

# BETTER TIMES

June 2010

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## Interested in the history of AA?

There is a "AA History Lovers Group" on Yahoo which is a devoted group of members who talk about the archival history of AA.

<http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers>

## Summer Sobriety

Warm weather is here again! Cottages are opening up, patios are busy, BBQ's are getting fired up.

It has been a long hard day on the job, or with the kids or just full of hustle and bustle; traffic is bad, construction is everywhere, trains are delayed. Wouldn't you like to sit down, relax amongst friends and enjoy an AA meeting!? I know I would. Can I join you?

Attending AA meetings, open, closed, service related or fellowship in general, is in my opinion a great equalizer. If I'm feeling revved up I'm usually brought back down to earth. If I'm in the dumps I usually get inspired. A wise man once said "rarely is it a bad idea to go to a meeting".

Summertime can often bring new schedules and opportunities, so let's make the best of them. How? Perhaps carry a meeting list so if you're in another part of town you will know where to go, or call the Intergroup office to get directions to a meeting and to hear a friendly voice. If a listed

meeting isn't available, have your own impromptu meeting. Maybe meet up with your sponsor or another AA member or two. Bring along a Big Book, a 12 and 12 or a Grapevine. Meet at the park, on the dock or the back yard, anywhere! All you have to do is show up! What if no one is available? Perfect time for Step 11, prayer and meditation, even if you think you're not on this step, your Higher Power won't mind. Believe it!

Summer can be a lot of fun, but it can be filled with enticement and temptation that I know will get this alcoholic spinning out of control and out of bounds in seconds if I don't make "Sobriety top of the Schedule".

From 12oz to 12 Steps. See you at a meeting soon!  
 Yours in service

**Aaron K., Yorkville Group**

## 10th Annual 11th Step Picnic/Family Day

The tenth annual 11th Step Picnic and Family Day will be held Saturday, August 7th at Olympic Island at the Toronto Islands. The picnic will be held from 12pm to 5pm.

We welcome all AA members and families to come and join us for fellowship in the sun. Make sure to bring you ball and glove, frisbee, games, blankets, sunscreen...whatever you want!

There will be speaker meetings at 1pm and 2:30pm. Please help us celebrate this exciting milestone – our 10th year!

The cost is FREE! Donations will be gratefully accepted. For more information call Barb at 905-264-6080. If it rains, unfortunately the event will be cancelled.



### INFO AA DAY

**Saturday May 29th, 2010**  
**8:00 am – 4:00 pm**

**Lansing United Church, 49 Bogert Ave.**

Early bird meeting 8:15, Opening at 9:00

**Potluck lunch**

\$5.00 at the door or from Group Reps or GSRs

**Part 1 of letter to the Alcoholic Foundation  
written by Bill Mcl., Secretary for the Toronto AA Central Group**

Toronto A.A. Central Group, Alcoholics Anonymous, 1170 Yonge Street, Phone MI-9951

March 20, 1946

Mrs. Margaret B., National Headquarters, Alcoholics Anonymous, New York, NY

Dear Bobbie:

I realize that I am reporting in rather late but A.A. has been moving very rapidly here since the first of the year and moving in the right direction. We started off with our New Year's party which was a grand success and quite different from a year previous when four of us sat in a morgue like atmosphere drinking ginger ale and wondering if it was worth it. This year we had well over 100 happy, laughing sober people. Truly a tribute to the way A.A. works.

A second group had formed before Christmas and their method of leaving had left rather a bitter taste. I am very glad to be able to say that most of that bitterness and resentment has gone and the two groups are constantly moving closer together. Later we are going to have an East End Group and this, I am sure, will have the hearty support of both groups and might be the weld needed to join all Toronto groups in the proper A.A. spirit. As you already know a small but solid group has started in Hamilton. A week ago, we chartered a bus and about 22 went over for their meeting. There was a member from Dundas, Ontario and one from Simcoe, a good indication of how A.A. is getting into even the towns and villages around us. As you can see, we also modernized our stationery. Another reason for the delay is I wanted to use the new letter (or is that just another alibi). Also enclosed find our new pamphlet and enclosure we are using for mailing and the members to carry in their pockets. We have had a number of other groups send us their pamphlets on A.A. and are trying to have 6 or so different kinds on hand to keep the new man interested and give him something to carry with him. Would appreciate it greatly if you could send us a list of books which we could use as suggested reading. At present "Remember September" and the "Glass Crutch" is going the rounds but would like to get something with more meat in it. As the member progresses he is reaching for something more than sobriety. To meet this need, we would like to stock our library with those that have proven helpful.

*Continued in July Better Times*

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

**2010 International  
Convention of AA**

The 2010 International Convention of AA will be held July 1-4 in San Antonio, Texas with the theme "A Vision for You." Members and guests from around the world will celebrate AA's 75th year.

Big meetings will be held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Alamodome. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the San Antonio Convention Center and local hotels.

Registration opens in the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center on Wednesday June 30 at 8 am. Registration will be Wednesday – Friday from 8am to 8pm, and Saturday from 8am to 6pm. The opening *Party in the Park* starts at approximately 8pm Thursday evening and ends at midnight. Marathon meetings will begin at midnight on Thursday, and run around the clock until Sunday morning. Meetings start at the Convention Center on Friday and Saturday at 9am and continue until 5pm each day.

Friday night and Saturday night from 8 to 10pm, we gather in the Alamodome for big meetings. The Flag Ceremony will take place before the meeting on Friday night, and Saturday we will have an oldtimers meeting, where AAs with more than 40 years of sobriety will share.

The closing meeting will take place in the Alamodome on Sunday from 9 – 11am.

***We look forward to  
seeing you in San Antonio!***

**Where We Met**

I make my way from the curb to the church, rain-water soaking through the holes in my sneakers. I should spend some money on myself, I know. Maybe this spring. The chairs are hard. I feel tired before the meeting starts. I close my eyes to remove the distraction of the chipped basketball hoop. Its ugly apparatus of pulleys and levers will occupy me for an hour, if I let it.

Everything I've described so far is familiar to you; you know this scene well. You know too that tonight something will be said that makes a small change in your life. That's why you are here. We are here for the same reason, to encourage a change for the better. The only difference between us is I am listening, you are speaking. After the meeting I sidle up to you and shyly try to let you know that you made an impact on my life.

Months later, we sit at a social gathering. Someone asks of us "And where did you two meet?"

That's an easy question to answer: "Oh, we met a while ago at a function in a church basement ..." There's no response to that, so I may as well continue, "... and we got to share some of our ideas. I'm a writer, she is a publisher, and we're both avid book readers and often chat about something through email, or over the telephone".

And so the moment passes. We're friends, just friends, brought together through the gloom, the cold, the wet, the ugly, the pathetic, and at times, the downright distasteful. What a miracle!

**Christopher G., Bloordale Group**

# haveyouheard

## Recent Medallions:

Tim C.	25	Mississauga Group	May 2
Abdi J.	1	Westmoreland Group	May 4
Brandon F.	1	Living Sober (Newmarket)	May 4
Dave R.	25	Shepherd Group	May 4
Tom McN.	30	Rexdale United Group	May 6
Dave A.	5	Lakeshore Group	May 9
John M.	1	Prince Edward Group	May 10
Soren T.	1	Westmoreland Group	May 11
Sari S.	5	East York Group	May 11
Sharlene G.	1	Rexdale United Group	May 13
Judy B.	15	Scarborough Group	May 14
Noel	1	Bayview Group	May 16
Sandra H.	10	Lakeshore Group	May 16
Gina C.	1	Prince Edward Group	May 17
Mary P.	20	A Place to Share	May 21
Alinne C.	1	River Drive Group	May 24
Mike Q.	20	Westmoreland Group	May 24
Veronica M.	5	River Drive Group	May 24

## Upcoming Medallions:

Kirk S.	1	Rouge Valley Centenary	May 27
Peter Y.	1	Scarborough Group	May 28
Sally B.	30	Unionville Group	May 26
Rod C.	10	Park Royal Group	May 27
Pat D.	25	East York Group	June 1
Cathrine S.	1	Don Mills Group	June 2
Ed C.	5	Unionville Group	June 2
Phil G.	5	Mississauga Group	June 6
Karen W.	5	Bathurst Group	June 7
Martha F.	1	Prince Edward Group	June 7
Gerry R.	1	Unionville Group	June 9
Ken C.	10	Markland Wood Group	June 10
Deb R.	1	Unionville Group	June 16
Marion S.	15	New Anchor Group	June 17
Ciara C.	5	Silverbirch Group	June 18
Carol R.	1	Anniversary Group	June 23
Janice T.	1	Unionville Group	June 23
Brad H.	5	Rexdale United Group	June 24
Kim P.	1	New Anchor Group	June 24
Peter D.	5	Sunnyside Group	June 24
Paul F.	30	Unionville Group	June 30
Lesley B.	5	Crossroads	July 4
Marilyn H.	20	Crossroads	July 4
Glenn G.	5	East York Group	July 6
Marvyn W.	5	Mississauga Group	July 18

## Meeting Changes:

**Brampton Sunday AM Discussion (C)** Sunday 10:30am (SUBURBAN NORTHWEST): As of May 23 meeting is temporarily moved to Flower City Community Campus, Building D, at 8850 McLaughlin Road South.

**Recovery 12 Step (C)** Saturday 11am (SUBURBAN NORTHWEST): From April 17 – June 12 meeting is temporarily moving to Central Public School Arts & Recreation Centre, 24 Alexander St., Studio D, Brampton.

**Rexdale United (O)** Thursday 8pm (NORTHWEST): Meeting has temporarily moved to St. Paul the Apostle Anglican Church, 2182 Kipling Avenue, for the May 20, 27 & June 3 meetings only.

**Streetsville St. Andrews (O)** Thursday 8:30pm (SUBURBAN WEST): Meadowvale South meeting group has changed their name to Streetsville St. Andrews.

## Discontinued Meetings:

**Back To Basics (Ajax)** Sunday 7:30pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Cornerstone Discussion** Sunday 8pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Glenview Discussion** Monday 8pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Half Century of A.A.** Tuesday 6pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Lakeside Discussion** Monday 8pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Monday Night Big Book Disc.** Monday 8:30pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Oak Discussion** Saturday 7:15pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Russian-speaking Friday** 8pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Shepherd Discussion** Sunday 10:30am: Meeting has been discontinued.

**St. James Big Book Discussion** Monday 1pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Top Of The Stairs** Friday 12pm: Meeting discontinued.

**Twelve Steps Discussion** Thursday 8pm: Meeting has been discontinued.

**Un Despertar Espiritual Hispano** the following meetings have been discontinued: Tuesday 8pm, Sunday 8pm,

Wednesday 8pm, Thursday 8pm, Friday 8pm, Monday 8pm and Saturday at 8pm.

## Announcements:

**No Longer Alone Group** will be celebrating their 15 year anniversary on Friday May 28 at 8pm. All are welcome!

**Info AA Day** will be held Saturday May 29 at Lansing United Church (Yonge and Sheppard subway). Cost of the day is \$5, and includes a pot luck luncheon.

**42nd Annual Big Deep South Convention** will be held June 18–20 in New Orleans. For more information go to [www.bigdeepsouth.org](http://www.bigdeepsouth.org)

**The Trillium 2010 "Courage to Change" Convention** will be held June 18–20 at the Doubletree International Plaza Hotel in Toronto. Hosted by Ontario South Al Anon/Alateen with full AA participation. To register go to [al-anon.alateen.on.ca](http://al-anon.alateen.on.ca)

**Lakeshore Districts' 38th Annual Conference** will be held August 13–15 at 1551 Stevenson Road North, Oshawa. For additional information call Lakeshore Intergroup at 905-728-1020

**52nd International Conference of Young People in AA** will be held August 26–29 at the Marriott Marquis-Times Square in New York City. For more information go to [www.icypaahost.org](http://www.icypaahost.org)

**Mount Royal - York Group** will celebrate their 50th anniversary on July 13 at Metropolitan United Church, 56 Queen Street East. All are welcome!

**2010 International Convention of AA** will be held July 1–4 in San Antonio, Texas. For more information go to [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org).

**Tenth Annual 11th Step Picnic/Family Day** will be held on Saturday August 7. We will start at 12pm on Olympic Island in Toronto.

**Lakeshore Districts' 38th Annual Conference** will be held August 13 – 15. Event will be held at 1551 Stevenson Road North in Oshawa. For additional information call Lakeshore Intergroup at 905-728-1020

**Mississauga Fall Roundup: Sunlight of the Spirit** will be held on Saturday October 2 from 8am to 3:30pm. Event will be held at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church at 3625 Cawthra Road in Mississauga. Includes AA, Al-Anon and Alateen speakers and a hot and cold buffet lunch. Tickets are \$20 (Alateen \$5).

## I Thank You for my Life Today

I sat at home watching TV and idling the day away, thinking it was too cold to go to my home group meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. Then on the news they began showing the bodies of our fallen soldiers being brought home, and I was reminded of my duty as a recovering alcoholic. These soldiers were fighting for freedom. When I came to AA, I did not know what I was looking for, but as the years have gone by, I realize I was looking for freedom from alcoholism.

When I walked through the doors of AA for the first time on July 12 1989, there were people there to greet me and welcome me. These people had come to these meetings no matter what the weather conditions were. It may have been a blistery cold night or it may have been steaming hot and humid; regardless, they were there at the AA meeting, week after week. These are the soldiers of AA, welcoming the alcoholic home and offering them guidance and hope for a better life, a life of hope, faith

and courage. These members of AA were also there as their families and friends celebrated birthdays, Christmas, anniversaries and other family milestones and celebrations. As an alcoholic brought to AA by the grace of their Higher Power, they are brought home.

If I choose to stay home and not go to my AA meetings and not be present when the regular member, the newcomer or the one who has relapsed walks in, I am turning my back on my higher power. As the members of AA were there when I walked in, I would like to carry on this responsibility for the future generations. I also hope that AA will be there when my son is ready to join us, that the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous will be open. I was able to talk to my daughter and son during this weekend again, yet there are many parents, sister, brothers, friends and other family members who are not able to talk to their loved ones. Their loved ones have lost their lives in the battle with alcoholism.

**Kris O., Keep It Simple Group**

# April '10: Intergroup Report

**Chair's Opening Remarks:** John C. (Half Century), Executive Committee Chair – John announced that there needs to be an election for one new Executive Committee member, as Elaine G. (Port Credit) needed to resign due to personal reasons. He also shared that he was glad to see so many members here this evening thanks for your attendance and support!

**Finance Report:** Don M. (Hill), Finance Chairperson – Finance Report for the month of March 2010 Summary:

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
<b>March</b>	\$8,32	\$13,567	-\$5,244
<b>Comp. to Budget</b>	-6,136	-5,657	-429
<b>Year to Date</b>	\$37,829	\$39,017	-\$1,188
<b>Comp. to Budget</b>	-5,919	-9,640	3,771

Donations were under budget in March continuing a trend that has resulted in total donations being 17% below budget year-to-date. Sales were also slightly below budget. Loss in market value of Prudent Reserve investments makes up most of the under run in March Income before Operating Expenses. March Total expenses were below budget due to deferred expenses for Better Times. Year to date expenses were reduced by deferred committee expenditures and audit, computer software and office equipment. Prudent Reserve as of March 31, 2010 (Book value + accrued interest): \$234,242.

**Questions:** Someone from the Floor had a question regarding the annual expenses amount (cost to run Intergroup). Don replied that it is around \$300,000 a year. This includes out-of-pocket expenses at around \$281,000, plus literature expense and the ORC.

Mimy (King City) had questions specifically about rent cost, tax rebate, the amount of time left on our lease, and also inquired if we could break the lease. Don answered that there are three items regarding our rent: Hydro costs, Property taxes, and the actual rent amount (about \$3,500 a month for 2,000 sq.ft.). This amount is very reasonable for the area. We have the current lease until 2012. There would be penalties arising from the breaking of our lease. Don also added that there has been some discussion among Finance Committee members about the ideal location for our office; it was a consensus that it was vital that we have ready access to both public transit and/or have easy access to major highways around the GTA. Mimy (King City) asked if our rent amount will go up in the next two years; Don replied that it goes up every year.

Roger (Fellowship) had a question regarding our Prudent Reserve: is the market value declining? Don explained that our Prudent Reserve investment is made up of a) bank-preferred shares, and b) coupons in provincial government. These will go down in value as interest rates go up. For protection against rate increases, short-term investments are better right now.

There was also a question about the Prudent Reserve increased by \$100,000. It was explained that \$100,000 was taken out of the bank and invested in government and B.C. coupons.

**MOTION** to suspend regular business to facilitate elections moved by Davis B. (Lakeshore) and seconded by Dan W. (Willowdale). **MOTION CARRIED.**

New Executive Committee member is needed. Term would entail serving the rest of this year and the candidate can serve an additional year if desired. John clarified the sobriety/service requirements. Two candidates were nominated and asked to give a brief address to the Floor. Ballots were distributed. Dave B. (Lakeshore) is the new Executive Committee member.

**MOTION** to destroy ballots from the election moved by David Z. (Saturday Morning Discussion) and seconded by Reg (Bramalea Care & Share). **MOTION CARRIED.**

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

**Access Ability:** Donna MacQ. (Sunnyside), Chair – Donna is stepping down as Chair and Cathy will be taking over in May. The ORC was terrific as far as speakers, meetings, agenda, etc. Unfortunately, there wasn't much attendance at the table. We hope we can move back into the hallway next year. Some of our upcoming events we will be attending are Mayfest and Info AA Day.

**Archives:** Roy R. (Trial & Error), Chairperson – Committee was present at two events – the Area 83 Eastern Ontario Archives Workshop and the Hamilton Archives Breakfast. Upcoming events: the Annual Archives Breakfast in November, and a new event; 50 years of AA Toronto through the eyes of Bobby D. This last event will be happening in October and will feature a collection of 17 binders of material that Bobby kept over the years.

**Corrections:** Trevor O. (Mississauga), Executive Committee member – The ORC event went well. Volunteer applications were received there for Corrections work, Volunteers still needed, particularly for the "Bridging the Gap" initiative. There was a recent article about the Corrections committee in the Better Times.

**CPC:** No report.

**Information AA Day:** Jim A. (St. Andrews Saturday Night), DCM Dist.18 – Jim presented the floor with a complete itinerary of the day. Tickets are \$5, available through group GSRs or Intergroup Reps.

**ORC 2010:** Jim B. (Saturday Morning Discussion), Chair – Jim thanked everyone for their support. Committee has pretty well cleared up the financials for the event, and it looks like there will be a \$12,000 (or higher) donation to Intergroup in future. Bob (Weston) asked if there are contingencies in place for a possible disaster (i.e. low attendance at a future ORC due to a storm, etc.). Don M. (Hill), Finance Chair, stated that there is a contingency in our Prudent Reserve.

**Public Information:** Vivien C. (Fellowship), Chairperson – Committee is still waiting to hear on the status of the vetting process for the Toronto District School Board to give presentations to the students. Workshop for U of T Medical Students given in March/April went well, with 18 students in attendance. Several Districts have been busy with P.I. work but some districts are not represented at the table; Vivien will follow up. Volunteers interested in speaking at schools encouraged. The committee will be present at the upcoming Dist.22 Service Day on Sept.25.

**Treatment Facilities:** No report.

**Twelfth Step:** No report.

**Website/Better Times:** No report.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

At a previous meeting, there was an inquiry about the possibility of installing a toll-free 1-800 number to our helpline. A Motion was introduced to the Floor.

**MOTION** that GTA Intergroup implement a no long distance fee telephone number, for the use of those outside the 416 calling area, to enable them a no cost access to services offered by the GTA Intergroup. Motion made by Tom W. (Aurora) and seconded by Mimy C.-K. (King City). (Hard copy of Motion on file) There was a brief discussion on this item. John stated that he will get some facts and cost figures on this idea and will bring this information to the next General Meeting.

*To see the complete minutes go to [www.aatoronto.org](http://www.aatoronto.org).*

