

# BETTER TIMES

December 2010

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**BETTER TIMES** Published monthly for AA members in the Greater Toronto Area. 234 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 202, Toronto, ON M4P 1K5  
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Each year since 1944, over 300 AA people gather to greet newcomers, fellow members to attend meetings, listen to music, and enjoy a Holiday Seasonal Dinner.

**THE 2010 WINTER SEASON OPEN HOUSE**

- Four 45 minute Topic Closed Discussion Meetings start at 10:30 AM
- Keynote Speaker 1:00 PM
- Live Music for one hour at 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
- Al-Anon, AA Open Speaker Meeting 2:30 PM
- Holiday Seasonal Turkey and Ham Dinner with all the Trimmings from 11:00 AM
- Coffee, tea and sweets available throughout the day

Saturday December 25th, 2010

10:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Emmanuel-Howard Park United Church,  
 Roncesvalles & Wright Avenue  
 (Northwest Corner-214 Wright Ave)

**DIRECTIONS**

TTC - Take subway to Dundas West Station then board 504 Streetcar or take the westbound 504 Streetcar west along King Street W.

**VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED**

Cooks, Greeters, Set-up, Car Pool Drivers, and Musical Talent.

**PLEASE CONTACT**

[winter@aatoronto.org](mailto:winter@aatoronto.org)  
 or 647-992-8592



## SPIRITUAL NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE AND BUFFET

Friday, December 31, 2010  
 Holy Rosary Parish Hall  
 356 St. Clair Ave. W.  
 Toronto, Ontario

Friday December 31, 2010. East of Bathurst (St. Clair West subway station).  
 Open AA & Al-Anon meetings at 8:30 pm. Dance and Pot Luck Buffet in the hall at 10 pm. Gratitude Service at 11:15 pm. Admission \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. Pot Luck! Please bring food to share. For tickets or to volunteer.  
 John P (Welcome) 416-460-7956, Craig M (Stepping Stones) 416-603-9548.

## MEMBERS SHARE SOME OF THEIR FAVOURITE TIPS FOR HOLIDAY SOBRIETY

- Make sure you go to the parties where you feel comfortable with the people so that you can spend time interacting not thinking of drinking.
- PRAY for sobriety before you go and get out of yourself by talking to others. Replace booze with people.

— Jane C., St. Clement's Group

- At a party, discreetly mark your glass – or bring your own – so you don't inadvertently pick up one full of holiday "spirit."

— Anne H., Pine Hills Group

- Stay away from that first drink.
- Talk to your sponsor.
- Find one thing to be grateful for; then find more.
- Pay attention to H.A.L.T. – don't get too hungry, too angry, too lonely or too tired.
- And remember – it wasn't the drinking between Christmas and New Year's that led us to AA. It was the drinking between New Year's (this year) and Christmas (next year)!

— Betty M., Erin Mills Group

- Going to Regent Park and being of service to those less fortunate at the Regent Park Christmas Dinner.
- Going to lots of Candlelight Meetings and listening to the gratitude around the rooms, or even the people in pain who know going to meetings and being among others will help.

— Charlene S., Bellamy Group

- My tip would be go to meetings! You will see other people in recovery and feel more inspired to keep the gift of sobriety!

— Carol P., Shepherd Group

- Look for another alcoholic to stay sober with.
- Be tolerant of other people, support your family and friends. Remember what you were like in the past, think of the people you harmed and try to make amends. Staying sober can itself be an amends.
- Meetings, meetings, meetings!
- **Avoid dancing with the tall woman in the green dress with all the jewelry, it might be the Christmas tree! You'll never live it down.**

— Aaron K., Yorkville Group



# THE 2011 ONTARIO REGIONAL CONFERENCE (ORC)

March 18, 19, 20  
The Fairmont Royal York  
100 Front Street West,  
Toronto, Ontario

## The Great Fact

The 2011 Ontario Regional Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel from March 18<sup>th</sup> to March 20<sup>th</sup>. The theme of the conference is **The Great Fact**.

There are two references to the Great Fact in the Big Book – Alcoholics Anonymous. The first one is on page 25 in the Chapter, There is A Solution:

“The **great fact** is just this and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God’s universe.”

The second, and perhaps more well known reference, appears on page 164 in A Vision for You:

“Our book is meant to be suggestive only. We realize that we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven’t got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the **great fact** for us.”

Join us at the ORC to hear what our many speakers from around North America have to share about this hopeful message. As always, there will be full AA, Al-Anon and Alateen programs.

Registration fees remain the same and we are very pleased to announce that the Royal York has offered us a reduced room rate of \$159 per night.

For registration or more information, visit the ORC page (under Events) at [www.aatoronto.org](http://www.aatoronto.org).

Barbara H.  
PI & Greeters Coordinator  
ORC 2011

# haveyouheard

## Recent Medallions:

Andy C.	5	Bathurst Group	November 1
Jeannine S.	10	Prince Edward Group	November 1
Dave P.	15	Unionville Group	November 3
Ed H.	25	Twelve Steps Group	November 3
Gail P.	10	Unionville Group	November 3
Patrick O.	5	New Anchor Group	November 4
Terry H.	1	Markland Wood Group	November 4
Mike R.	10	Prince Edward Group	November 8
Jessica A.	5	Shepherd Group	November 9
Cheryl S.	1	Unionville Group	November 10
Kait T.	1	Stepping Stones Group	November 13
Kevin I.	1	Glenholme Group	November 15
Sonja T.	10	East York Group	November 16
Barb H.	5	Unionville Group	November 17
Norm P.	20	Golden Mile Group	November 17
Harriet (?)	1	Silverbirch Group	November 19
Jennifer P.	1	Silverbirch Group	November 19
Bernadette M.	20	King City Group	November 22
Mary T.	35	Prince Edward Group	November 22
Norman S.	20	Glenholme Group	November 22
Cattarina B.	5	Anniversary Group	November 24
Mike E.	1	Unionville Group	November 24
Bob C.	20	Chartwell Group	November 25
Helen F.	20	Chartwell Group	November 25
Max A.	1	Markland Wood Group	November 25
George M.	15	Silverbirch Group	November 26
Michelle M.	1	Stepping Stones Group	November 27
Alex X.	1	Prince Edward Group	November 29
Glen H.	5	Prince Edward Group	November 29
Kathy P.	35	Nothing Else Worked Group	November 30

## Upcoming Medallions:

Gord J.	5	Primary Purpose Group	December 1
Alexx V.	15	Stepping Stones Group	December 4
Jamie B.	15	Keep It Simple Group	December 5
Debbie M.	20	Beaches Group	December 7
Mike G.	5	Unionville Group	December 8
Tony D.	1	Silverbirch Group	December 10
Tracy R.	5	Anniversary Group	December 15
Jean L.	35	Bloodale Group	December 17
Mark B.	1	Unionville Group	December 22
Kevin C.	1	Fellowship Group	December 27
Jerrey M.	1	Maple Group	December 30

## Discontinued Meetings:

**973 (C) Thursday 7:30pm (CENTRAL):** Meeting has been discontinued.

**Augusta Discussion (O) Tuesday 5:30pm (CENTRAL):** Meeting cancelled until further notice.

**End of the Line Discussion (C) Wednesday 8:15pm (EAST):** Meeting is cancelled until further notice.

**Joyful Steps to Recovery (C) Wednesday 3pm (EAST):** Meeting cancelled until further notice.

**Willingness to Work (O) Thursday 8pm (SUBURBAN NORTHEAST):** Meeting has been discontinued.

## Meeting Changes:

**Glenholme (?) Monday 8:00pm:** Glenholme Group meeting December 20, 2010 will be cancelled.

**Melrose (?) Saturday 2:30pm:** Melrose Group meeting is cancelled December 25, 2010.

**Miracle Discussion (?) Friday 12:15pm: Temporary Relocation:** Miracle Discussion Group will be moving to Calvin Presbyterian Church, one block south, Friday November 26, 2010 only.

**One Day At A Time (?) Sunday 8:00pm: Holiday Meeting cancellation:** One Day at a Time Sunday meeting will be cancelled December 26, 2010 only.

**Spirit Of Saturday Night (?) Saturday 8:00pm: Change of group name:** Oakville West Discussion Group has changed it's name to Spirit of Saturday Night and added an open meeting at 9:30pm know as the Spirit of Saturday Night-Night Owl meeting.

**Stepping Stones Disc. (?) Saturday 8:00pm: Temporary cancellation:** Stepping Stones meeting December 11, 2010 will be cancelled.

**Sunday Northwestern (?) Sunday 11:00am: Temporary holiday cancellation:** Sunday Northwestern Group meeting will be cancelled Sunday December 26, 2010 only.

## Announcements:

**The Literature Department** will be closed for holidays and inventory from Friday Dec. 24, 2010 to Monday January 3, 2011 inclusive. Please get your literature orders if they need to be shipped and medallion orders in by December 10th . Shipping can be delayed by seasonal volumes at the post office.

**GTA Intergroup office staff** will be on holiday from Friday December 24, 2010 to Monday January 3, 2011. Best wishes of the season to all from Alexx, Helen, Gregg and Judy.

# archivesalley

## Frequently Asked Questions About the *Big Book*

### Where did the *Big Book* get its nickname?

When Alcoholics Anonymous was published, the founding members wanted purchasers to be sure they were getting their money's worth. So they instructed the printer to run the job on the thickest paper he had. "The original volume proved to be so bulky that it became known as the '*Big Book*,'" Bill W. said.

### Where did the custom of reading from Chapter 5 at the beginning of meetings get started?

A man by the name of Mort J. sobered up in 1939 solely from reading the *Big Book*. He moved to Los Angeles in 1940, and at his own expense rented a meeting room in the Cecil Hotel. He "insisted on a reading from Chapter 5 of the A.A. book

at the start of every session," according to *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* (page 93). The practice took root on the West Coast and spread from there.

### Who are the recipients of the milestone printing copies of the *Big Book*?

At the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary International Convention in Montreal in 1985, the five-millionth copy was presented to Ruth Hock, who typed draft after draft of the original manuscript. The one-millionth copy was presented to President Richard Nixon in April 1973; the two-millionth to Joseph Califano in June 1979; the ten-millionth to Nell Wing, Bill W.'s longtime (nonalcoholic) secretary and A.A.'s first archivist, in July 1990. The 15-millionth was given to Ellie Norris, widow of former trustee chairman John L. Norris, M.D., in 1996; and in the year 2000, the 20-millionth copy was presented to the Al-Anon

Family Groups. The 25-millionth copy was presented to Jill Brown, warden of San Quentin Prison, in July 2005, at the A.A. International Convention in Toronto.

### How much has the price of the *Big Book* risen since 1939?

The original price of the *Big Book* was \$3.50; the hardcover Fourth Edition is now \$8.

### Who wrote the "*To Wives*" chapter?

Bill W. wrote that chapter. According to his wife, Lois, she wanted to write it but Bill "insisted" on doing it himself. "I was mad," she said, adding, not "so much mad as hurt." The reason he gave for wanting to write the chapter himself, said Lois, was that "he thought it should be in the same style as the rest of the book." (*Pass It On*, page 200)

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Better Times is looking for a new Co-Editor!

Do you enjoy writing? Do you have any great stories ideas for Better Times? Looking to get involved in service? Contact us for more info at [bettertimes@aatoronto.org](mailto:bettertimes@aatoronto.org) if you are interested in this great service position.

# October '10: Intergroup Report

**Finance Report:** Don M. (Hill), Finance Chair – Finance Report for September 2010

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
September	\$35,517	\$23,231	\$12,286
Comp. to Budget	4,754	3,436	1,386
Year to Date	\$269,185	\$243,641	\$25,544
Comp. to Budget	19,561	-24,502	44,213

**Prudent Reserve as of September 30, 2010:** Book value + accrued interest: \$238,011.

**Notes:** ORC impact on Income Statement has been adjusted and now is only reflected as surplus in income and an overrun in net income; accounting for HST, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, has increased sales by 2% for books and 5.2% for all other sales. Offsetting this impact COGS and expense accounts have increased by 2.5% for books and 3.9% on all other purchases; statements do not include ORC prepaid expenses or deferred revenues for September 2010.

**MOTION** to adopt Finance Report as presented moved by Dee T. (Streetsville) and seconded by Nicholas (Responsibility). **MOTION CARRIED.**

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

**ACCESS ABILITY:** Cathy Z., Chairperson: The Access Ability was grateful to be a part of District 22's service day. I'd like to remind everyone to notify Intergroup if your group is wheelchair accessible and if your group allows ASL interpreters. It is important to ensure that the meeting room is accessible and washrooms are available. Meetings cannot be designated as accessible without washrooms. Groups with wheelchair access are asked to post instructions on how to get into the meeting in the notes section for their meeting online. Items like which door to arrive at and where the ramp is are important to know ahead of time. We will not be meeting in December.

**ARCHIVES:** Gord H. (Bloordale), Chairperson: On Oct. 3, "AA Through the Eyes of an AA Member": Bobby D., which was an amazing collection of information Bobby kept of all meetings for almost 50 years. This material will be stored in the Archives repository at the Intergroup office. Also mentioned, the first Eastern Arctic Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous which will be held on June 24 and 25, 2011. Members interested can contact Gord as travel arrangements are in process. Questions: Bev (Rover Drive Park) inquired about collection the oral histories of 'long timers': how is this done? Gord answered that this is arranged through the District Archives Chairs, or members can contact Gord directly. Usually these are members with 35 or more years of sobriety.

**CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES:** Phil G. (Mississauga), Chairperson: The monthly meeting is held at 234 at 7:30pm on the first Monday of the month. Electronic reports were received from Districts 02, 18, and 22 and are included along with a Dist.06 report. For the full text of these reports, please see the minutes posted on the AA Intergroup website. At year end Phil will be rotating out of the Dist.06 Corrections Chair position. Unless there is someone anxious to do the GTA Corrections Chair job I would be very happy to continue. There are a number of initiatives that I am eager to pursue. The Keele Centre is in a state of flux and needs to be addressed.

**COOPERATION with the PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC):** No report at this time.

**INFORMATION AA DAY 2011:** Scott M. (Bloordale), committee member: Scott read a report from the Info AA Day Chair, Vince R.: As we stated last month, the theme for this year will be "Pass It On"; however, I should have added that the full theme is 'The Only Requirement: Pass It On'. The event is shaping up nicely but we do need to fill the position of Lunch Coordinator. If anyone is interested, please email infoaaday@aatontario.org.

**ONTARIO REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2011:** Roger L. (Welcome), 2011 Event Chair: The Conference Theme is 'The Great Fact' and will be held March 18, 19, and 20 at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Posters and Registration forms were made available to everyone at tonight's meeting. Please remember to bring them back to your group. Registration and banquet cost will remain the same as last year: \$30.00 for registration and \$60.00 extra for the banquet. On line registration will be available next year. We are hoping to have that set up and running by mid / end of November. Monthly draws will be held for all who pre register. Hotel room rates

have been reduced next year to \$159.00 per night. Please indicate "ORC" when reserving a room. Volunteer Signup sheets will be available at November's meeting. The Committee will require the help of all the Intergroup reps with this as we need approximately 200 greeters. If you have any questions or concerns for the 2011 committee, please call 416-640-1905 or email at orc@aatontario.org. Both are listed on the front of the flyer. Any questions / concerns regarding the 2012 conference can be sent to orc2012@aatontario.org.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION:** Vivien C. (Fellowship), Chairperson: We met last Monday on Oct.18 for our Workshop "Speaking at Non-AA Meetings". Attendance was good (14) but only one young person (under 25) was present, which we need for the schools. Six months' sobriety is required. Unfortunately – although we had a few requests to participate in Health Fairs – we missed the deadlines because we did not get the information in time. We have resolved this with our web servant and now have a P.I. email box (this was due to not meeting in the summer and not picking up our mail from 234). There are lots of events coming up over the next few months, so if anyone is interested in getting involved with P.I., please send us an email: publicinfo@aatontario.org. We need help in distributing Beginner's pamphlets (through the Folder and Holder campaign) to the following places (with their consent): food banks, drop-in centres, community centres, dentist offices, criminal/family lawyers offices, YMCA/YWCA, guidance offices, emergency rooms, shelters, doctor's offices, community health clinics, independent pharmacists, or Salvation Army meal van. Members don't need to be on the P.I. committee to distribute these. They can be ordered at the 234 literature department (cost is \$7 which includes a holder for the pamphlets + 200 pamphlets).

**RECEPTION:** Glenn C. (East York), Executive committee member: Those present this evening are 8 Executive Committee members, 2 staff, 4 District Liaisons, 5 Subcommittee Chairs, 35 reps, 7 alternates, and 8 guests. Total group representation is 39. Glenn asked that members continue the discussion with their groups on the possible reformatting of the Meeting Directory Booklet from its current size to 3 inches in height (the reason for this change so that it can fit into a pocket). There will be more information next month about the cost difference for possible reformatting (changing the format will cost more).

**TWELFTH STEP:** Tom S. (Saturday Morning Discussion), Chairperson: We are still moving ahead with the technology and the computers regarding the phone remote access, etc. to provide better access to our information through various sources (texting, etc.). Questions: the Rep from the Hill Group brought up the concern of the caller I.D. feature on the phones at 234 out of concern for the spirit of anonymity. Is caller I.D. necessary? Tom's answer: the way that the phone provider works is that, once the call is through electronically, the service system delivery already has the number, so it's just a matter of whether they display it on our screen or not. This is way that the system is set up. In terms of having to do an 'override' with the tech people providing the system delivery, we would have to overhaul our system. This would incur complications and costs. There is no extra cost for the display feature. Gord H. (Bloordale) can't see a problem with this because, as trusted servants and members (including phone greeters), we don't take names to the outside. If a name shows up on the caller display, this is a member of AA. Dee T. (Streetsville) concurred, adding that, as a trusted servant and phone greeter, people phoning in don't know we have call display.

**WEBSITE/BETTER TIMES:** Aaron K. (Yorkville), Chairperson: BT welcomes your submissions and ideas. Please have them in by the 10th of every month. Please take notice of this month's insert 'Things We Cannot Change'. This is a forum where we may honour those members who have passed away in the past year. Please have them returned by Jan.10, 2011 for the February issue's inclusion. On our website, the Google map of AA listings has a new feature: to enlarge the map to full screen, just click where marked. A new feature on the main page has a Help feature next to the phone number. All emails are forwarded to the Twelfth Step Committee. Next meeting: Sat. Nov.13 at 1 p.m. at 234.

**WINTER SEASON OPEN HOUSE:** Vlad G. (Mississauga), 2010 Event Chair: Everything is on schedule.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS from Previous Meetings:** No unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS:** No new business. Meeting adjourned with the Responsibility Pledge.

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

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