

# the Westword

**25 cents**  
(Suggested Donation)



september issue/2008

## Tradition Revisited

**Bill W.**  
New York, NY  
*AA Grapevine*  
January 1953

Tradition 9: AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

**W**hen Tradition Nine was first written, it said that "Alcoholics Anonymous needs the least possible organization." In years since then, we have changed our minds about that. Today we are able to say with assurance that Alcoholics Anonymous. . . AA as a whole. . . should never be organized at all. Then, in seeming contradiction, we proceed to create special service boards and committees which in themselves are organized. How, then, can we have an unorganized movement which can and does create a service organization for itself? Scanning this puzzler, people say, "What do they mean, no organization?!"

Well, let's see. Did anyone ever hear of a nation, a church, a political party, even a benevolent association that had no membership rules? Did anyone ever hear of a society which couldn't somehow discipline its members and enforce obedience to necessary rules and regulations? Doesn't every society on earth give authority of some of its members to impose obedience upon the rest and to punish or expel offenders? Therefore every nation, in fact every form of society, has to be a government administered by human beings. Power to direct or govern is the essence of organization everywhere.

Yet Alcoholics Anonymous is an exception. It does not conform to this pattern. Neither its General Service Conference, its Foundation Board, nor the humblest group committee can issue a single directive to an AA member and make it stick, let alone mete out any punishment. We've tried it lots of times, but utter failure is always the result. Groups have tried to expel members, but the banished come back to sit in the meeting place saying, "This is life for us; you can't keep us out." Committees have instructed many an AA to stop working on a chronic backslider, only to be told: "How I do my Twelfth Step work is my business. Who are you to judge?" This doesn't mean an AA won't take advice or suggestion from more experienced members, but he surely won't take orders. Who is more unpopular than the old-time AA, full of wisdom, who moves to another area and tries to tell the group there how to run its business? He and all like him who "view with

alarm for the good of AA" meet the most stubborn resistance or, worse still, laughter.

You might think AA's headquarters in New York would be an exception. Surely the people there would have to have some authority. But long ago, trustees and secretaries alike found they could do no more than make suggestions, and very mild ones at that. They even had to coin a couple of sentences which still go into half the letters they write: "Of course you are at perfect liberty to handle this matter any way you please. But the majority experience in AA does seem to suggest. . ." Now, that attitude is far removed from central government, isn't it? We recognize that alcoholics can't be dictated to. . . individually or collectively.

At this junction we can hear a churchman exclaim, "They are making disobedience a virtue!" He is joined by a psychiatrist who says, "Defiant brats! They won't grow up and conform to social usage!" The man in the street says, "I don't understand it. They must be nuts!" But all these observers have overlooked something unique in Alcoholics Anonymous. Unless each AA member follows to the best of his ability our suggested Twelve Steps to recovery, he almost certainly signs his own death warrant. His drunkenness and dissolution are not penalties inflicted by people in authority; they result from his personal disobedience to spiritual principles.

The same stern threat applies to the group itself. Unless there is approximate conformity to AA's Twelve Traditions, the group too can deteriorate and die. So we of AA do obey spiritual principles, first because we must, and ultimately because we love the kind of life such obedience brings. Great suffering and great love are AA's disciplinarians; we need no others.

It is clear now that we ought never to name boards to govern us, but it is equally clear that we shall always need to authorize workers to serve us. It is the difference between the spirit of vested authority and the spirit of service; two concepts which are poles apart. It is in this spirit of service that we elect the AA's group informal rotating committee, the Intergroup Association for the area, and the General Service Conferences of Alcoholics Anonymous for AA as a whole. Even our Foundation, once an independent Board, is today directly accountable to our fellowship. Its trustees are the caretakers and expeditors of our world services.

Just as the aim of each AA member is personal sobriety, the aim of our services is to bring sobriety within reach of all who want it. If nobody does the group's chores, if the area's telephone rings unanswered, if we do not reply to our mail, then AA as we know it would stop. Our communications lines with those who need our help would be broken.

AA has to function, but at the same time it must avoid those dangers of great wealth, prestige, and entrenched power which necessarily tempt other societies. Though Tradition Nine at first sight seems to deal with a purely practical matter, in its actual operation it discloses a society without organization, animated only by the spirit of service. . . a true fellowship. ☺

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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](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: Saturday, Oct. 11th & Monday, Oct. 13th**

## GREAT MOMENTS IN AA HISTORY

MAY 12, 1935  
BILL W. AND DR. BOB MEET



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## My Brother, My Truth

How do you make amends to an active alcoholic or to someone you can no longer reach?

**Pamy H.**  
Logan, UT  
September, 2008

I grew up in a family of ten children, each barely a year apart in age, which allowed us to pick and choose who to spend our time with. This essentially created many families within a family, with those closest in age enjoying unbreakable bonds that lasted a lifetime.

Our father drank heavily, so alcohol was readily available to us at a very young age. As I sat and watched my three older siblings drink away their days, I did the same, watched by the young ones, as my older brother spent his time with my two oldest sisters. Dave was my younger brother by just over a year, and closest to my age, and he and I spent most of our time together. We watched each other meet one alcoholic bottom, and then another. There were few times when the family didn't cast us out when we'd hit bottom, but Dave and I were always at each other's sides, regardless.

Finding the rooms of AA, nine years into my drinking, yielded little results. As a young girl of fifteen, too smart for her own good, with too much life ahead, I was unable to accept that I could be an alcoholic.

Dave and I took turns sitting at each other's hospital bedsides as we took turns recovering

from attempts at ending our lives. Sometimes it was I who watched my brother through plexiglass, adorned with city garments inside the city jail. At other times he watched me, as he sat clinging to a telephone with too little cord and not enough time to talk.

Through gains and losses, we endured it all together. He was the Saturday morning cartoon superhero, appearing time after time, just when I needed him most. I had never called, asking him to come; he just always knew when to show up. In 2001, twenty-one years old, with enough of a drinking career behind me to be able to see I was alcoholic, I found a room filled with unquestioning eyes and unconditional love, as well as wafting stale smoke and bad coffee. I would soon feel a kinship here, as one does to a family, as I trudged that road of happy destiny.

Dave would appear, on occasion, to watch me pick up various chips or speak at speaker meetings, but he would soon blend back into a world that seemed so far away, it might just as well have existed in another time. As I would reappear for family functions or funerals, I would see my dear brother, looking older and older every time. I wanted to carry AA's message to him, but I didn't know how, since he was so close to me, despite the years I'd put between us. It hurt too much to see him suffering, so I did nothing and drew further away.

As the years wore on, his attempts to spend time with me dwindled and, although I mourned the loss of his friendship, I began to also mourn his life as though he were dead. A handful of times, over the course of the next few years, Dave found the rooms through court orders, remaining only long enough to get a signature for

## NEW MEETINGS

**Northwest Calgary Group: New Meeting**  
(Open, Mixed, Step/Tradition)  
Tuesday, 8:00pm  
Foothills Alliance Church  
333 Edgepark Blvd. N.W.

**New Fellowship Group**  
(Open, Mixed)  
Monday & Friday, 7:00pm  
Hanna Hospital Cafeteria  
Hanna, AB

## MEETING CHANGES

**Wake-Up Group**  
Sunday, 9:00am  
New Address:  
#203 - 11625 Elbow Drive S.W.  
Canyon Meadows Shopping Centre

**New Beginnings**  
ALL meetings, ALL days, ALL times!  
New Address:  
#203 - 11625 Elbow Drive S.W.  
Canyon Meadows Shopping Centre

## CANCELLED MEETINGS

**Paliser Group**  
Thursdays, SW Calgary  
Calgary, AB

**Spirit Walkers**  
Wednesdays  
Calgary, AB

**Podium Group**  
Tuesdays, 8:00pm  
Calgary, AB

the judge. Then, as always, he would fade back into the world I had left behind.

Two years ago he resurfaced and, with the help of my sponsor, I was able to reach out to him. I bought him a Big Book and later had the honor of taking him to a meeting. I am told he attended a meeting nearly every day at that time, always hiding beyond the circle of storytellers, sitting on the floor, shaking. But my self-preservation won out. I missed him deeply, but was afraid of the life that awaited me if I spent much time in his world.

One day, shortly before Thanksgiving, Dave attended a meeting, went home, and shot himself in the head. Many words were left cold on his pad of paper, but one phrase will never die out of my mind: "I can't be an alcoholic and survive, but I am an alcoholic." I have attended many funerals of fellow alcoholics who couldn't, or wouldn't, see AA's way of life, and I would be a liar to say I never wonder what I could have done differently for them. But why my dear, sweet brother, my world, my history, my truth, my other half?

All I know how to do is pray, hope my Higher Power brings him my amends, and then treat every newcomer the way I always wanted to treat Dave, but was too afraid to, for fear it would chase him away.

I doubt this pain will ever leave. Dave remains my reminder that each of us may be the only recovering alcoholic a suffering one ever reaches out to.

Dave has been the hardest amends I have ever made. ☹

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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: email: [corrections@area78.org](mailto:corrections@area78.org)**

Members needed to carry the message to the **Remand Centre, Spy Hill Jail and Calgary Youth Offenders Centre**.

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

**More Information: Grace P. (403) 698-2666**

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 or Mathew (403) 777-1212**

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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

## 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 - Always the LAST Wednesday of the month.**

**More information: [pichair.calgary@gmail.com](mailto:pichair.calgary@gmail.com)**

PII

PII

## Gratitude Roundup 2009:

To all members interested in becoming apart of the Calgary Gratitude Roundup Committe 2009 Edition! Our first meeting will be held at Central Service on Wednesday, September, 10th at 7:00pm. After that every meeting will be held the **third Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm at Central Service Office**.

## Archives Digital AA Meeting

In pursuit of going forward and digitizing the archive's old cassettes and tapes of speakers. We, your Archive Committee, would like to welcome you to attend our Weekly Digital AA Meeting.

In this meeting you will be able to listen to the old members of AA on tape recount their stories as we digitize them into our computer system.

**When: Every Saturday starting September 6, 2008**

**Place: Central Office**

**Time: 7:00 PM**

*“In memory of those that have gone before.”*

## CPC Committee Reconvened!

Calgary General Service Committee's Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) committee **has reconvened!**

We meet monthly at Central office, every second Thursday. Come and join us!

**When: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month (next mtg. on September 11, 2008)**

**Place: Central Office**

**Time: 7:00 PM**

We are entering a new era of cooperation (but not affiliation!) with Calgary Intergroup's Public Information Committee and look forward to working closely together.

All submissions to be included in any upcoming editions of the Westword newsletter should be sent to [westwordeditor@gmail.com](mailto: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

## Medicine Hat's Annual AA Roundup

Sept. 12th - Sept. 14th, 2008

The Medicine Hat Esplanade

401-1st St. S.E.

Medicine Hat, AB

More Info: 403-977-3877

## Grande Prairie's 49th Annual AA Roundup

Sept. 12th - Sept. 14th, 2008

Clarkson Hall, Evergreen Park

Grande Prairie, AB

More Info: 780-897-9255

## District 15's Annual AA Roundup

Saturday Oct. 4th, 2008

Rosedale Community Hall

Hussar, AB

More Info: 403-334-0246

## District 10's Unity Roundup

Oct. 17th - Oct. 19th, 2008

Blueberry Hall

Btwn. Hwy. 16 & 16A on Range Rd. 15

Stoney Plain, AB

More Info: 780-818-5070

## 35th Annual "AA Family Roundup"

Oct. 18th - Oct. 19th, 2008

Claresholm Community Centre

"The Joy of Living!"

Claresholm, AB

More Info: 403-625-2137



**Intergroup Christmas Party**

The Intergroup Special Events Committee is looking for members willing to help with the 2008 Intergroup Christmas Party. If you are interested, please call:

**Greg @ 403-202-5617.**

## CSO NEWS

### ALREADY HERE!

2009 Grapevine Calendars..... \$10.00

2009 Grapevine Pocket Planners..... \$6.50

**Both are available in English, French & Spanish**

### 4 AWESOME AA DVDs!

Markings on the Journey - A history of AA **\$22.50**

Bill tells his story - from Stepping Stones, NY **\$22.50**

Bill discusses the 12 traditions **\$14.00**

Alcoholics Anonymous - about AA in general **\$14.00**

## Still Discounted!!!

Big books are still only \$9.00!!!

Keep those contributions coming so they can remain that price!

# HAPPY AA BIRTHDAY!

## August

### 272 Group:

Gary L. 18 yrs.

### Airport Group:

Jason D. 6 yrs.

### Back From Hell:

Coleene K. 12 yrs.  
Jim M. 21 yrs.

### Crossroads:

Bonita N. 26 yrs.

### Dalhousie Men's:

Doug C. 1 yr.  
Blaine A. 5 yrs.  
Wally T. 9 yrs.  
Roger D. 21 yrs.

### Desperation Group:

Theresa B. 1 yr.

Scott B. 2 yrs.

### Garnett:

Sheila 1 yr.  
Ashley 1 yr.  
Gary L. 8 yrs.

Dave H. 8 yrs.  
Sharon S. 16 yrs.  
Herb D. 16 yrs.  
Al G. 24 yrs.

Donna 25 yrs.

### Glenmore:

Ryan B. 1 yr.

Eric M. 3 yrs.

Chris G. 4 yrs.

Lonny 6 yrs.

Julie 17 yrs.

Jonie 17 yrs.

Dusty 26 yrs.

Marvin 29 yrs.

### Highland Park:

GIN W. 1 yr.

Ellen L. 21 yrs.

Orland W. 22 yrs.

### Link Group:

Wendell M. 16 yrs.

Beth 23 yrs.

### MAAT Group:

Angie P. 20 yrs.

### Marlborough Park:

Ray I. 21 yrs.

### New Beginnings:

Alison F. 3 yrs.

Don M. 3 yrs.

Shawn M. 3 yrs.

Linda W. 4 yrs.

Rebecca W. 6 yrs.

Andre P. 8 yrs.

Lise W. 8 yrs.

Cheryl B. 10 yrs.

Kimberly S. 15 yrs.

### Northlanders:

Briana 1 yr.

Paul F. 1 yr.

Sunil 11 yrs.

Jim G. 23 yrs.

### Recovery:

Jason F. 2 yrs.

Darryl P. 5 yrs.

Mo B. 14 yrs.

Tom E. 32 yrs.

Dick W. 40 yrs.

### Open Door:

Jiven S. 1 yr.

Patty F. 27 yrs.

### Sun. Morn. 11am:

Bruce H. 7 yrs.

Noel C. 10 yrs.

Walter N. 17 yrs.

### Tue. Morn. Ladies:

Melanie S. 3 yrs.

Susan D. 3 yrs.

Paula S. 4 yrs.

Faye H. 18 yrs.

Pat J. 26 yrs.

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**

## September

### 272 Group:

Larry C. 13 yrs.

### Back From Hell:

Shandi B. 1 yr.  
Melanie B. 2 yrs.

### Dalhousie Men's:

Gary C. 3 yrs.  
Don D. 9 yrs.

### Forest Lawn Group:

Norm L. 32 yrs.

### Garnett:

Estee L. 4 yrs.

Grace P. 23 yrs.

### Highland Park:

Gord R. 35 yrs.

### MAAT Group:

Kristin B. 2 yrs.

Echoe L. 4 yrs.

Cate C. 17 yrs.

Sharon D. 19 yrs.

Tudor B. 20 yrs.

### Northlanders:

Lori B. 4 yrs.

Terry D. 10 yrs.

### Ogden:

Emily 1 yr.

Calvin S. 1 yr.

Tom H. 6 yrs.

Janet B. 12 yrs.

### Open Door:

Albert D. 9 yrs.

### Recovery:

Eric V. 1 yr.

Greg K. 1 yr.

Monika B. 1 yr.

Bill O. 1 yr.

Callie M. 2 yrs.

Scott C. 2 yrs.

Jim DH. 2 yrs.

Mark Z. 3 yrs.

J.C. 4 yrs.

Louise M. 19 yrs.

Cam M. 25 yrs.

### Sat. Nite Forest Lawn:

Norm N. 32 yrs.

### Tue. Morn. Ladies:

Maureen D. 26 yrs.

## PLEASE NOTE:

Calgary Central Service Office is not responsible for ensuring birthday information is correct. If you have any questions or concerns regarding birthday announcement submissions please email them to:

**westwordeditor@gmail.com**



## SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

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

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

### UPCOMING GROUPS:

- Generation 12 (Sept. 14)
- Generation 12 (Sept. 21)
- Generation 12 (Sept. 28)

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 MTG.

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

Speaker - 8:00pm

## KEY CONTACTS

Intergroup Chairperson .....calgaryintergroupchair@gmail.com  
Public Information Chairperson ..... pichair.calgary@gmail.com  
Telephone Monitoring Chairperson .....monitorchair@gmail.com  
Intergroup Secretary ..... CalgaryAA@shaw.com  
Westword Editor ..... westwordeditor@gmail.com  
Intergroup Archives..... calgaryintergrouparchives@gmail.com  
Calgary Central Office.....centraloffice@telus.net  
Area 78 website ..... http://www.area78.org



## 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**

**monitorchair@gmail.com**



ANNUAL PIONEERS DINNER  
&  
SPEAKERS MEETING

**SPONSORED BY  
CALGARY INTERGROUP ARCHIVES COMMITTEE**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2008  
5:30PM-10:00PM  
DALHOUSIE COMMUNITY CHURCH  
5511 BAROC RD. N.W.  
CALGARY, AB**

**COST: \$25.00  
(DINNER AND REFRESHMENTS)**

**!!LIMITED SEATING!!**

**SPEAKERS: CEC A.(TRI-CURRIE GROUP),  
KEN R.(ABC GROUP), PAT M.(ALANON)**

For more information contact  
CENTRAL OFFICE  
(403)-777-1212  
aaoffice@telusplanet.net