



• Contents •

**The World Convention Experience** .....1  
**2011 Ontario Regional Conference**.....1  
**More Accounts from the AA World Convention** .....2  
**He chose to pick up a drink**....2  
**Mississauga Fall Roundup** .....2  
**Have You Heard**.....3  
**Archives Alley**..... 3  
**Intergroup Report**..... 4  
**Cartoon**..... 4

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

Saturday August 7th, 12–5pm on Olympic Island in Toronto  
 The cost is FREE!  
 For more information call Barb at 905-264-6080  
 Event will be cancelled if it rains

## The World Convention Experience

Several members of the Miracle Group (Central Toronto, Wed and Fri at 12:15) attended the World Convention in San Antonio Texas this past July 1-4. Here are a few comments:

**Ellen Y.:** "the feeling that there weren't any barriers to be crossed. We were all there for the same reason and I could talk to anyone anywhere - in a meeting, on the street, in elevators or just standing in line at Starbucks. I felt like I was protected and was in the presence of something greater than myself. I guess you could call it a spiritual awakening and not feeling alone!"

**Helen T.:** "the prayers are what I will keep in my heart forever-the community of 50,000 alcoholics, praying as one for the suffering alcoholics in our world - an explosion of hope! I felt the spirit of our prayers reaching out to help others recover from our seemingly hopeless disease. It was also fun and frolicsome - lots of laughing and conversations

*everywhere. For the first time in my life, I enjoyed waiting in lineups; I never knew who I would end up talking with or what we would talk about."*

**Beth L.:** "my five words for the experience are 'swollen feet and swollen heart'. Sharing, caring and laughing among the five women from my home group I travelled with, strangers outside the hotel and at the venues, or the internet gratitude friends I met face to face for the first time truly opened my heart. Every moment increased my gratitude for sobriety and the fellowship of AA. The first day back I started saving my loose change to attend Atlanta in 2015, God willing, and the daily action is an additional daily commitment to growing in sobriety."

**Submitted by Helen T., Miracle Group**

See Page 2 for more personal accounts from people who attended the 2010 World Convention

## 2011 Ontario Regional Conference

With the excitement of the 2010 Ontario Regional Conference settling down, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the 2010 Committee for the astounding number of hours they devoted to organizing the experiences that we all enjoyed. We also owe a great debt of gratitude to the hundreds of volunteers whose commitment made the Conference so successful.

For the 2011 ORC, one uncertainty will be how the new Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) will impact our operating costs. We will continue to keep the membership updated on this matter throughout the year. A bright new certainty for 2011 is that our Hotel Coordinator was able to secure a reduced room rate of \$159.00, a substantial decrease from past years.

It has been announced that the ORC will be moving to the Westin Harbor Castle in 2012.

Come to the 2011 ORC and enjoy the ambiance, warmth, and Old World opulence that we have experienced for so many years at the Royal York Hotel. The 2011 committee would love to hear your fond memories from past ORC's.

I'll close with an email from a concerned member:

"Dear ORC member,

*I have been attending the annual ORC for about 20 of the past 25 years. I always thoroughly enjoy the fellowship and speakers. One thing I noticed at this year's event which disturbed me was the number of people taking photographs with their cell phones, and various other picture-taking apparati. I probably would have said something if there were one or two people doing this, but I literally saw dozens of people taking photos. Personally, I am not concerned about my own anonymity, but I do care about the newcomer and professional anonymity. I would think that some people might never come back if their picture appeared publicly. Even the voice of the ORC could have mentioned something about this. As an "old-timer" and "trusted servant", I feel this should be brought to someone's attention. The repercussions could be deadly.*

*Could you please make sure that this comment reaches the proper authorities. Thank you for your time.*

*Respectfully, Alan H."*

Something for all of us to think about....

**John H., 2011 ORC Greeters & P.I Chair**

# More Accounts from the AA World Convention

Downtown San Antonio felt like "AA City". The 70,000 AAs who came from 90+ different countries made San Antonio feel like a city of miracles. And we were a happy, grateful city of folks fully aware of the fact that we are all living a second life. The atmosphere in the many meetings taking place during the weekend was incredibly warm and supportive toward the brave folks who took to the podium to share their stories. The huge meetings in the Alamodome had an electric charge of excitement and power. I've never been more delighted to belong to this fellowship than I am after attending the 2010 World Convention. I'm saving my pennies now for the next one. See you all in Atlanta in 2015 and, until then, as they say in the south west AA, Vaya con Dios! (travel with God).

– Laurie D., Joy in Sobriety

I was expecting the 2010 World Convention to be like my first convention, when I was completely amazed, confused, excited and walking three feet off the ground. I found I was a little disappointed in San Antonio because I did not feel that "high" this time around. However, what I can say is that I felt my soul had grown in five years. I was calm, grounded and at peace with who I was today. The notion that I felt completely safe amidst 32,000 people packed in a stadium with very little security is purely miraculous. There was a knowing deep inside my soul that we were all there for the same reason, with the same goal of inner peace and love. As we all bowed our heads for a moment of silence you could hear a pin drop. When we all sang Amazing Grace together you can bet there was not a dry eye in the house. This program is a blessing and I have to keep that in the forefront of my mind: "when someone reaches out for help...I always want the hand of AA to be there."

– Kelly G., Fellowship Group

Wearing a tiny Canadian flag pin on my badge garnered lots of attention, mostly from people who had attended the World Convention here in 2005. And they loved us! It was marvellous to see the throngs of happy people all over San Antonio. We all wore our green ribboned badges everywhere so were easily identified. The Alamodome meetings were very special for the goose bumpiness they caused. I kept thinking, we're all here, alive, thanks to Bill and Dr. Bob! It turns out San Antonio was the biggest convention ever. I felt very proud, and blessed, to be trudging the road of happy destiny with so many others.

– Sandy D., Saturday Morning Discussion Group

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Were you at the 2010 World Convention in San Antonio? We want to publish your favourite memories.

What did you love? What did you learn? How did the experience make you feel?

Send your memories to the Better Times Committee at [bettertimes@aatoronto.org](mailto:bettertimes@aatoronto.org)

## Mississauga Fall Round Up:

### *The Sunlight of the Spirit*

**Date:** Saturday October 2, 2010  
**Time:** 8:00 am – 3:30 pm (approx.)  
**Location:** St Mary's Catholic Ukrainian Church,  
3625 Cawthra Road, Mississauga  
**Cost:** \$20 (\$5 for Alateen), includes lunch

One of the highlights of the day is the AA/Al-Anon family panel. Members of the same family share their unique perspectives in a powerful session that is one of the most popular events of the Mississauga Fall Round Up.

*Full article will appear in the September Better Times*

## He chose to pick up a drink

"He chose to pick up a drink", says Alf, "It's not my fault. I tried. I really tried". Heard that before?

My understanding of being an alcoholic is that of someone who has no defence against picking up that first drink.

Examples abound:

- *We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking.* – Now where did I read that?
- *This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it — this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish.* – Now where did I read that?
- *The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of choice in drink.* – Now where did I read that?

I think that a major difference between the newcomer to AA and me (and probably you, too) is that after a Spiritual Awakening, Psychic Change, or whatever you call it that comes after the 12 Steps, I do have a defence against that first drink – a Higher Power.

Bailing out a lapsed newcomer is bad for me and for AA. That's one more drunk on the street telling everyone they meet that "AA doesn't work", and yet I am living proof that it does work.

The newcomer did not choose to pick up a drink. The newcomer had no choice. No choice at all. That's why we need to take the newcomer by the hand and guide or lead or tug them into this program – if they truly want what we have.

Look back to your first few weeks of sobriety. Were you pushed, wrestled, tugged, arm-twisted or court-ordered into AA? Or were you like me – locked in a Psych Ward with no choice but to do what the nurses told me to do.

The bottom line remains – the alcoholic has no defence against that first drink. Has no choice. Has no mental power, and will-power doesn't work. The alcoholic is helpless, without help, against that first drink.

That's why we ought to carry the alcoholic to Big Book Studies, Twelve & Twelve Studies, and work hard at taking them through the Twelve Steps.

Christopher G., Member of AA

# haveyouheard

## Recent Medallions:

Dahon P.	1	Restoration and Recovery	July 2
Sylvia M.	1	Back to Basics Group	July 2
Lesley B.	5	Crossroads	July 4
Marilyn H.	20	Crossroads	July 4
Glenn G.	5	East York Group	July 6
Reno	10	Golden Mile Group	July 7
Heinz F.	5	Maple Group	July 8
Abidh K.	10	Thorncliffe Park Group	July 9
Maggie A.	1	Bayview Group	July 11
Tyler A.	1	Credit Valley Group	July 11
Barry D.	15	Midtown Group	July 11
Nazli E.	5	King City Group	July 12
Greg P.	15	Parkway Group	July 12
Michael T.	1	St. Patrick's Group	July 13
Vik M.	1	East York Group	July 13
Barry W.	5	Markland Wood Group	July 15
Marvyn W.	5	Mississauga Group	July 18
Sharon K.	10	High Park Group	July 18
John R.	1	Parkway Group	July 19
Steve K.	20	Sheppard Group	July 20
Courtney R.	30	Living Sober Group	July 20
Helen N.	35	Anniversary Group	July 21
Hamdi K.	1	Yorkville Group	July 24
Tim H.	15	Yorkville Group	July 31

## Upcoming Medallions:

Andrew D.	1	Tuesday Night Disc.	August 5
Dave McC.	5	Back to Basics	August 6
Gary L.	20	Thorncliffe Park Group	August 6
Kevin M.	1	Prince Edward Group	August 9
Happy N.	20	Mount Royal - York	August 10
Duanne F.	1	Rexdale United Group	August 12
Ellen Y.	1	Miracle Group	August 13
Marrey P.	5	Restoration & Recovery	August 13
Anne C.	5	Miracle Group	August 13

Jim G.	5	Miracle Group	August 13
John B.	15	Prince Edward Group	August 16
Lola T.	5	Anniversary Group	August 18
Tracy C.	1	Silverbirch Group	August 20
Kathy N.	1	Shepherd Group	August 24

## 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.

**Maple (C)** Tuesday 8pm (SUBURBAN NORTH) Tuesday meeting at 8pm will change to Monday at 8pm effective September 6.

**Friday Noon Women's (C)** Friday 12pm (SUBURBAN NORTH): Meeting will move to Our Lady of Grace Church at 15347 Yonge St, Aurora for July and August.

**Recovery 12 Step (C)** Saturday 11am (SUBURBAN NORTHWEST): From April 17 to September 4 the meeting will move temporarily to Central Public School Arts & Recreation Centre, 24 Alexander St., Studio D, Brampton (3 Blocks north of Queen, east of Main St.) Meeting room is on 2nd floor and is NOT wheelchair accessible.

## New Meetings:

**Silverbirch Group (C)** Monday 8pm (EAST): Silverbirch Group has added a 12&12 discussion meeting. Meeting is located at St. John's Norway Church, 470 Woodbine Avenue. This is in addition to our regular Friday night Open Meeting and Big Book discussion meetings.

## Discontinued Meetings:

**Noon (C)** Thursday 12pm (CENTRAL): Meeting has been discontinued.

**Free Spirit (O)** Saturday 8pm (SUBURBAN NORTH): This meeting has been discontinued until further notice.

## Announcements:

**16th Annual Great Lakes Gathering AA Conference** will be held July 30 – August 1 at Walpole Island Sports Complex, Walpole Island, Ontario.

**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

**Woodstock's 29th Annual Marathon of Unity Convention** will be held August 20–22 at the C.A.W. Hall, 126 Beale St. in Woodstock, Ontario. Fellowship, food & fun. For more information: visit [www.oxfordaa.com](http://www.oxfordaa.com).

**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)

**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).

**Lake of the Woods 39th Annual A.A. Roundup** will be held September 10–12 at the Best Western Lakeside Inn & Conference Centre, near 470 1st Avenue S in Kenora, ON.

**District 70 Renfrew-Pontiac Fall Conference** will be held October 9th at 115 Veteran's Memorial Boulevard in Renfrew, Ontario. For more info visit [www.aatoronto.org](http://www.aatoronto.org).

**63rd Annual Cornwall AA Conference** will be held November 5–6 at the Ramada Inn, 805 Brookdale Avenue, Cornwall, Ontario. For more information visit [ottawaaa.org](http://ottawaaa.org).

# archivesalley

## The story behind the circle and triangle logo

### Q. What is the story behind the circle and triangle logo?

**A.** The circle and triangle symbol has long been connected to the A.A. Fellowship. It was adopted as an official A.A. symbol at the International Convention in St. Louis in 1955, and from that point on was widely used in the Fellowship.

For the Fellowship, the three legs of the triangle represented the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service, and the circle symbolized the world of A.A. In Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, Bill W.'s 1955 speech, in which he describes the adoption of the symbol, is printed:

“Above us floats a banner on which is inscribed the new symbol for A.A., a circle enclosing a triangle. The circle stands for the whole world of A.A., and the triangle stands for A.A.'s Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service .Within our wonderful new world, we have found freedom

from our fatal obsession. That we have chosen this particular symbol is perhaps no accident. The priests and seers of antiquity regarded the circle enclosing the triangle as a means of warding off the spirits of evil, and A.A.'s circle and triangle of Recovery, Unity, and Service has certainly meant all of that to us and much more.” (p. 139)

Nevertheless, in the early 1990s, A.A.W.S. decided to phase out the use of the circle and triangle symbol on its literature, letterhead and other material. In 1994 the General Service Conference resolved that the logo be discontinued on all Conference-approved literature. However, the symbol is still associated with Alcoholics Anonymous (and other kinds of 12-Step recovery fellowships) and has a special meaning for A.A. members all over the world.

# June 2010: Intergroup Report

**Chair's Opening Remarks:** John C. (Half Century), Executive Committee Chair – GTAI subcommittees need support /attendance from both District Chairs and new volunteers.

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

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
<b>May</b>	\$16,724	\$12,992	\$3,732
<b>Comp. to Budget</b>	5,179	-7,546	12,725
<b>Year to Date</b>	\$186,536	\$176,404	\$10,132
<b>Comp. to Budget</b>	118,672	84,549	34,173

Group donations in June increased significantly. As of July 1st, HST at 13% will be applied to all items we sell, other than books and audio/video versions of books. Books, cassettes, DVDs, and CDs that are audio/video versions of books will continue to have only GST applied.

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

**Access Ability:** Cathy Z., Chairperson – We were at People in Motion June 4 & 5 which is a large event catering to people with mobility issues. Committee members have been tasked with reviewing wheel chair access at the meetings in their district. It is important to ensure that the room the meeting is held in is accessible and that there are washrooms available. Would also like groups that have wheel chair access to post instructions on how to get into the meeting in the notes section for their meeting online.

**Archives:** Roy R. (Trial & Error), past Chairperson – Pleased to announce new Archives Chair is Gord H. (Bloordale). 'Bobby D. Day' will be held on Oct. 3, location TBA. The annual Archives breakfast will be held Nov. 7, tickets will be available next month.

**Corrections:** Phil M. (Bloordale), Executive Committee Liaison – Dist. 22 reports that things are working well at the East Detention Center and they are busily preparing for their District's Service Day in September. Dist.18 shared that meetings at the Don are mostly going well, with the exception of poorly-attended PC meetings, but hope that they will right themselves in the near future. Probation and Parole Office meetings are going well after a few 'wrinkles' were ironed out regarding suiting up and showing up. Dist.06 is happy to report that at Mimico both the meetings for fulltime inmates and the meetings for weekenders are doing well, and that Grapevines and pocket-size Big Books are being well-received. Area 83 informed us that GSO is seeking stories from inside the jails to be included in the Newsletter "Sharing from Behind the Walls". Submissions are to be sent to GSO. The chair, with the help of Jim M. of the Corrections desk at GSO am communicating with Bob S. of Dist.60 in Pennsylvania to learn about their correspondence program, which is geared more towards short-term inmates, such as we have in the GTA.

**CPC:** Phil M. (Bloordale), Executive Committee Liaison – Committee will not meet in the summer months, but will continue to communicate via e-mail.

**Info AA Day 2010:** Phil M. (Bloordale), 2010 Event Chair – Event went well, though attendance was lower than previous years. Final figures to come.

**ORC 2011:** No report. Meetings will resume in September.

**Public Information:** Phil M. (Bloordale), Executive Committee Liaison – The committee continues its initiative to supply Big Books in high schools and libraries. Also there is an idea to provide schools with the Beginner Pamphlet and GTAI business cards. The vetting process for P.I. with regards to carrying the message in schools is still in ongoing. It was reported that the new P.I. posters geared towards young people are being well-received. This committee will not meet in the summer months, but will continue to communicate via e-mail.

**Treatment Facilities:** Trevor O. (Mississauga), Executive Committee Liaison – The committee still pursues the 'Bridging the Gap' initiative. The table expressed positive feedback regarding the idea of a toll-free number.

**Twelfth Step:** Tom S. (Saturday Morning Discussion), incoming Chairperson – Tom thanked all for the opportunity to serve as Chair. He explained that the

phones are one of the first points of contact with AA. Tom reported that there was a Motion to look into an auto-dial option on the phones regarding 12 Step work; also, the committee is looking at the possibility of a 24-hour service. The committee is looking for volunteers for the phones and for Greeter Captains. To do the phones, members must have one year of continuous sobriety plus have done a phone training session. To be a Greeter Captain, anyone can do the work of this task; you don't need to be on the Twelfth Step committee to be a volunteer. Greeter Captains monitor the flow of the monthly schedule, and make sure all shifts are manned properly. This is a month-long commitment.

**Website/BetterTimes:** Aaron K. (Yorkville), Chairperson – The Better Times always welcomes your submissions and announcements. Please have them in by the 10th of the month for BT publication, and anytime for the website. There are many copies of the Newsletter at the back; if you have not picked up your copies, there are available for free!

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

As per instructions from the Floor, the Executive Committee contacted our long-distance supplier (Allstream) regarding the 1-800 number initiative. We can get 1000-2000 minutes each month for \$50/month. This will provide us with a toll-free number from anywhere in Ontario, and there is no set-up charge. The number will be available (guaranteed) by July 15. We will confirm the number by the July General Meeting. We will also be investigating the cost of putting this number in the white pages for the GTA and York Region.

## NEW BUSINESS

Marvyn W. (Mississauga) brought up the issue of a meeting in the Central listings called The Good Neighbours Club Drop-In Meeting (an Open Service meeting open to all alcoholics) held on Fridays at 4 p.m. This is a facility for homeless men over the age of 50. According to Marvyn, the director of the Centre (Kelly) reported that attendance has been poor. Maryvn has made the commitment to take care of chairing/providing speakers for June18, June 25, and July 2. Who handles this meeting? Megan (Yorkville) confirmed that attendance has been poor, and also asked who was responsible for this meeting. Dee T. (Streetsville) shared that, as a service meeting, it is autonomous usually and handled by various members (a steering committee of AA members). Joy (Welcome) stated that she will bring this item to her group and will also contact Kelly at the Centre.

Tracy (Anniversary) mentioned the daily rate idea for the ORC that was discussed at the May General Meeting. Her group suggested that an alternative registration fee for Saturdays be available for \$20, in addition to the usual \$30 weekend rate. John promised he would bring this up for discussion with the ORC 2011 Chair (Roger L.) and report back to the Floor.

## OVERHEARD AT A MEETING!

HEY BUDDY, COULD YOU BE THE SPEAKER AT THE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY THIS WEEK? I THINK YOU HAVE A GREAT MESSAGE AND I CAN GUARANTEE THAT YOU'LL HAVE A CAPTIVE AUDIENCE!



by DAVE N.

Idea submitted by  
AUSTIN R.