrae Community Centre, Rm. 3
11024 Oakfield Dr. SW

CANCELLED MEETINGS

Tsuu T'ina Spirit Healing Lodge Meeting

Monday & Thursday, 8:00pm
Tsuu T'ina Reserve

Turf Group

Thursday, 8:30pm
Calgary, CENTRAL

Rule 62:



Joke of the Month

AA Grapevine

January 1990

Rich M. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, swears that in "Shoplifters Anonymous," the last part of their Eighth Step reads:

'...became willing to make amends to the mall.' ☺

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MEETING CHANGES

Tsuu T'ina Reserve Meeting Tuesday, 5:00pm

Meeting time changed from
Wed. 8:00pm TO Tues. 5:00pm

Spirit Walkers Wednesday, 7:00pm

Meeting time changed from
8:00pm TO 7:00pm
Based on Native Spirituality

Sobriety & Beyond

Mondays, SE

This meeting is now held Mondays at 7:30pm
(NOT 8:00pm) at the New Brighton Residence As-
soc. Building - #2, New Brighton Dr. SE
(Buzz for entry)

Daily Reflection Ladies

Sunday, SW

Listing incorrect in new Meeting List!
Meeting is held Sundays at 1:30PM not AM.

Can She Bake A Cherry Pie? Firsts in Sobriety

Marjorie R.

Albuquerque, NM
AA Grapevine
January 2002

When I was a girl, I was always in the kitchen, trailing behind my grandmother, eager to put my hands in whatever she preparing to cook. As I got older, the kitchen became my haven. I loved to turn out pies, cakes, and cookies. As a teenager, I discovered that vanilla and other extracts contained alcohol, so the rule became a teaspoon for the batter and two tablespoons for me. Pretty soon I was buying extracts in the large economy-size.

In time, with marriage to an alcoholic husband, TV dinners, restaurants, and carry-out became a way of life. Martinis were my breakfast, lunch, and dinner. We had two children, and I resented the fact that I was supposed to cook for them.

After I'd gone to many fancy drying-out places, my husband di-

vorced me, and I went into a state hospital for a year, where I was introduced to AA. I finally got sober by admitting I was powerless over alcohol and that my life was unmanageable. Accepting the First Step set me free.

In AA meetings, I had lots of good discussions and drank lots of coffee, but something was missing: cookies. Soon I was baking cookies for my group. (Still do!) During my baking time, I actively work the Third and the Eleventh Steps: this is my quiet time when I get in touch with my Higher Power who lives in my soul.

During my first year of sobriety, every once in a while a truck driver would come into the meeting. One evening I asked him what his favorite pie was and he said, "Cherry." As it happened, I had baked a cherry pie that morning, the first in a long time. I asked him over to my house to share a slice of that pie and to get his opinion of my baking.

A year later, we were married.

Today, I have thirty-three years of sobriety. As I trudge the Road of Happy Destiny, AA holds my left hand, God holds my right, and I have no hands left to pick up a drink. ☺

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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

Members needed at Central Service Office as **Telephone Monitors**.

One shift per week, Monday to Friday
9:00am to 1:00pm or 2:00pm to 5:00pm

More Information: Axel (403) 355-5600

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

More Information: Axel (403) 355-5660 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 as **Centres Outside of Calgary**.

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

If you are still interested in a service position with this years Banff Roundup Committee the **next meeting is: Monday, February 4th at 6:00 PM at Central Office.**

- Many Hands Make for Light Work! -

Contact Jeff P. at 685-2012 or jdpool@poolerlawyer.cm for more information.

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 Area AA Service Seminar!

If you are interested in learning more or are new to service, this seminar brings many of Calgary and Area AA's service opportunities into one place for your convenience. Come and learn all about the various service opportunities available to you!

Saturday, February 9th at 10:00am - 3:00pm.

Tickets are \$5.00 and they include a Lasagna Lunch!

Join the Gratitude 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, January 7th at 6:00pm.

Contact Jeff P. at 685-2012 or jdpool@poolerlawyer.cm for more information.

Join the Public Information Committee!

There are many service opportunities available on this fun and exciting committee. The public information committee is dedicated to spreading word to the public about the **“solution on which we can absolutely agree and join in brotherly and harmonious action!”** (BB pg. 17)

Next meeting: Central Office - Wednesday, January 30th at 7:00pm.

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

Taber AA 52nd Anniversary

Courage to Change

Feb. 9th, 2008

Taber Heritage Inn

Taber, AB

More Information: Sharon 223-0339

Camrose Intergroup Valentine's AA Roundup

Feb. 16th - Feb. 17th, 2008

The Moose Hall

5001 - 52nd Ave.

Camrose, AB

More Information: Annette 672-8398

2008 Western Canada Regional Forum

Feb. 22nd - Feb. 24th, 2008

Ramada Plaza and Conference Centre

Abbotsford, BC

More Information: 212-870-3120

Saskatoon & Area 41st Annual Roundup

Steps to Freedom

Feb. 22nd - Feb. 24th, 2008

Saskatoon Inn - 2002 Airport Dr.

Saskatoon, SK

More Information: 665-6727

In the Fellowship of the Spirit

6th Annual Big Book Journey

Feb. 29th - Mar. 2nd, 2008

Camp Horizon

Bragg Creek, AB

More Information: Shelia K. 282-5138

2008 Banff Roundup

Mar. 14th - Mar. 16th, 2008

Banff Park Lodge

Banff, AB

Get your tickets fast as the Special Conference

Rate only available until Jan. 31st

More Information: Jeff P. 685-2012

“We need your help!”

The “Back to Basics” Group needs your help! Currently we are in search of:

- Temporary Sponsors for Beginners
- Beginners
- AA members willing to learn to lead the meetings or be Temporary Sponsors.

At “Back to Basics”, beginners take the 12 steps over a 4 week period and then return the following week to serve as the temporary sponsor for a new Beginner. When AA groups in the 1940's & 50's used this approach to the AA program, recovery rates were 50% - 75%. For more details, go to:

<http://www.aabacktobasics.com> OR call:

- Carol G: 264-1900
- Joanne M: 283-7115
- Adam R: 969-7672
- David M: 234-0839

Week #1 of the next 4 week cycle starts:

Monday February 4, 2008

(see New Meetings listing on pg. 2)

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!

December

272: Jacques 2 yrs. John L. 2 yrs. Wilfredo 3 yrs. Percy W. 26 yrs.	ABC: Dan M. 4 yrs. Dianne T. 12 yrs. Mel S. 43 yrs.	Dalhousie Mens: Don M. 18 yrs.	Desperation: Desperation Grp. 16 yrs.	Glenmore: Angela 2 yrs. Wendy 2 yrs. Carol 3 yrs. Gail 4 yrs. Lucinda 9 yrs. Jim R. 9 yrs. Jackie B. 10 yrs. Kalen 11 yrs. Pat F. 13 yrs. Bryan R. 17 yrs. Dallon 17 yrs. Bill M. 17 yrs. Lanny 18 yrs. Jim C. 23 yrs.	Irricana: Dave B. 1 yr. Chrissy M. 3 yrs. Bob K. 4 yrs. Sean C. 9 yrs. Dianne D. 14 yrs. Bob W. 21 yrs.	MacKenzie Group: Clarke N. 1 yr. Colin G. 2 yrs. Shelda M. 3 yrs. Marie M. 3 yrs. Angela S. 4 yr. Colleen Mc. 18 yrs. David L. 24 yrs.	New Beginnings: Edith S. 4 yrs. Ken J. 4 yrs. Laura G. 6 yrs. John H. 11 yrs. Jim E. 13 yrs. Nancy R. 15 yrs. Mary Z. 16 yrs. John S. 18 yrs. David M. 27 yrs.	Recovery: Bojana B. 1 yr. Diana L. 2 yrs. Eleanore F. 2 yrs. Greg K. 3 yrs.	25 yrs. Jon G. 25 yrs. Terri-Lynn S. Woody H. 24 yrs. Marie M. 31 yrs.	Sunday Morn. 11am: Carol C. 10 yrs.	Tues. Morning Ladies: Mona D. 4 yrs. Val S. 14 yrs. Carol G. 24 yrs.	Wed. Morn. Eye Opener: Bud Mc. 22 yrs.
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January

Airport Group: Dwayne G. 7 yrs. Judy M. 9 yrs.	Crossroads: George W. 14 yrs. Glenn W. 29 yrs.	Dalhousie Mens: Mike B. 1 yr.	Desperation: Lyle K. 9 yrs. Same G. 28 yrs. Peter C. 31 yrs.	Edgemont: Jon G. 12 yrs. Ann U. 17 yrs. Kim W. 32 yrs.	Highland Park: David D. 10 yrs. Michelle P. 21 yrs. Brian H. 25 yrs. Al C. 39 yrs.	Inglewood: Melanie S. 4 yrs.	Irricana: Wayne K. 21 yrs. Garry R. 33 yrs. Neil R. 35 yrs. George F. 47 yrs.	MAAT Group: Barb G. 27 yrs.	Northlanders: Jennifer F. 10 yrs. Marilyn B. 14 yrs. Mary Jo 17 yrs.	Open Door: Wayne F. 9 yrs.	Recovery: Sean K. 1 yr. Kristen B. 1 yr. Chris E. 1 yr. Jay J. 1 yr. Tiffany K. 2 yrs. Don M. 3 yrs. Frank L. 3 yrs. Donna R. 5 yrs. Bernie H. 6 yrs. Marie U. 20 yrs. Roy S. 23 yrs.
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NOTE:

Please remember, if you would like your groups monthly birthday's listed, please be sure to submit them to Central Office, or email westwordeditor@gmail.com, **no later than the first Monday of each month.**



SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

Downtown Ramada Inn
708 - 8th Ave. SW
Breakfast - 9:00am
Speaker - 10:00am

- UPCOMING GROUPS:**
- New Beginnings (Jan. 20th)
 - Regal Group (Jan. 27th)
 - Crossroads (Feb. 3rd)
 - Crossroads (Feb. 10th)

Come and join us for breakfast:

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

To inquire about speaking opportunities in the future, call Jacques at 714-5101.



DOWNTOWN SATURDAY NIGHT SPEAKER

Fortis Building
North Tower
801 - 7th Ave. SW
Speaker - 8:00pm



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 Axel at:
355-5600
axel.koenig@shaw.ca

What Shape Is Your Triangle?



Is your triangle balanced? Come and have fun and see how you can improve your sobriety at our seminar.

When: February 9, 2008
Where: St. Mark's Church
Time: 10a.m.—3p.m.
Cost: \$5 (see your IGR or GSR)

See talented actors performing a Tradition play!

Contact: Marilyn L. 239—4923
Jeff P. 685—2012

