

# Utah Area 69 Newsletter

June-September 2005

Issue 3

*"Sponsorship, Service and Self-support  
in a Changing World"*

## JUST ME AND SHIRLEY AND 44,000 FRIENDS

It just seems almost like a dream, but I know it was real. I know that just a few weeks back Shirley and I arrived at the Salt Lake City International Airport to begin a trip that started 5 years ago in Minnesota.

The first leg of this journey would take us to Phoenix, Arizona. There we would transfer to another plane for a long, long flight to Toronto, Canada. It sure doesn't seem economically or geographically feasible to go 750 miles further away from Point B than where you started at Point A to go right back past Point A destined for Point B - but that's a problem to ponder another day.

As we sat in the airport I recalled the excited conversation I had some 5 years ago in Minneapolis with a group of friends from the Pacific Region and other places around the world. The last meeting signaling the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous in Minneapolis hadn't yet been held and already the group was planning a trip to the 12<sup>th</sup> International Convention. It was to be hosted by, of all places, Toronto, Canada.

As the last 5 years flew by, the casual conversation that was to take shape as a plan started to become a reality. A few loose ends had to be wrapped up. Some were big ends like acquiring a Passport and hotel reservations and airline tickets and some were small ends like making sure the lawn would get watered. Finally, the footwork was done and everything was now in place to begin a dream journey.

The flight to Phoenix and the flight to Toronto were exactly on time. Getting through Canadian Customs and border security went very smooth. It took much longer to get our luggage than it did to clear customs.

The first thing we did while waiting for the hotel shuttle bus at the Toronto airport, was start making new friends. Randy and Ingrid are from Riverside, California and were as

excited to be in Toronto as we were. Randy and Ingrid must think a lot like Mike and Shirley as we crossed paths with them several times in the next 6 or 7 days. I like to think it was more than just coincidence in a city of 5 million people. After a 30 minute bus ride to the hotel, we were ready to get some rest. The next morning it was time to take a look at Toronto.

The CN Tower in Toronto is one of the tallest structures on earth, if not the tallest free-standing tower. The highest observation point on the tower, "The Pod", is the highest observation point in any man-made structure on the planet. The pod is a dizzying 1,400 plus feet above the ground.

Not far from Toronto is Niagara Falls. The power of millions of gallons of water rushing over the falls every minute defies description - so I won't even try.

The Rogers Centre, formerly known as the Skydome, is a wonderful place to hold small, intimate AA meetings with 40 or 50 thousand people attending.

And, the Toronto Convention Centre is as big a building as I've ever been in. There is a North and a South part to the Convention Centre though it seemed more East and West to me. If viewed from outside, it doesn't appear to be much, as most of it is underground. It was certainly large enough to hold dozens of panel discussions and workshops all at the same time. All throughout the day Friday and Saturday, thousands and thousands of attendees in groups of 100 or 500 or even more filled every room in the Centre.

Back to the Rogers Centre Stadium -

Friday evening was the first of the 3 big meetings associated with the International Convention. Flags from more than 90 countries were presented to the cheers and tears

of all in attendance.

Saturday evening was the second of the big meetings. The highlight was an Old-timers meeting consisting of 12 speakers with 40 or more years sobriety. The names of the speakers were "drawn from the hat".

Sunday was the last of the big meetings and was crowned by the presentation of the 25 millionth copy of the Big Book to the warden of San Quentin prison.

And on that gorgeous Sunday morning, to end the festivities, Shirley and I and Jim and Mickey and 44,000 close friends repeated in unison our Responsibility Pledge "I am Responsible. When Anyone, Anywhere reaches out for help; I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that, I am Responsible." I know that the touch of God that guided Bill W. and all the members assembled back in 1965 in Toronto, was there, at that moment, as strong as ever. Just as it was when our Responsibility Statement was adopted by the fellowship that eventful year.

True to form, before the last meeting of this 12<sup>th</sup> International Convention had even gathered together, we had already started making plans to attend the 13<sup>th</sup> International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous. It will be hosted by, of all places, San Antonio, Texas. And I wouldn't be the least bit surprised to see Randy and Ingrid in the registration line or at the hotel or at the Alamo or.....

If you have not attended an Alcoholics Anonymous International Convention, I urge you to join me in planning to attend the 2010 happening in San Antonio. Our Big Book says we were launched into a 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension - Celebrating sobriety with more than 40,000 people from all over the world is a part of this flight you will remember for a lifetime.

## **\*\* Workshop Topics \*\***

### Sponsorship

- Presenting AA to Newcomers
- Changes in the Alcoholic coming to AA
- Sponsorship into Sobriety; into Service

### Service

- Performing Service without Expectations
- Leadership-An ever Vital need
- Responsibility with Accountability

### Self-Support

- Informed Group Conscience
- Gratitude through Self-Sacrifice

## **Upcoming Area Events**

- *Fall Assembly – Logan, UT Sept, 23-25, 2005*
- *Fall Workshop – Vernal, UT Nov. 5-6, 2005*
- *Area Committee Meeting Provo, UT December 3, 2005*
- *Area Committee Meeting Salina, UT February 18, @006*
- *PRAASA – Woodland Hills, CA March 3-5, 2006*
- *Pre-Assembly Conference - Ogden, UT March 17-19, 2006*
- *Post-Conference Assembly - SLC, UT May 19-21, 2006*
- *Pacific Regional Forum Seattle, WA June 23-25, 2006*

## The 54<sup>th</sup> Annual University of Utah School on Alcoholism

By Michael Aasheim, CPC Chair, Area 69

This year I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to help represent Alcoholics Anonymous at the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual University of Utah School on Alcoholism, which was held from July 19<sup>th</sup> until July 24<sup>th</sup>. I am grateful that there were quite a few members of the fellowship who helped man the booth (that GSO furnished) and chair the open meetings held each night. I personally made many professional contacts from all over the country.

I arrived at the School on Sunday at 8:00 am. Putting together the booth required some cursing and swearing, but I managed to get it together and it was very nice. When I opened the box of literature provided by GSO, to my dismay there were about 100 copies of *AA in the Native American Communities* and nothing else. I should have looked into the box before I left Price! I drove back to Price and got my CPC literature rack and a couple days later Graham and Leann brought some more literature from the Area PI and the Area Literature.

I met the coordinator for the Pharmacy Division. Since I am a Pharmacist he let me attend several lectures; that was very nice. I also met a Pharmacist from the State Board of Pharmacy Diversion Committee. She and I talked in great length about what the State does with impaired Pharmacists. I also met several physicians and many people from treatment centers.

I highly recommend being of service to the School. It was an incredibly moving and spiritual experience, far more than I could have imagined. Anyone who is interested, the School is an annual event and the 55<sup>th</sup> Session will be held again next July.

### SPECIAL NEEDS

Here is a question that went unanswered at the Ask-it-Basket session of the Post-Conference Assembly.

*"If someone who is Deaf called a member of the Central Office of SLC, how would we go about getting them to a meeting they could participate in?"*

I paid a visit to our Salt Lake Central Office last week just to ask this question. I talked to Ron and Sandy and both Ron and Sandy told me the same thing.

At Fellowship Hall (2060 Windsor Street in Salt Lake City) there was one meeting that regularly provided an ASL translator. There was heavy emphasis on "was". The group still meets at 5:30 PM every evening. Having an ASL translator available for every meeting was not something the group could continue to support.

Both Ron and Sandy agreed that when they do get such a request it normally comes through the TDD Network and they have just one solution. Whomever takes the call, in turn places a call to Charlie T. in District 2 to plead for assistance in locating an ASL translator and setting up a meeting time for the person.

In our discussion, Ron suggested that trying to find meetings with translators for hearing impaired persons is just one of the many hurdles he and the other members of the Central Office staff have to deal with on a regular basis. Many of the other requests they receive are calls from homebound or hospitalized persons wanting a meeting brought in to them. I'm certain he mentioned other circumstances of isolation, but these are the two instances that stuck with me.

Ron said he just wishes there was one person that could put together a list of people that would be available to respond to these requests. Something like a "Special Needs" coordinator on the Area Committee – someone with contacts in all of the districts. As Ron pointed out, the calls they get at Salt Lake Central Office come from everywhere. The problem may be in District 2 or District 10 or District 11 or any other District in Utah. A single contact would be of great benefit.

I hinted to Ron that Area 69 is looking into this solution now. We have an Ad-Hoc committee that is considering the ramifications of an Accessibilities Committee for the Area. An Accessibilities Committee to address Special Needs, Remote Communities, Elderly Communities, etc.

As you read this article, I would urge you to think about where you live and go to meetings. Ask yourself this: If you are made aware that someone in your community is hearing impaired and needing a meeting, what do you do?

After all of this, I still don't feel like I sufficiently answered the question. But, I hope I raised an awareness of the great need that exists everywhere for more solutions to eliminating the barriers that prevent some of us from enjoying a meeting to talk about our recovery.

Mike Ohlson

Panel 55 Delegate – Area 69, State of Utah

## **Delegate Area 69 (Utah) Official Website**

It's hard for me to believe, but I've heard that there are folks out there that don't know about the Area 69 website! This article is to help inform those folks, as well as for those who did, but may not be aware of all of its features and functionality. The website is located at [www.UtahAA.org](http://www.UtahAA.org).

On the home page alone you will find the following;

### **Find an Alcoholic Anonymous Meeting**

The website lists all AA meetings within Utah. AA Meetings can be found by searching by general geographic area, city, date or type. Once you have a list by one of those categories, you can generally refine your search by either city or day. As an example if you selected all of the meetings in the Central Utah area you could refine that list to all meeting that are in Salina, or all meetings in Central Utah on Tuesday. Most meetings have a map associated with them as well as the address, meeting time, and if it's an open or closed meeting. Once you have the meeting list you want, you can then select the "Printer Friendly" button and create a printable list.

### **Area 69 Publications**

This section currently contains an archive of the Area's Newsletters and a place where you can manage your own email subscription to it. You can subscribe and unsubscribe yourself. The pamphlet "So You've been told to go to AA . . ." is available here in English and Spanish.

### **Service Materials**

This section contains links to the following.

The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service  
A.A. Guidelines from G.S.O.  
Area 69 New Group Forms  
Area 69 Change of Group Information Forms  
Area 69 Service Position Change Forms  
Area 69 Guidelines

### **Public Service Announcements**

There are several links to G.S.O.'s Public Service Announcements

### **District Information**

Each of the eleven Districts of Area 69 has a page on the website. This contains a quick link to all meetings that fall within that District, sorted by day, or by meeting name. This feature could be very handy for the DCMC and DCMs to keep their group's information current and up to date.

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There are also links to the Service Positions email accounts. We were keeping this restricted to District 2 as a test, but the kinks have been worked out and this feature (email accounts for district service positions) is available to any district that is interested.

A list of the individual District's meeting times & places are also listed. There's usually a map that accompanies this as well. A list of the individual District's meeting times & places are also listed. There's usually a map that accompanies this as well.

### **Next Service Event**

The next Service Event is displayed in its own box on the right hand side of the home page. This feature makes it easy to see what's coming up next, without having to drill down through several different pages. It does provide a link to the Events Calendar so you can drill down and get more information. The link on the event itself is either to its registration form or information flier.

### **Check your email**

Area Officers who chose to get their email via the web can use this link to do so.

### **AI-Anon/AI-teen Family Group website**

A link to our sister program.

### **Standing Committee Pages**

Corrections  
Cooperation with the Professional Community  
Grapevine  
Literature  
Public Information  
Treatment Facilities

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## Questions?

A link to the Web Servant's email address.

## Suggestions

A link to a form that can be used to anonymously, or not, make suggestions to improve the website. The form gets sent to the website committee.

## Contact us

A link to a page that lists the Area 69 Officer's and Standing Committee Chair's email addresses.

## Special Notices or Announcements

With the approval of the website committee.

Using the pull down menu

system the following services are available from every page

## Home

A link back to the home page ([www.utahaa.org](http://www.utahaa.org))

## Are You New to AA?

- A.A. Fact Sheet
- Bridging the Gap Program
- AA Pamphlets & Other links
- So You've Been Told to go to AA

## Find an AA meeting

- Northern Utah (Ogden, Brigham City, Logan)
- North-Central Utah (Salt Lake City, Park City)
- Central Utah (Provo, Orem, America Fork)
- South-Central Utah (Richfield, Manti, Delta)
- South-West Utah (St. George, Cedar City)
- Eastern Utah (Vernal, Roosevelt)
- East Central Utah (Price, Helper, Huntington)
- South-East Utah (Moab)
- Reuniones en Español (Meetings in Spanish)
- Other State's A.A. Websites
- Search for a meeting
  - Search by City
  - Search by Type
  - Search by Day
  - Special Needs
  - Search by District or Intergroup

## Central Offices

- Northern Utah
- Salt Lake AA Central Office
- Utah Valley (Provo)
- Dixie Central Office (St.George)

## Calendars

- AA Service Events
- AA Gatherings

## Contact us

- District Information
- Email address list
- Area 69 Standing Committees
- Correctional Facilities
- Cooperation with the Professional Community
- Grapevine
- Literature
- Public Information
- Treatment Facilities

## Other

- Standing Committees Forum
- Suggestion Box
- Area Publications
- Service Materials

The website has become more than a valuable PI tool. It continues to prove itself as a service tool as well. Its uses are limited only by our imagination.

It has been an incredible experience serving you as the first Area 69 Web Servant. Thank you for allowing me to serve!



Doug R.

Area 69 Web Servant  
[webservant@utahaa.org](mailto:webservant@utahaa.org)



## Personal Story "By the Book"

About five years ago I was living in San Francisco and I was walking down Market Street with a new sponsee. We were on our way to a meeting. He started to tell me about the problems he was having with his ex wife. She had taken everything away from him in the divorce - the kids, the money, and the thing that really PISSED him off the most was that she had also gotten the house. The house that his father had left to him and that his Grandfather had left to his father. As we continued to walk, James is starting to talk really crazy. He starts to say things like, he's going to buy a gun, get on a plane, go to Seattle, walk up to the door of the house, break down the door and shoot and kill his Ex and her no good boyfriend. I think to myself "you've got a real sick one on your hands this time!" I was quiet for a few minutes. I started to say a little prayer in my head, "Oh please God help me with what to say to him" and then with out missing a beat I turned to him and said, "James I know that you've read the Big Book. Would you please tell me where and on what page it tells us that killing people is the way we deal with our problems in life." He stumbles for an answer and after a moment he looks at me and smiles, he gets the point. I realized that I was taking the Big Book literally and not figuratively anymore. A miracle had happened for us both.



What it was like . . .

My name is Albert and I am an Alcoholic. And as a drunk I was sure of one thing, and that was that some how or another I just didn't understand how to do this thing called life. I always felt that the living of life and all of its joys were meant for other people and not me. I always felt like I was on the outside looking in, always standing on the side lines watching the parade go by. I was so damaged, so unlovable and not worthy.

I had this little movie I played in my head, that up in Heaven, the day that I was born, God is standing at a very long and large conveyer belt. At his right side is a golden lever, He pulls the lever down and a new born baby comes out of the shute and down the line. The belt stops in front of God and he says a few nice things to the infant, like "have a great life and I'll see you in about seventy years," then he hands the little cherub a book to take with him. On the cover is printed "THIS IS THE MANUAL ON HOW TO DO LIFE" "PLEASE REFER TO THIS WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH!!!" God then pulls the lever to his right again and down comes another child, repeat story. This time God pulls the lever and down comes baby Albert, only this time as the belt stops in front of God he sneezes, (a BIG one!!!), and pushes the lever fast forward and I get by without Him ever even seeing me. No greeting, no see ya around kid, and most of all, NO Fricken manual on "How to do Life" no nothing. I'm one pissed off little kid. A defect I would perfect over the next 29 years. Over my drinking career I spent a lot of time looking for that manual with the answers, at the bottom of a lot of empty Gin bottles. Finally I stopped believing in God because I knew that God had stopped believing in me!

What happened . . .

On March 21st 1983 I walked through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous for the first time. Life had beaten me down very hard. I had hit a very low and dark bottom. All my choices had been taken away and there was no place left to turn and no one wanted anything to do with me. I had burned every bridge. Little did I understand that in my final moments of despair, Grace was teaching me to surrender, that by walking through the doors of AA for the first time I was being given a new life. AA turned me into the person that I had always hoped that booze would. The meeting was about to begin and I sat down on an old lumpy couch. I was not happy about its state of disrepair. I was also not very happy about being in a church, and the last straw was that I found myself sitting next to some Hippie Mountain Mama named Debbie. None of her cloths matched, her hair was a mess and she had on sandals. I thought to myself where are the fashion police when you need them. But a strange thing happened, As I looked into her face I could see that she had something that I did not, a look of peace and happiness. Strange to think that in a flash all I knew was that I wanted what she had. After the meeting she walked me over to a table that had all kinds of stuff on it, she reached for a large blue book and put it into my hands, and she said to me, "Read this honey, this book is going to teach you how to do life!" And then she put her arms around me and held me tight for what seemed a very long time, and although I wanted her to believe that I wasn't enjoying it, I began to cry. She walked me to the door said "Goodbye honey! And remember, keep coming back". That was twenty-two years ago.

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What it's like today . . .

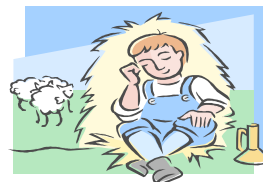
Over those twenty-two years I have read the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous many, many times. In the first few months of my recovery, I just didn't get it!! So I began to think that maybe I didn't understand the code. Or I needed to read between the lines, or read it sitting on a couch, or laying down on a bed, or standing on my head. Then one day I thought perhaps the French version or perhaps the Egyptian translation might help me get it, and what was all this stuff about working the steps. It seemed like an exercise in abstractions. Oh, but what a wonderful thing time can be. After all these many years I have finally reached the point in my recovery where I accept the Big Book as it is meant to be, followed as simply as it is written. For me today, the steps are to be lived, not worked. The Big Book is the Blueprint for my life, meant to be utilized not analyzed. Mine is a program of utilization not analysis. Today when I have problems with people, places and things, I turn to the Big Book and the steps. For the answer I seek is always somewhere to be found on those pages. Just like that night some five years ago walking down Market street with James in San Francisco, IF IT ISN'T IN THE Big Book, or one of the many suggested things that I hear in the fellowship or that my sponsor tells me, I'm most likely walking down the dark side of my path. Today I take the Big Book literally. It IS the easier softer way. It's just that simple.

It is said that God works through other people.

Funny to think that when Debbie handed me that Big Blue Book, it was God making up for having had a very bad case of hay fever the day I was born. He finally gave me the manual on how to do life.

Albert O. – Salt Lake City

(Thank you Albert for sharing this with all of us...)



**(Thought this would be useful information for those of us who use BTG...)**

To all, **The BTGWW Resource Library is now available.**

If you or someone you know would benefit from having access to years of documented experience, strength and hope on matters relating to Bridging the Gap and Temporary Contact Programs, this is very important news to you.

For more info, please contact Mark C, Coordinator of this years Bridging The Gap Workshop Weekend at [Mdogva@msn.com](mailto:Mdogva@msn.com).

For an e-copy of the resource library list, contact Mark C. at the aforementioned address.



Love is service,  
Mark C

**Thank you all for your contributions to the Utah Area 69 Newsletter, and for keeping us all informed of your activities. We appreciate your service, and dedication to carry the message to the still suffering Alcoholic, no matter where he or she may be.**

**(In an email dated September 9, 2005, from our Public Information Chair, after many updates and information was shared about the folks from the New Orleans area that had been brought up to Camp Williams)**

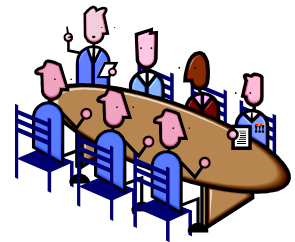
Hello Friends,

We would like to thank all of you whom have called or e-mailed offering help for the Hurricane victims. There has been such an out pouring of love and willingness to serve. Thank you!

At this time we feel that we are prepared to serve the needs of our new friends from the South. When we received word that Utah would be the destination for some of the Hurricane victims, it was estimated that there could be upwards of fifteen thousand people at Camp Williams. As it turned out there have been less than a thousand. The need was not as great as first anticipated. However, the fellowship has stepped up and offered everything from support, rides to meetings, facilitating meetings and donating AA books and AA literature.

At this time we will have more than enough volunteers. We would like to thank every one that has called and or e-mailed with help and concern.

As for the Big Books, Grapevines and other AA literature; In an email sent out by GSO today, it was stated that they are taking care of the needs of our members in the South. So, if there are any books and literature left over, after the needs of the Hurricane victims here in Utah are met, the books will be donated where needed here in Utah. If you would like to continue to make these donations please feel free to do so. As you may well know each book could help to save a life. It's a great way to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous here at home.



The drop off locations for these items are as follows:



Salt Lake Central Office (2480 S. Main, #112)  
Utah Valley Central Office (420 N. 200 W. Provo)  
Alano Club (5056 South 300 West, Murray)  
Fellowship Hall (2060 South Windsor [840 East] SLC)

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact the Utah Area Public Information chair at [pi@utahaa.org](mailto:pi@utahaa.org) or call (801)891-3329.

Today I am so proud to be a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. I am Proud to be a part of such a wonderful Fellowship that pulls together to help one another in recovery and in life as a whole.

Thank you for your love and support.

In love and service,  
LeAnn L.

Public Information Chair Area 69 (State of Utah)

### **The Responsibility Declaration**

**I am Responsible— When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the Hand of AA *always* to be there... and for that... I Am Responsible**





**\*\*\* This is a Confidential Publication,  
to be used and distributed only amongst the  
membership of Alcoholics Anonymous \*\*\***

*The Utah Area 69 Newsletter is available to all members of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are truly “self-supporting through our own contributions”. Without your help, the newsletter is not possible, (or is very boring...).*

*Please send your stories, reports, jokes, cartoons or whatever else strikes your fancy related to recovery to the Newsletter Chair at;*

*Newsletter@utahaa.org*

*Or Newsletter Chair*

*335 S. State St. 37-9, Roosevelt, UT. 84066*

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