

From the Editor

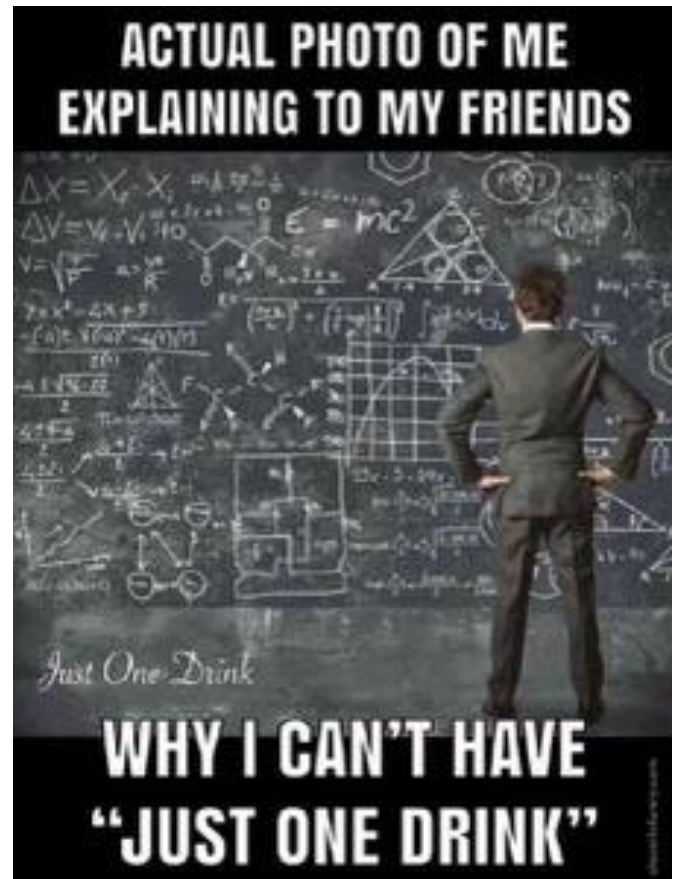
The AA Promises are found on pages 83-84 of the Big Book. The promises are not numbered in the Big Book. In some presentations of the promises, promise 1 is "We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness", and promise 3 is "We will comprehend the word serenity" and 4 is "We will know peace". However, in other presentations, promise 1 is "If we are painstaking about this phase or our development..." and promises 3 and 4 of the former presentations are merged as one.

We will take promise two to be "We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it" and some attention will be given to promise two in this month's *ECO Newsletter*.

Another theme of this February issue is the idea that "alcoholism is a disease". We have an article by a local member, Dave F. of the Reflections Group, in which he reflects on Dr. Silkworth's at that time novel theory that alcoholics have a biological "allergy" to alcohol that ordinary, temperate drinkers do not have. A second article published last year in the Washinton Post is presented here entitled "How a struggling socialite convinced the world alcoholism is a disease".

As usual we have a little humor to brighten your day. Enjoy! Keep warm! Spring will come!

In service and with gratitude,
Julia J., Editor ECO Newsletter



An alcoholic like myself can easily communicate to another alcoholic why I cannot have just one drink. But it is extraordinarily complicated for me to explain this same concept to someone who does not have a drinking problem.

"These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all; and once having formed the habit and found they cannot break it, once having lost their self-confidence, their reliance upon things human, their problems pile up on them and become astonishingly difficult to solve." AA The Doctor's Opinion, p.xxviii

STEP TWO

“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

The moment they read Step Two, most A.A. newcomers are confronted with a dilemma, sometimes a serious one. How often have we heard them cry out, “Look what you people have done to us”! You have convinced us that we are alcoholics and that our lives are unmanageable. Having reduced us to a state of absolute helplessness, you now declare that none but a Higher Power can remove our obsession. Some of us *won't* believe in God, others can't, and still others who do believe that God exists have no faith whatever He will perform this miracle. Yes, you've got us over the barrel, all right—but where do we go from here?”

TWELVE STEPS and TWELVE TRADITIONS p. 25

TRADITION TWO

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers? 2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibilities? 3. Do I look for credit in my AA jobs, praise for my AA ideas? 4. Do I often feel the need to “save face” in group discussions, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work along with it? 5. Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn with AA chores? 6. Do I complain about the decisions that my group makes, even though I do not attend the business meetings where these decisions are made? (from AA Grapevine Traditions Checklist)

CONCEPT TWO

The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.

- Do we have an understanding of history of the General Service Conference?
- What is a Conference Advisory Action? Does our home group's G.S.R., D.C.M., area delegate report back to the group on the highlights of the Conference and Conference Advisory Actions?
- Is our group meeting its wider Seventh Tradition responsibilities?

PROMISE TWO

“We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.”

What man does not want to make peace with his past?

How many of us enter recovery with a deep feeling of shame for how we have lived?

How many of us are confused about what we have done and what that might mean about who we are?



“It’s an UNDO button”.

Cartoon by Kate Curtis. All of Kate’s cartoons can be found on her blog at <http://cluestolife.wordpress.com>.

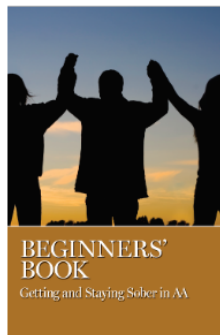
If only there was an undo button, but we in AA make amends for our misdeeds and learn how to do better in the future. How we wish we had said or done something differently, that we had spent more time with family and friends, and that we had given someone something of ourselves when they needed it most, but, no matter how far down we have gone, we begin to see how our experiences can benefit others. We practice Step 10 continuing to take personal inventory and promptly admitting when we are wrong. Hence we have less and less need for an undo button. We live more in reality and avoid wishful thinking.

GRAPEVINE Daily Quote

February 25, 2022

“I was told by a sober member of AA that if I wanted to stay sober I would need to do three things: get a sobriety date and don’t change it, get a sponsor, and get a home group.”

“Three Essentials,” Glendale, California, March 2002, *Beginner’s Book: Getting and Staying Sober in AA*



“Just my luck to be found by a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.”

The Twelve Promises

The 12 AA Promises offer a list of lights at the end of the tunnel, giving you things to look forward to as you continue on your path to recovery. They read as follows:

Promise One: We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.

Promise Two: We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.

Promise Three: We will comprehend the word serenity.

Promise Four: We will know peace.

Promise Five: No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.

Promise Six: That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.

Promise Seven: We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.

Promise Eight: Self-seeking will slip away.

Promise Nine: Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.

Promise Ten: Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us.

Promise Eleven: We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.

Promise Twelve: We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

BIRTHDAY CLUB

None this Month

“What is the Birthday Club?”

- A show of gratitude by AA members, who contribute \$1.00 or more for each year of continuous sobriety.
- These funds are used to HELP SUPPORT Central Office staff and volunteers to carry the Twelfth Step message during the office hours.
- You will receive personal Birthday Card on your sobriety date.
- Please contact Central Office, if you want to join our **BIRTHDAY CLUB!**

#205, 10544 – 114 St., Edmonton, AB
T5H 3J7 780-424—5900

FAITHFUL FIVERS

None this Month

The Faithful Fiver Club was initiated several years ago to generate funds for Central Office. AA members pledge a donation of \$5.00 or more a month. They then receive the satisfaction of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, and recognition (if they desire) in the monthly ECOS Newsletter.

“The Promises written into the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, describe precisely what you can expect by applying the principles learned for the 12 Step process. The AA Program as it is outlined in the Big Book, has been around since 1939 and has saved the lives of more than 3,000,000 people worldwide and made the lives of countless families repair the wreckage of their past and rebuild their lives together.”

The Promises of Alcoholics Anonymous
Seth Goodman

CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDMONTON CENTRAL OFFICE

In keeping with the AA Seventh Tradition of self-support, Edmonton Central Office can accept contributions only from AA members and AA Groups.

Contributions can be made to Edmonton Central Office by any of the following methods (AA members or groups only please):

- **E-transfer to centraloffice@edmontonaa.org** you will need to provide the answer to the security question via a separate email to this address.
- Visa or MasterCard either over the phone (780-424-5900) or in person (by appointment)
- Cheque made payable to "Edmonton Central Office" and brought to the office (by appointment) or mailed to the office at:

Edmonton Central Office
Suite 205
10544 114 St NW
Edmonton, AB T5H 3J7

- Cash brought to the office (by appointment).
- Arranging on-going monthly contributions by calling or emailing Central Office

The Edmonton Central Office Society is a registered charity. A tax receipt will be issued early in 2022 to individuals whose contribution is greater than \$20.00. For a receipt to be issued, the full name and address of the individual is needed. The receipt will indicate a contribution to the Edmonton Central Office Society.

Note: You can phone Central Office weekdays from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. If you need to visit Central Office, please arrange an appointment by phone or email.

Happy
Valentine's
Day



A hungover and anxious man entered a florist shop and said. "I need a bouquet beautiful enough to go with a very lame excuse."

On the first day of college, the Dean addressed the students pointing out a few rules. Drinking in the dorms is not allowed. Anybody caught breaking this rule the first time will be fined \$60. The second time will be \$90. The third time will be \$180. The dean then asked if there were any questions. A student replied "How much for a seasons pass?"





Group Birthdays February 2023

A New Way of Life

Last Monday

Feb 17 Ryan 1 yr
 3 Larry V. 36 yrs
 21 Jeff B. 9 yrs
 26 Brian D. 5 yrs

60 Minutes to Sobriety

Last Sunday

None

Bonnie Doon

Thursday 8:00

Feb 11 Dan R. 40 yrs
 19 George B. 48 yrs

Breathe Easy

First Friday

Feb Davin T. 9 yrs
 Bruce M. 10 yrs

Fellowship Breakfast

Last Saturday

Feb 15 Misty M. 3 yrs

Gratitude

Last Monday

Feb 11 Octavus 3 yrs
 28 Barry W. 4 yrs

Jasper Place

Last Tuesday None

Last Call

Last Wednesday

None

Mustard Seed

Last Sunday

Feb 5 Debra S. 33 yrs
 5 Dar 28 yrs
 25 Peter N. 5 yrs

Oilman's

First Monday

None

South Side

Third Friday

Feb 14 Karen W. 18 yrs
 25 Andy R. 18 yrs

12 Steps to Serenity

None

Step Sisters

Last Wednesday

None



WEM

First Wednesday

Feb 8 Ravi S. 11 yrs
 8 James H. 19 yrs

Westminster

Last Saturday

Feb 4 Linda V. 47 yrs
 20 Brenda B. 26 yrs
 21 Steve K. 48 yrs

St. Albert

Breakfast

Feb 5 Ken M. 27 yrs
 13 Walter H. 45 yrs
 13 Janice B. 11 yrs
 21 Fay D. 52 yrs

Back to Basics

First Thursday

None

Sunday Night

Last Sunday

Feb 11 Eddy B. 4 yrs

Please send members lists

editor@edmontonaa.org

or update your members list

at AA Central Office.

Upcoming Events and other Notables



Mark your calendars!

District 40's Annual

Beat the Midwinter Blues Roundup

"I am responsible..."

February 3-4, 2023
Rio Terrace Moravian Church, 15108 76 Ave., Edmonton

Tickets \$40 - includes speakers, dinner Saturday night, hours of fellowship, 50/50 draw, workshops and more!

- Contact Trish at 780-722-8846

Guest speakers and panelists:

- **Mike M., Past Delegate, Cedar Rapids, IA**
- **Dave S., Area 78 Chair**

Stay Tuned! More details to come!



14 Week Step Series
January 23, 2023 at 7:00 pm

MOSAIC HOUSE (Basement)

6811 – 92A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta

14 Week Tradition Series

Wednesday January, 18, 2023

Location: Mosaic House Church

6811-92A Avenue

TIME: 7:00pm – 8:00pm

WESTERN CANADA REGION ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SERVICE ASSEMBLY

WRAASA 2023

"A.A.'s Three Legacies – Our Common Solution"

February 24-26, 2023 | Edmonton, AB

WRASSA 2023 is hosted by Area 78 in Edmonton, AB with support from the Areas of the Western Canada Region.

The purpose of WRAASA is to develop greater unity among the members, groups, and areas of the Western Canada Region; to encourage the exchange of ideas and experience; and to provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Assembly and the WRAASA Committee foster the legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service in Alcoholics Anonymous. *ALL members of Alcoholics Anonymous are welcome and encouraged to attend this Service Assembly.*

\$35 Registration and/or \$25 Saturday Banquet

(Eventbrite service fees apply)

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/wraasa-2023>

****Edmonton Inn Rates****

- Standard: One Queen (Incl. One Breakfast Buffet) = **\$104
- Standard: Two Queen (Incl. One Breakfast Buffet) = **\$109
- Parlour Suite (Incl. One Breakfast Buffet) = **\$135

****Each Additional Person/Room = +\$10 Per Person for Breakfast Buffet (MANDATORY)**

BREAKFAST BUFFET INCLUDES: Coffee, Tea, Juice | Fresh Fruit | Granola, Cereal, Oatmeal | Parfait Station | Toast, Muffins, Pastries | Scrambled Eggs | Hashbrowns | Bacon, Sausage | Make Your Own Waffles (whipped cream and strawberries)

Spirit of the North

Sunday and Wednesday
7:00 PM Mountain Time
Monday 7:00pm is a
big book study

(Personal Meeting ID):

942-603-2414

Passcode: billw

These are Open meetings, particularly for those who cannot make it to a face to face meeting. We especially welcome those located in remote areas, newcomers and also those who have limited accessibility and special needs.

43rd Annual District 64 Round-Up

Circles of Love and Service

With Al-Anon participation

March 31st and April 1st, 2023



CIRCLES OF LOVE AND SERVICE*



Friday, March 31st, 2023

- 6:30p Doors Open / Registration Fellowship/Refreshments
- 7:30 **AA Speaker:**
Kevin O. (Calgary, AB)
- 8:45 Ice Cream Social

Saturday, April 1st, 2023

- 8:30a Doors Open / Registration
- 9:00 Open AA Call-Up Meetings
Open Al-Anon Meeting
- 10:30 **Founders (AA History)**
Interactive Presentation: Kevin O.
- 12:00 Luncheon by Donation
(Hosted by Al-Anon)
- 1:00 **Al-Anon Speaker:**
Donna J (Onoway)
- 2:00 Break
- 2:30 **AA Speaker:**
Don M. (Winnipeg, MB)
- 4:00 **Entertainment:**
Danny Floyd Cole
- 6:00 Buffet Dinner
Countdown – AA & Al-Anon
- 7:30 **Keynote AA Speaker –**
Martin A. (Hamilton, ON)
- 8:30 50-50 /Raffle draws

St. Albert United Church

20 Green Grove Drive

St. Albert, AB

**TICKETS (2023):
\$40.00**

Available now!

Coffee/Tea – 7th Tradition
Beverages and snacks available

**FOR TICKETS OR MORE
INFORMATION:**

Chantal M (780) 953-0617

Arlene B (780) 604-0472

Danielle A (780) 445-0127

RECOVERY/UNITY/SERVICE

THIS IS A SCENT FREE EVENT!

Groups Needing Support

- Mon – AB Group in Belgravia
- Mon – Chapter-Oilmen's Group
- Mon – Eastwood Group
- Tue – Jellinek Sunrise Light Luncheon Meeting
- Tue – West End 12 Step Group
- Wed – Jellinek Jumpstart
- Thurs – North Edmonton Group
- Fri – Jellinek Sunrise Light Luncheon Meeting

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

This is the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, the Basic Text for Alcoholics Anonymous

Big Book Studies

Tuesday 7:30 PM (Open)

Saturday 9:15 AM (Men)

South Side Chapter House

8318 104 Street

North Entrance on 84th Avenue

LADIES AA 12 STEP STUDY

Sunday Jan. 8, 2023

For 14 weeks

6:00 - 7:30 pm (Mtn time)

Zoom ID: 458-778-3027

PW: 739610

AREA TREATMENT & ACCESSIBILITIES

**COMMITTEE CHAIR
REQUIRED, Contact
chair.72@area78.org**

Message from PI/CPC Speaker Coordinator

Hello friends! Our committee is busy carrying out our primary purpose - to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

We are **ALWAYS** looking for new members. Our monthly committee meetings run from September to June, **every third Wednesday at 6 pm at the Alano Club (Lois Room). The address is 10728 - 124th Street Edmonton.** We have an excellent team who would be more than happy to fill you in on all the details.

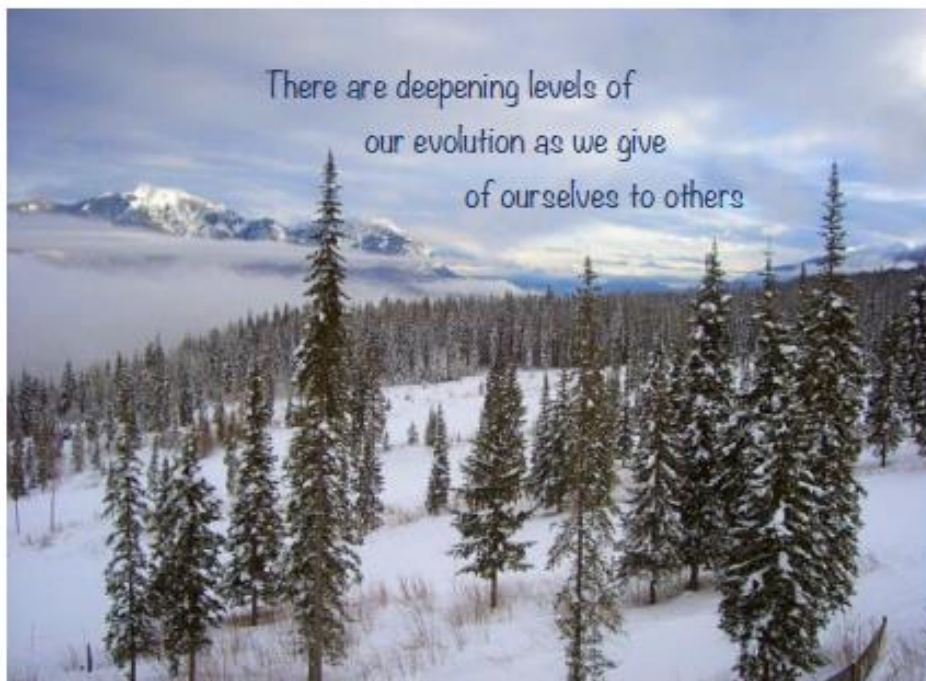
There are many presentations to take part in on the events website. Our website is fully self-serve and is updated on a regular basis. Simply choose the event you want to participate in and select **“click here to register”** and follow the prompts.

Oh, how brightly you shine!!

Quick announcements (more at the end):

1. **WRAASA (Western Region A.A. Service Assembly)** is an entire weekend of inspiration and motivation for ALL MEMBERS! See you there ☺ <https://wraasa.org>
Feb 24-26, 2023, at the Edmonton Inn

2. Our **Pre-Conference Assembly** this year is April 14 - 16, 2023 at the Edmonton Inn.
 - a. Our 'March' Assembly is in **APRIL**
 - b. The membership is quickly gearing up to address the agenda items.
What interests you??
 - c. Submitting an agenda item for the 2024 Conference is Sept 15th



We are one body and one mind moving toward solutions and unity within our Area 78 community. The **only** difference between you and me is our current role, merely a temporary one. You are wise in the ways of AA, in the ways of being sober and reaching out your hand. And you are here, reading this! Together we do this work to keep A.A. alive and well.

There are deepening levels of our evolution as we give of ourselves to others. In AA language, we call this Service, and refer to it as our Third Legacy in our recovery journey. THIS is the work of 'general service'. It IS the reason we have Districts and an Area. Since the General Service structure started in 1951, YOU, the membership has been guiding and determining the direction of A.A. Many thought that having the membership make all the decisions wouldn't work. But for the last 73 years it has been stupendous. Area 78's first Delegate was George Dunaway. George served on Panel 2 for 1952 & 1953. Come be a part of history.

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Thank you for allowing me to serve. My understanding is clear that the Area Committee Officers are to take direction from you, the membership of Alcoholics Anonymous. Your thoughts come through your GSRs to your DCM, to the Area, and on to the Conference in NYC. None of us govern, but we are **all** leaders (refer to Concept 9), working together by sharing our experiences, our strengths, and much hope for one another. The Area's job is like the Trustees and subsequently, the staff at the General Service Office, who take their direction from the Conference members' advisory actions (decisions) and committee considerations (suggestions) and all the discussions that happen over the annual week-long meeting.

We rely on you to raise issues, open discussion, make suggestions or motions at your business, district, or Area meetings so we can all listen to the differing ideas that lead to the decisions. Then we get busy working on those solutions as our Area moves forward with our primary purpose, while supporting one another with love, tolerance, kindness, and acceptance.

Why do we need a Conference?

Well, Bill Wilson's dear friend and confidant, Bernard Smith (fondly referred to as Bern), non-alcoholic, was our GSB Chair for many years. He was 'a principal architect' in creating our Conference Structure. He answered this question in his opening remarks at the 1954 meeting. An excerpt of it for today:

"...We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of only a few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is."

(Bern's very moving, spiritual talk can be found in the Service Manual pg 40).

We are open to all who need and want us. This is true! So, I ask you, "Do we believe all who need and want to be sober ARE in our rooms? Could any be missing? Are we attractive, welcoming, inclusive, and available to those who may be missing - unsure, scared, or confused about us? With this in mind, we prepare for the 73rd General Service Conference.

An update on my activities: January was busy! I was flat out with Area meetings, Conference Delegate Chair meetings, Western Regional meetings including WRAASA, speaking at groups, districts and events, and lots of Conference preparations.

The dashboard, our conference communications tool, opened Jan 10th. Lots to 'find', then read! All the new Panel 73rd Delegates are elected. In our Western Canada Region, we have new

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Delegates Rio D, Area 79, BC/Yukon and Lori R, Area 91, SK. Honestly, ours is the best of all 8 regions 😊

January 26 - 31 has me in New York for the January Board Meetings. I had a challenge concerning the 1-year term as the Conference Delegate Chair. The past Delegate Chair (and the 4 before her) confirmed the term is Jan to Dec - made sense to me. However, conversations with the Trustees and GSO folks since August indicated they thought I knew things I didn't and expected things I wasn't to do yet. The term for Conference Committee Chairs, Trustees and Directors runs conference to conference (April to April). All will be corrected this year. Ben N, Alt Delegate Chair/Mailman and I will serve January to end of April. See! 'STUFF' happens everywhere. And just cuz it's *always* been done that way, doesn't mean it has to, or that it's right. Ben and I will offer regular online Delegates-only discussion meetings till then.

I encourage all members to be part of the agenda discussions in your groups. Talk to your GSR or DCM to see about the committees and see where *your* heart lies in carrying the message to those who suffer. Which committee do you want to know more about? Make decisions for? Suggest materials about? Have an opinion about?

At the conference, 135 of us from all over Canada and US discuss these same items again to see what is best for AA as a whole body. You are welcome to come to the pre-conference Assembly April 14 - 16 at the Edmonton Inn. Join in the discussions, listen to other members from other districts across our Area share their thoughts and needs. Learn more and share your thoughts.

My role is to carry members' thoughts to the Conference. I cannot if your voice is silent.

Quick GSO update - check with your DCM for the detailed update from GSO - tons of stuff!!

- Contributions & literature sales were lower than expected/budgeted so redoing budget
- Jacketless Big Book is now being sold
- Mixed title ordering is continuing
- Box 4-5-9: picture of the White Bear meeting room in SK
- Online 7th Contributions to GSB - working on a solution to ensure groups are identified as the contributor vs individual
- Sections of the Plain and Simple Language BB translation will be at the Conference to study by voting members

With Love and Service,

Tami

Your Delegate 💜

VACANCY FOR NON-TRUSTEE DIRECTOR OF AA GRAPEVINE, INC. BOARD IN 2023

Résumés should be sent to Janet Bryan, Director of Operations, AA Grapevine, Inc. at jbryan@aagrapevine.org, by February 3, 2023.

SOBRIETY IS A MIRACLE FOR US

Is sobriety an accomplishment? Sobriety is an accomplishment. But some people are sober their whole lives, no big deal, it's just what you should have been doing all along. A common misunderstanding that NEEDS to be cleared up.

In 1939, a definitive book was published on alcoholism, entitled, "Alcoholics Anonymous." In the front matter is a letter written by Dr. William Silkworth, director of The Charles B. Towns Hospital for Drug and Alcohol Addictions in New York City. Dr. Silkworth first broached the novel theory that alcoholics have a biological "allergy" to alcohol that ordinary, temperate drinkers do not have. In alcoholics, the consumption of ANY AMOUNT of alcohol sets off "The Phenomenon of Craving" that NEVER occurs in the average, temperate drinker. The Phenomenon of Craving is an irresistible power compelling alcoholics to keep consuming alcohol. The power compelling an alcoholic to drink, due to their allergy and The Phenomenon of Craving, is stronger than any human effort to resist or control. That is why it is said that alcoholics are powerless over alcohol. The allergy theory makes clear that drunkenness is not weakness nor moral failure, for alcoholics. It is an irresistible medical condition. But, to be clear, the allergy and The Phenomenon of Craving only take merciless hold of the alcoholic if they consume alcohol. Once torn free of the force of active addiction, total abstinence removes craving. Dr. Silkworth's theory about alcoholics having an allergy that average, temperate drinkers do not have, is now widely accepted as medical fact. While the exact mechanism is not known—and several mechanisms have been proposed and subsequently rejected—the fact that there is such an allergy is not in dispute.

Ordinary, temperate drinkers do not have to fight the mortal, un-winnable battle that alcoholics have to fight. For them, sobriety is not an accomplishment and is nothing to celebrate. But for the millions and millions of alcoholics like me, diagnosed or not, getting and staying sober is a genuine accomplishment and something to be celebrated like a birthday. It's more than an accomplishment: it is a miracle. No human power can overcome The Phenomenon of Craving. As a theologian, I can say with confidence that sobriety for an alcoholic is a miracle.

The image depicted is available for purchase by any individual and does not necessarily reflect at the level of press, radio, film, tv, or internet any affiliations that the author may or may not enjoy.

Peace,

Dave F

Reflections Group

(Alano Club, Saturday 7pm)



How a struggling socialite convinced the world alcoholism is a disease

By Carl Erik Fisher

The Washington Post, January 29, 2022

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2022/01/29/marty-mann-aa-alcoholism-disease/>



Marty Mann, second from left, attends a 1960 Reader's Digest symposium titled "Women who drink too much," at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. (Bettmann Archive)

Hundreds of elegant passengers poured off the Queen Mary, the enormous luxury liner, and down to the docks of 1936 New York City. Among the jostling crowds, Marty Mann's mother and sister craned their necks, eager to catch a glimpse of Marty. They wondered: How had their brilliant debutante changed after six years in Europe, hobnobbing with the likes of Virginia Woolf and others in the famous [Bloomsbury Group](#)?

The stream of passengers thinned out. Where was she? Finally some crew members emerged at the top of the gangway, hauling a stretcher with a woman sprawled across it. It was Marty, unconscious, reeking of alcohol. What her family didn't

know was that Mann had needed to borrow money to book her passage home.

What her family didn't know was that Mann had needed to borrow money to book passage home. She had once been a successful advertising executive and glittering socialite, but her drinking had long been out of control. She had already attempted suicide twice. She had meant to sober up on the trip home so she could disembark with a clear head and finally get her life together, but by the time land came into sight, Mann was passed out at the Queen Mary's sumptuous art deco bar.

Her mother immediately found a place for her to be hospitalized, and for the next several years, Mann's life would be consumed by one question: What, exactly, was wrong with her?

Mann bounced from psychiatrist to psychiatrist, seeing more than a half-dozen doctors, but most psychoanalysts of the time didn't consider addiction a proper subject for psychiatry treatment, and no one would take on her case. Soon she was homeless, living from couch to couch, blackout to blackout, drink to drink, with no relief in sight.

Imagine the terror of suffering from alcoholism in the 1930s — having the sense that something was wrong, but not quite understanding what. The profusion of theories, explanations and cures, none of which seemed to work. The confusion and despair. This was a dark time for patients with addiction, the pessimistic attitudes captured well in the original 1937 version of the film "A Star Is Born": Norman Maine's alcoholism is a death sentence, one that compels him to walk into the Pacific Ocean to relieve the burden on his wife.

Eventually, and only through the influence of well-connected friends, Mann managed to be admitted to Bellevue Hospital's neurological ward, then gain admission as a charity case to Blythewood, an upscale mental-health facility on a 50-acre estate in Connecticut. Mann threw herself into psychotherapy, meeting with her psychiatrist Harry Tiebout an hour each day, but even then she struggled. She was given weekend passes to visit the city, each time confidently ready to test her resolve not to drink. She'd have a string of successful visits, but before long she would return drunk, ashamed and most of all baffled. After months of treatment, a defeated Tiebout told her that if something didn't change, he'd have to discharge her.

Then, one day in early 1939, Tiebout excitedly called Mann to his house and showed her a prepublication draft of a new book written by a small group of alcoholics who had founded their own new program: Alcoholics Anonymous. Flipping through the pages, Mann felt hopeful. She was skeptical about the religious language in the book, but the prospect of relief that the group promised — through a method entirely outside the medical profession — seemed worth investigating. Tiebout put her in a train to New York City once more. This time, Mann was cautiously optimistic, wondering what she might find at her first "meeting."

AA was a tiny, scrappy, informal fellowship in those early days. Of course, it would soon become the most significant and enduring social movement in the history of addiction, one that has defined our national understanding of substance problems — arguably exerting an even greater influence than the medical profession.

Less widely appreciated is the role of Margaret "Marty" Mann in this history. Mann was a brilliant strategist and a public-relations genius who played a crucial role in mid-century alcoholism advocacy. Today she is largely forgotten, even to many of the most ardent AA devotees, despite the fact that she might have been more important to the rise of AA's popularity than founder Bill Wilson himself.



Marty Mann, co-founder of the National Council on Alcoholism, testifies before the Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Narcotics on July 24, 1969. in (The Washington Post/Getty Images)

Arriving in Manhattan on that chilly April evening in 1939, Mann rode a clattering subway down to Wilson's home in Brooklyn Heights. Initially nervous, she hid upstairs until Wilson's wife, Lois, coaxed her down to join the group in the living room. She immediately felt an unmistakable rightness to it all: "I could finish their sentences! They could finish my sentences! We talked each other's language! It was not a room of strangers. These were my people."

Mann was outwardly different from other AA members. She was a lesbian, and her partner, Priscilla Peck, later joined AA — they were among the first women to be long-term members, and certainly among the first LGBTQ people. Nevertheless, she found enormous strength in the mutual identity of an alcoholic.

Mann threw herself into the nascent fellowship, which grew slowly. Later in 1939, Bill and Lois Wilson, Mann, and a few others drove to Cleveland to help establish a new meeting. In front of the crowd, Mann quipped, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if some day we could travel across the country and find an AA meeting in every town?" It was a joke, and the hundred or so people collapsed in laughter. For Mann, though, it was only a half-joke. In their own circle, people were relapsing, even dying. Surely there was more they could do. In sobriety, Mann was a dynamo. Brimming with energy, brilliant and polished, she captivated audiences at AA meetings.

----- As many critics have noted, AA was created by and for those in power — namely White, Protestant, middle-aged, professional men — and it wasn't easy for women in AA in those early days. Around that time, the prevailing stereotypes of female alcoholics were legion: sexually promiscuous, neglectful mothers, sicker than men and harder to cure. Many men in AA referred alcoholic women to their wives rather than trying to help the women themselves, worried that the presence of women in meetings would be too tempting. To this day, men outnumber women in AA by nearly 2 to 1.

Yet Mann hungered for more. There were still legions of people, who had never heard of this lifesaving program.

World War II was raging, and Mann was working in her new job, producing radio programs on American history. One featured Dorothea Dix, the 19th-century crusader who led a national campaign against the inhumane treatment of the mentally ill, and Mann was profoundly moved. What if there was a similar battle to be waged on behalf of alcoholics?

Soon afterward, she woke in the middle of the night with an epiphany, ran to her typewriter and typed out a detailed plan for a national campaign that would convince the public that alcoholism was not a moral but a medical condition.

Her plan was to reach not just scientists and medical professionals but the whole of society. Her project was medicalization: She wanted to make alcoholism into a disease like any other, one that would be recognized and treated as such.

Mann attributed this notion of disease to AA, but the main AA text she was reading used the term “disease” only once, and generally in AA, the physical is always tempered with, if not wholly subordinated to, the spiritual. Mann, on the other hand, insisted that alcoholism was a clear, known and singular scientific entity.

She was more innovator than inventor. Interest in thinking about alcoholism as a disease was already on the rise. In 1941, the U.S. Public Health Service had issued an important publication framing alcoholism as a public health problem rather than immoral behavior. A group of alcohol scientists had also established a group called the Research Council on Problems of Alcohol, which was attempting to promote a therapeutic approach to alcohol problems. At Yale University, some researchers involved with the research council had already begun conducting studies, engaging in state-level advocacy, and generally promoting a new scientific vision of alcoholism.

Mann connected with these Yale researchers — most fatefully, a brilliant and iconoclastic Hungarian American man named E.M. “Bunky” Jellinek, who recognized Mann’s gifts. She was a stunningly talented speaker. Her social capital was unmatched, including a firm footing in the growing fellowship of AA. As an attractive, upper-class woman willing to identify herself as an alcoholic in recovery, she shattered the dominant stereotype of the alcoholic as a skid row bum.

Mann moved in with the Jellinek family in New Haven and spent the summer studying alcoholism. A few months after that, she was ready. In October 1944, Mann held a news conference in New York to announce a new national organization to combat alcoholism. In her dignified, finishing-school accent, like Katharine Hepburn with just a hint of a homey Midwest twang, she captivated the 45 newspapers in attendance, especially after she revealed herself as an alcoholic, one who had “been free for five years.”

Mann announced that her organization, which in time became known as the National Council on Alcoholism (NCA), would embark on a campaign to convince the public that, first and foremost, “alcoholism is a disease.” News items about the news conference appeared for two weeks afterward. Time magazine published a feature story on Mann that month. In less than a year, she made no fewer than 49 speaking appearances across the country, and her visibility only rose from there — in later years, she routinely booked more than 200 public talks a year. Everywhere she went, she established and developed local “alcoholism information centers” that launched public education campaigns framing alcoholism as a disease.

There was a churning positive feedback loop between grass roots organizing and high-level connections. It was the birth of what scholars have come to call the “modern alcoholism movement,” a vigorous yet loosely organized coalition of advocates for mutual help and therapeutic approaches. AA grew from slightly more than 10,000 members in 1944 to just shy of 100,000 members in 1950.

Mann’s advocacy was soon felt in the medical domain. She helped establish the medical organization that eventually became today’s American Society of Addiction Medicine, the nation’s largest professional organization of its kind. Slowly but surely, these efforts helped inspire therapeutic approaches to addiction, as

community hospitals began establishing specialized alcoholism treatment units. In 1956, the American Medical Association adopted a resolution recognizing “alcoholism as a medical problem.” A year later, the American Hospital Association passed its own resolution urging hospitals to develop programs for treating alcoholics.

Mann leaned on her connections with politicians, such as President Lyndon B. Johnson, once a member of the Texas NCA. In 1966, he announced a new program in a special health message to Congress, declaring that alcoholism was “a disease which will yield eventually to scientific research and adequate treatment.”

Two years later, Mann and the NCA rejoiced when Harold Hughes, an AA member and an openly recovering alcoholic, was elected to the Senate, where he proceeded to work for federal legislation on alcoholism and arranged for Mann to testify before Congress.

In 1970, Congress passed a comprehensive alcoholism act, known as the Hughes Act. President Richard Nixon almost let the bill die in a pocket veto, but at the last minute Mann’s wealthy Republican allies put some backdoor political pressure on the president, who finally signed the bill into law on the last day of 1970. It was the first significant federal legislation on alcoholism. Not only did it create the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, but it laid the groundwork for today’s system of addiction treatment.

Soon after the Hughes Act was passed, Mann gave a speech declaring an end to “America’s 150-year war” of alcohol versus alcoholism. Since the first days of our nation, she explained, the moralistic forces of temperance, the “drys,” had railed against the evils of alcohol. The supposed evil of demon rum had attached itself to alcoholics; this was “the origin of stigma, that smothering blanket which so effectively prevented alcoholics or their families from recognizing, admitting, or seeking help for their illness.”

But then her NCA had brought together two important countervailing forces: scientists (in the form of the Yale researchers) and alcoholics (in the form of AA), and through their combined powers, the alcoholism movement won the day over the forces of superstition and stigma.

This article is adapted from “The Urge: Our History of Addiction,” by Carl Erik Fisher, Penguin Press.

It’s not always about you.



“It makes me so mad that two women can’t have a drink without every man in the bar staring at us.”

Cartoon by Kate Curtis. All of Kate’s cartoons can be found on her blog at <http://cluestolife.wordpress.com>.

Tricky Riddles

Jimmy’s mother had three children. The first was called April, the second was called May. What was the name of the third?

What begins with T, ends with T, and has T in it?

It’s so fragile even just saying its name can break it. What is it?

What building has the most stories?

What can you keep after giving it to someone?

Three doctors said that Bill was their brother. Bill said he had no brothers. Who was lying?

Answers in next month’s Newsletter

Edmonton Central Office Society			
INCOME STATEMENT 2022			
	December		
	Actuals	Budget	Variance
Revenue			
Group Contributions	\$5,983.20	\$4,879.33	\$1,103.87
Individual/Bequeath	\$6,601.40	\$6,773.93	(\$172.53)
Birthday Club/Faithful Fivers	\$865.00	\$112.61	\$752.39
Office Supplies / Postage	\$52.40	\$74.90	(\$22.50)
Rental Income-EGSC, etc	\$171.75	\$37.50	\$134.25
Tradition Seven-meetings	\$359.15	\$683.52	(\$324.37)
Fundraising			
Other Inc (Interest, etc)	\$157.58		\$157.58
Total General Revenue	\$14,190.48	\$12,561.79	\$1,628.69
Literature & Medallion			
Literature	\$5,384.15	\$6,882.38	(\$1,498.23)
Medallion	\$1,350.00	\$1,448.40	(\$98.40)
Total Literature and Med.	\$6,734.15	\$8,330.78	(\$1,596.63)
Total Revenue	\$20,924.63	\$20,892.57	\$32.06
Expenses			
AAWS & Grapevine Literature	\$3,857.17	\$4,329.66	\$472.49
Meeting list & Greeting Cards	\$205.16	\$83.59	(\$121.57)
Medallion Purch /engraving	\$743.80	\$690.77	(\$53.03)
Intergroup Expenses			
12 Step Answering	\$404.87	\$412.00	\$7.13
Other (Archive, 12 Step,Cred,Grp Ser	\$27.50	\$38.00	\$10.50
Administrative Expenses			
Accounting & Legal	\$185.78	\$225.00	\$39.22
Bank Chgs & Cr Card chgs	\$355.58	\$150.00	(\$205.58)
Computer & IT Maintenance	\$128.12	\$510.00	\$381.88
Equipment Lease/Purchase	\$359.77	\$375.00	\$15.23
Fundraising expense			
Insurance	\$342.95	\$300.00	(\$42.95)
Office Supplies	\$623.20	\$175.00	(\$448.20)
Postage	\$53.87	\$100.00	\$46.13
Rent	\$4,188.15	\$3,956.00	(\$232.15)
Salaries, Source, WCB	\$8,458.08	\$7,926.00	(\$532.08)
Staff Training / Seminar			
Telephone / Internet	\$133.26	\$165.00	\$31.74
	\$20,067.26	\$19,436.02	-\$631.24
Total Revenue	\$20,924.63		
Total Expenses	\$20,067.26		
Income / (Loss)	\$857.37		

