

# BETTER TIMES

March 2010

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## Submissions Wanted!

Tell the world (well, the AA world anyway) about your group's anniversary, roundups, medallions, etc. Submissions are welcomed. Please submit material for the following month's issue by the 10th day of the prior month, i.e. items for the April issue must be received by March 10th.

## Christmas in March

Remember that feeling you would get as a child at the beginning of December about the upcoming Christmas, the excitement and anticipation? Oh, the presents and seeing family and friends!

I get that same feeling today about the ORC. No, I don't lie awake at night thinking about it, but I do think about it a lot for about a month before the conference. I anticipate the excitement of up to 3,000 alcoholics gathered at the Royal York Hotel to receive great messages from the many speakers. Or maybe I will receive a great message from a conversation I have with someone over a coffee. I anticipate seeing old friends again and meeting new ones, as alcoholics will arrive from all over Canada and afar. I always look forward to the family panel where I learn how my disease has affected those around me.

The 2010 ORC is less than 1 month away and the committee has been working for close to 2 years

to put together a weekend of meetings and fellowship. For only \$30 you can hear great speakers in the beautiful setting of the historic Royal York Hotel. From what I understand, that cost is less than a case of beer, (I think beer was \$22 a case in 1991 when I got sober).

There are still tickets available for the banquet, and rooms available at the special conference rate. Just tell the hotel that you are with the conference. A great thing about staying at the Royal York is that you probably will not have to share a bed with your little brother or worse, your grandmother! I have to admit I am also anticipating the buffet breakfast and fellowship at York Kitchen.

See you at the ORC!

**Tim R., Chartwell Group  
 PI & Hospitality Chair 2010 ORC**

## The Archives Committee

Alcoholics Anonymous is largely an oral society. Despite the Big Book and all our other literature, how to get and stay sober is largely passed from sponsor to sponsee by word of mouth. And stuff gets left out, or interpreted.

Have you ever played that parlour game where a short statement is whispered from one person to another around the room until it finally returns to the originator, who repeats both the original and last versions out loud? It's usually quite amazing.

Over and over again, we hear the recipe for sobriety – *don't drink, go to meetings, get active, pray if you can*. That's it. No mention of the Twelve Steps, or embedding their Principles in our lives. I suspect that originally this was specific advice for newbies – and in that context makes sense.

This is what archives are for – to capture information and records from our present, and preserve them as they become records of our past. Somewhere there might still be a speaker tape that has the old-time version of *don't drink, go to meetings*. It would be such a scoop to actually find such a tape, and be able to understand what was originally meant.

The Toronto Archives Committee is comprised of the Archives sub-committee chairs from all the Districts

in the GTA. We have a chairperson – me, a vice-chair, Bob D (Weston Group), and an archivist, Máire O. (Leslie Group). There are also members-at-large who are asked to 'be part of' because of particular skills. Mark C. (Welcome Group) is invaluable in digitizing our reel-to-reel audio tapes. Eddie G. (Beaches Group) and some others are currently stabilizing and cataloging documents and artifacts in our physical collection. Sound exciting? Right up your alley? Welcome, then. Our major ongoing projects are capturing group histories – where did my home group come from? And oral histories of our long-timers – what was AA like way back then?

The best way to get involved would be to get in touch with your District's Archives chair. That's where the work is being done – at the District and Group level. If you wish to visit us, we meet the 2nd Sunday of the month at 10 am, in the Intergroup boardroom.

Until then, when you hear your Group's secretary say the cupboard is going to be cleaned out and all the old business meeting minutes thrown out to make more room for coffee cups, jump up and scream NO! Ask for permission to bring those old, very wanted, very important documents to someone from the Archives committee. We will keep them, care for them and make them accessible for future generations.

**Roy R., Chair, Intergroup Archives Committee**

# Celebrating Sobriety

## AA Conference Schedule

For Al-Anon and Alateen schedule visit conference page at [www.aatoronto.org](http://www.aatoronto.org)

FRIDAY MARCH 19TH				
Time	Meeting	Chair	Speaker(s)/Topic	Room
1:00pm	<b>Early Sobriety Room</b>	Laura A., Toronto, ON	Step 3 Discussion	Alberta Room
3:00pm	<b>Panel: Young in AA</b>	Lisa M., Brampton, ON	Sidrah A., Toronto, ON Jim W., Toronto, ON	Ballroom
4:15pm	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Linda M., Toronto, ON	Paul D., Hamilton, ON	Concert Hall
5:00pm	<b>Early Sobriety Room</b>	Laura J., Scarborough, ON	The Promises and You	Alberta Room
5:30pm	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	MaryAnn B-N., Toronto, ON	Chris G., Toronto, ON	Ballroom
7:00pm	<b>Official Opening of the Conference</b>	Conference Chair Opens	Jim B., Toronto, ON	Cdn Room
7:15pm	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Scott M., Toronto, ON	Joe C., Palm Coast, FL	Cdn Room
9:15pm	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Linda U., Toronto, ON	Deb H, Yucca Valley, CA	Cdn Room
10:30pm	<b>AA Talkathon</b>	Rene T., Toronto, ON		Ballroom
SATURDAY MARCH 20TH				
9:00am	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Cathie D., Toronto, ON	Brendan K., Hastings, ON	Cdn Room
9:30pm	<b>Early Sobriety Room</b>	Stephanie B., Toronto, ON	Step 1 Discussion	Alberta Room
10:15am	<b>AA Panel: In Our Home</b>	Tim R., Toronto, ON	Elizabeth D., Toronto, ON Bob D., Toronto, ON	Ballroom
11:00am	<b>AA/Al-Anon Family Panel</b>	Máire O'B., Toronto, ON	Joe & Kaye G., Wylie, TX	Cdn Room
12:15pm	<b>Panel: Like Father, Like Son</b>	Kim S., Toronto, ON	Jim K., Toronto, ON Ken K., Toronto, ON	Ballroom
1:00pm	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Jim A., Toronto, ON	Joy H., Shawnee, KS	Cdn Room
2:30pm	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Peter N., Toronto, ON	Doug R., New York, NY	Concert Hall
3:00pm	<b>Al-Anon Main Speaker</b>	Pat M., Thornhill, ON	Jack H., Amherst, NY	Ballroom
3:00pm	<b>Early Sobriety Room</b>	Murray O., Toronto, ON	Came To Believe Discussion	Alberta Room
4:00pm	<b>AA Panel: Women in AA</b>	Tracy M., Toronto, ON	Norma Z., King City, ON Yvonne L., Hamilton, ON	Concert Hall
4:45pm	<b>AA Panel: Live, Love, Laugh</b>	Gerry M., Scarborough, ON	Kathleen M., Scarborough, ON Terry J., Mississauga, ON	Concert Hall
7:15pm	<b>Banquet and AA Open Meeting</b>	Jim B., Toronto, ON	Jack C., Hagerstown, MD	Cdn Room
9:15pm	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Arwen H., Toronto, ON	Joshua H., Toronto, ON	Concert Hall
9:15pm	<b>DJ &amp; Dance Party</b>			Cdn Room
SUNDAY MARCH 21ST				
9:15am	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Jan M., Peterboro, ON	Dennis N., Charlotte, NC	Cdn Room
11:00am	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Kim G., Toronto, ON	Don C., Colorado Springs, CO	Cdn Room
1:00pm	<b>Sobriety Countdown</b>	Peter C., Toronto, ON		Cdn Room
1:20pm	<b>AA Open Meeting</b>	Jim R., Toronto, ON	Franny S., Gardena, CA	Cdn Room
3:00pm	<b>Closing Remarks</b>	Roger L., Toronto, ON		Cdn Room

**What is the history behind reading The Lord's Prayer at meetings?**

In *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers* it says the prayer was used from the very beginning in the Fellowship, at least as early as 1938 and 1939. In those days there was no A.A. literature, so the early groups relied heavily on existing prayers, and on the Bible and Oxford Group literature, for inspiration and guidance.

Bill W. commented several times in his correspondence about the early use of the Lord's Prayer. In a letter to a member in 1959 he says:

*"This practice probably came from the Oxford Groups who were influential in the early days of A.A. You have probably noted in A.A. Comes of Age what the connection of these people with A.A. really was. I think saying the Lord's Prayer was a custom of theirs following the close of each meeting. Therefore it quite easily got shifted into a general custom among us."*

Bill also wrote the following in a 1955 letter:

*"Of course there are always those who seem to be offended by the introduction of any prayer whatever into an ordinary A.A. gathering. Also it is sometimes complained that the Lord's Prayer is a Christian document. Nevertheless, this Prayer is of such widespread use and recognition that the argument of its Christian origin seems to be a little farfetched. It is also true that most A.A.'s believe in some kind of god and that communication and strength is obtainable through his grace. Since this is the general consensus, it seems only right that at least the Serenity Prayer and the Lord's Prayer be used in connection with our meetings. It does not seem necessary to defer to the feelings of our agnostic and atheist. . ."*

*Continued on page 4*

**Recent Medallions:**

Jack P.	1	Prince Edward	February 1
Candace	5	Golden Mile	February 3
Cindy B.	1	Thornhill Recovery	February 4
Marc D.	10	Welcome	February 7
Barb H.	10	Prince Edward	February 8
Tom Mc P.	15	Rexdale United	February 11
Bruce M.	30	New Anchor	February 11
Lori C.	1	Keep it Simple	February 14
Patti W.	1	New Anchor	February 18
Dorothy S.	20	Rexdale United	February 18
Ron W.	1	Silverbirch	February 19
Allan M.	5	Principles B4 Pers.	February 21
Peter K.	1	Prince Edward	February 22
Kelly G.	5	Fellowship	February 22
Paul	15	Fellowship	February 22
Maverine V.	1	Living Sober	February 23
Gary N.	5	Unionville	February 24
Roy L.	35	Northwestern	February 28

**Upcoming Medallions:**

Erin B.	1	Prince Edward	March 1
Paul W.	5	Erin Mills	March 1
Tanya L.	10	King City	March 1
Steve H.	35	Pine Hills	March 1
Erin	1	Mt. Royal York	March 2
Marshal D.	1	Tuesday Night Discussion	March 4
Grant D.	25	Rexdale United	March 4
Diane G.	5	St. Andrews	March 6
Tony B.	1	East York Group	March 9
Mary C.	1	Shepherd	March 9
Ruth F.	15	Agincourt Acorn	March 9
Anne P.	5	Golden Mile	March 10
Larry F.	1	Bathurst	March 15
Lynn L.	15	East York	March 16
Jimmy O.	20	Marklandwood	March 18
Marnie S.	10	Fifth Tradition	March 23
Carmen F.	1	Marklandwood	March 25
Maureen C.	30	Shepherd	March 30
Charles W.	30	East York Group	March 30
Jeremy D.	1	Back to Basics	April 2
Kasey S.	5	Back to Basics	April 12

**Things We Cannot Change**

*The following is a list of AA members who passed in 2009 who were unfortunately missed in last month's insert:*

**Mike M.** of the Bellamy Group passed with 22 years of sobriety. Mike had an amicable and pleasant disposition even though he suffered many setbacks in sobriety. His favorite expression was a quote from one of his close friends which said "Always give a man his place".

**Joe C.** of the Bellamy Group passes away with 55 years of sobriety and was a faithful member of the Bellamy Group to the very end. Joe was passionate about A.A.; his favorites were the Better Times and the District 22 Archives Committee.

**Mary K.** of the Bellamy Group passed with 27 years of sobriety. Mary's favorite expression was "I am not the woman I ought to be, I am not the woman I want to be but thank God I am not the woman I used to be".

**Jack R.** of the Step Meeting in Orillia was just 2 months short of 50 years of sobriety when he passed. A man who gave 120% of himself over the years to helping others, he was originally a long time member of the Kingsway Group.

**Meeting Changes:**

**Fifth Tradition (Scarborough)** (O) Wed. 8pm (EAST): As of March 2nd meeting will be relocating to Wexford United Church, 2102 Lawrence Avenue East and will be changing days to Tuesdays.

**Lakeshore** (O) Sunday 8pm (WEST): As of March meeting will be located at Mimico Presbyterian Church, 119 Mimico Ave at Royal York Rd.

**Lakeshore Discussion** (C) Thursday 8pm (WEST): As of March meeting will be located at Mimico Presbyterian Church, 119 Mimico Ave at Royal York Rd.

**New Life** (O) Tuesday 8:30pm (SUBURBAN WEST): As of March 2nd meeting will now be at First United Church, 151 Lakeshore Road W, Mississauga.

**New Life Discussion** (C) Tuesdays 7pm (SUBURBAN WEST): As of March 2nd meeting will now be at First United Church, 151 Lakeshore Road W, Mississauga.

**Park Royal** (C) Thursday 8:30pm (SUBURBAN WEST): As of March 18 meeting time will change to 7:30pm.

**Announcements:**

**21st Suburban Northwest AA/AI-Anon Step Weekend** will be held February 26–28 in Marylake. This year Step 9 is the topic. The AA speaker is Jay F. and the AI-Anon speaker Catherine R. Bloomington Side Road & Keele Street, north of King City. \$160 including meals and accomodation. Contact Ralph W at 416 705-3044.

**Newcomers' Group** will celebrate their 33rd Anniversary on Friday March 5th at 8:30 pm. Please join us for cake and fellowship.

**23rd Annual Lakeshore Roundup** will be held Sat. March 6th at Sikorski Polish Veterans Hall, 1551 Stevenson Road North in Oshawa. Tickets are \$10 and include a potluck lunch.

**The Bayview Group** is celebrating their 40th Anniversary on Sunday March 14th at 8pm with 5 speakers sharing. Come and join our Celebration. Refreshments and goodies for all.

**Ontario Regional Conference 2010: Celebrating Sobriety** will be held Mar. 19–21, 2010 at the Fairmont Royal York, Toronto. For more information see the ORC page at [www.aatoronto.org](http://www.aatoronto.org).

**SoberStock** will be held Mar. 19–21 in Tampa, FL. This is an annual event of recovery including Live Bands, AA Speakers, Free Food, Camping, Fellowship & Fun! For information visit [www.soberstock.com](http://www.soberstock.com).

**Port Credit Group** will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary on Saturday March 20th at 9pm. Trinity Anglican Church, 26 Stavebank Rd (west of Hwy 10, off Lakeshore Rd).

**Golden Mile Group** will celebrate their 40th anniversary on March 24th at 8pm. Wilmar Heights United Church, 963 Pharmacy Ave (between Eglinton and Lawrence). Entrance at rear.

**Celebrate Sobriety** will be held April 2–4 in Vancouver. For more information visit [www.celebratesobriety.org](http://www.celebratesobriety.org)

**East York Roundup** to be held on Saturday, April 24th.

**45th Annual Blossom Time Convention: Sharing the Journey** will be held May 7–9 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Niagra Falls. Speaker meetings, discussion meetings, marathon meetings, etc. Full AI-Anon & Alateen Participation. For more info visit [www.blossomtimeconvention.com](http://www.blossomtimeconvention.com).

# January '10: Intergroup Report

**Chair's Opening Remarks:** Florence announced that this was her last meeting as Operating Chair. The ORC 2012 Chairperson has been elected: Margaret T. (Bayview). Tonight there will be elections for new members of the Executive Committee.

**Finance Report:** Don (Hill), incoming Chair – Summary for Dec. 2009:

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
<b>December</b>	\$20,899	\$14,263	\$6,580
<b>Comp. to Budget</b>	-3,273	-1,499	-1,404
<b>Year-to-date</b>	\$265,209	\$169,898	\$94,930
<b>Comp. to Budget</b>	46,828	- 40,824	92,392

December income is under budget mainly due to group donations being lower than expected. Year-to-date income exceeds budget significantly due to group donations, gratitude, ORC contribution and increased sales. Expenses continued under budget in most categories. Year-to-date expenses are lower than expected due to salary costs, delayed audit billing, 2007 property tax rebate and 2008 refund and committee expenses. Careful review of our investment holdings in the Prudent Reserve are underway.

**Motion** to suspend regular business to facilitate elections moved by Judith (Bellamy) and seconded by Marrey (Restoration & Recovery). **Motion carried.**

Florence facilitated election process. 5 members of the current Operating Committee have agreed to rotate on to the Executive Committee: Elaine G. (Port Credit), Craig V. (Prince Edward), Glenn G. (East York), John C. (Half Century), Phil M. (Bloordale).

According to the Procedures & Guidelines, a Chair and Vice Chair will be elected from these 5 members by members of the Executive Committee. Four more EC members are needed for the full committee complement.

## ELECTION PROCESS

Florence outlined the sobriety requirements for the positions. Positions require a one year of service on the EC, with an additional year optional. Nomination/volunteers from the floor were called for. 6 members stood for election and gave a brief address to the floor before vote was taken and the ballots tallied. The new Executive Committee members are: Amanda W. (Deer Park), Carolyn R. (Markham Village), Michael S. (Back to Basics), Trevor (Mississauga).

**Motion** to destroy ballots moved by Glen B. (Recovery) and seconded by Marrey (Restoration & Recovery). **Motion carried.**

**Motion** to resume some regular business moved by Glen B. (Recovery) and seconded by Amanda W. (Deer Park). **Motion carried.**

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

*Due to time constraints, regular subcommittee reports were suspended, except for the following:*

**ORC 2010:** Jim B. (Saturday Morning Discussion), 2010 event Chairperson – 'Celebrating Sobriety' will be held March 19–21 at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Event placards/registration flyers made available to reps at this meeting. For inquiries please call 416-487-2677 or email orc@aatoronto.org. Registration is \$30 and the banquet is \$60. All speakers are confirmed, and event planning is right on schedule. Registration for the event is going well but room bookings are slower than expected. Encourage members to book rooms for the event, see the website for details. Subcommittees that want to set up tables at the event are referred to Linda U. of the ORC committee.

## NEW BUSINESS

There will be a Workshop for new reps at the March General Meeting.

*Continued from Archives Alley on page 1*

*...newcomers to the extent of completely hiding 'our light under a bushel.' However, around here, the leader of the meeting usually asks those to join him in the Lord's Prayer who feel that they would care to do so. The worst that happens to the objectors is that they have to listen to it. This is doubtless a salutary exercise in tolerance at their stage of progress."*

As Bill's 1955 letter indicates, recitation of the Lord's Prayer at meetings has clearly been controversial in some circles almost since the beginning. The G.S.O. has responded to letters on this issue since the 1940s and 1950s. It has been addressed in articles in Box 4-5-9 and the A.A. Grapevine, and has been addressed on occasion at the General Service Conference. For example, at the 1962 Conference, one of the Ask-It-Basket questions was: "What is the procedure for dealing with individuals who refuse to stand during recitation of the Lord's Prayer? Answer: Participation—or nonparticipation—in recitals of the Lord's Prayer should be considered a matter of personal conscience and decision."

*Reprinted from Markings, Spring 2008*

**Máire O'B, GTA Intergroup Archivist**

## Webmaster Wanted!

*Are you a computer whiz? Want to apply your talents to a wonderful form of service?*

Better Times is seeking a new Webmaster.

Please contact us at [bettertimes@aatoronto.org](mailto:bettertimes@aatoronto.org).

