

CONCEPTS

NORTHERN ILLINOIS AREA LTD
AREA 20 SERVICE LETTER

SUMMER 2025 VOL. XLIX NO.2

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Young People in AA (YPAA/YPGs)
- 4 Friends of AA
- 5 Events, Fellowship and Service Opportunities
- 9 AA International Convention
- 10 Reflections on the International

YPAA

(Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous)

YPAA represents **Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous** (i.e. anyone who has developed alcoholism or who has gotten sober at an early age, or an alcoholic who is young at heart.) **Any members of AA who may have gotten sober earlier in life AND/OR are willing to grow in their sobriety are welcome.**

"Young People's Groups (YPGs) began appearing as early as 1945 in Los Angeles, Cleveland and Philadelphia and now can be found all across North America. In 1957, a group of young U.S./Canada A.A.s started ICYPAA to provide a setting for a yearly celebration of sobriety among young people in A.A. Two years later, at the Fellowship's 25th Anniversary Convention in Long Beach, California, Bill W. noted that the age of new members was much lower than when he and Dr. Bob founded A.A. in 1935. In a letter to ICYPAA, dated June 15, 1969, Bill wrote, "...in recent years I have found nothing for greater inspiration than the knowledge that A.A. of tomorrow will be safe, and certainly magnificent, in the keeping of you who are the younger generation of A.A. today."

from Box 4-5-9 (Vol. 51, No.2/April/May 2005, pg. 6

YPAA CONFERENCES

PAASTOCK 2025 (14th Annual Sober Music Fest)

August 1-3rd, 2025

627 N. Fairfield Rd Lake Villa IL 60046

Please follow www.PAASTOCK.com for further information and registration

ICYPAA 65 (International Conference of Young People in AA)

August 28-31st, 2025

The Hilton Minneapolis MN

1001 S Marquette Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403

Please follow iscypaa.org for any further information and registration

PRAIRYPAA (Prairie Path Suburbs)

has been granted host for

ISCYPAA 43 2026

IL State Conference of Young People in AA

Please follow iscypaa.org for updates and registration. Date and Location TBD

***** LIMITED DATES *****

Bonfire Meetings - May - October - Bring a chair

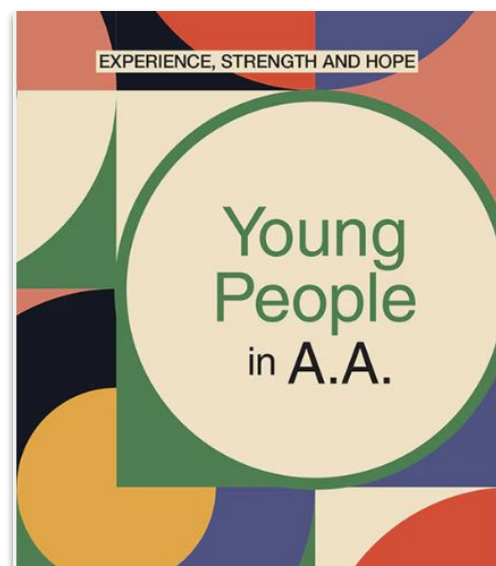
Every 3rd Saturday: 6/21, 7/19, 8/16, 9/20, 10/18/25

8 pm Open Speaker Meeting

Antioch Recovery Club

466 W. Route 173 Antioch, IL

Hosted by ANTYPAA - The Recovered Souls



YPAA

(Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous)

Across the Pond

Daily 8 am CST

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85124149161#success>

Phone: 1-312-626-6799

The 5th Dimension Young People Group of AA

Daily 8:30 pm CST

Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/687118144#success>

Phone: 1-646-876-9923

Sunday 9:30 am

[9:30 AM Beginner's Step 1,2,3 Meeting](#)

AMITA Behavioral Health Hospital

1650 Moon Lake Blvd, Hoffman Estates, IL

Sunday 7:00 pm

[Rule #62](#)

All Saints Lutheran Church

13350 South La Grange Rd, Orland Park

Sunday 8:00 pm

[Young People's AA Meeting](#)

Palatine Club

887 E Wilmette Rd, Palatine

Wednesday 8:30 pm

[Young People in AA](#)

Community United Methodist Church

20 North Center St., Naperville

Thursday 8:00 pm

[Young People's Big Book Group](#)

First United Methodist Church of Palatine

123 N Plum Grove Rd, Palatine

Friday 8:30 pm

[Young People in AA Big Book Study](#)

Crystal Lake Alano Club, 36 N. Virginia St., Crystal Lake, IL

Presented by PRAIRYPAA, host for
ISCYPAA 43 2026

BONFIRE & Fellowship

Last Friday of the month after the

9pm Speaker Meeting

6/27, 7/25, 8/29, & 9/26/25

West Suburban Alano Club, 17 W.

Quincy St. Westmont

Saturday 8:00 am

[8 AM Step Meeting](#)

AMITA Behavioral Health Hospital

1650 Moon Lake Blvd, Hoffman Estates, IL

Saturday 8 pm

[Beans Young Persons Group](#)

12 Step Fellowship Club, 8 E. Wilson St., Batavia, IL

12 & 12, Closed, Discussion

Saturday 8:30 pm

[Not Dead Yet YPAA Meeting](#)

Elgin Alano Club, 73 S. Riverside Dr., Elgin IL

Friends of A.A.

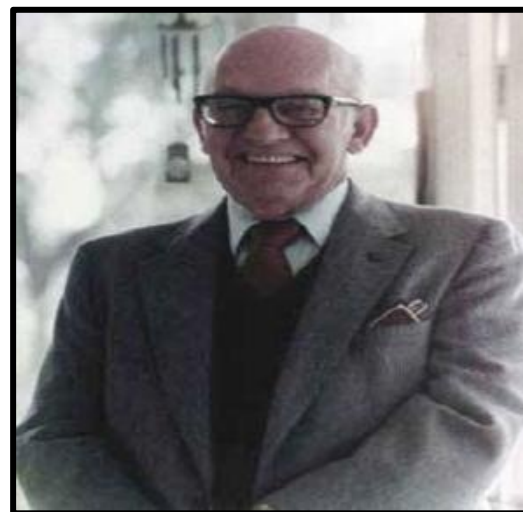


Bill Dobson

Bill D. was AA's no.3. Famously nicknamed the man on the bed, Bill was 12th stepped by Bill W. and Dr. Bob on 28th June, 1935.

Bill D. had been a well-known attorney and city councilman. His drinking caused him to be hospitalized 8 times in 6 months, and he ended up strapped to a bed in Akron hospital after hitting a couple of nurses. He was terrified when Dr. Bob asked him to be taken to a private room (usually reserved for patients with terminal illnesses), but was struck by the honesty of Bill W. and Dr. Bob when they related their drinking stories to him. Bill Dotson left the hospital on 4th July, 1935, and never drank again. He was in court arguing a case as an attorney within a week and then ran for election to the city council. He never sought publicity for his role in AA, nor did he wish his story to be published in the Big Book.

Clarence Snyder was 12th stepped by Dr. Bob and started a meeting in Cleveland – using the AA name from the Big Book. He detached his meeting from the Oxford Groups and introduced the concept of one to one sponsorship. Not a believer in the tradition of anonymity, Clarence granted many TV, radio and press interviews. Clarence came up with the idea of service rotation and started an AA Bulletin. He also created a great deal of publicity for AA. Clarence died at the age of 82 in 1984 and was 46 years sober.



Clarence Snyder



Marty Mann

Marty Mann was an early female member of AA and author of the story 'Women suffer too' in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th editions of the Big Book. Partly due to her life's work, alcoholism became seen as less of a moral issue and more of a health issue.

Marty got sober in 1940 when her psychiatrist (Dr. Harry Tiebout) gave her a copy of the Big Book and persuaded her to attend one of only two meetings of AA available in the USA at that time. Later, she organized the committee, which eventually became the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence.



Upcoming Events, Fellowship and Service Opportunities

June 21, 2025

NIA 20 Summer Assembly

Hosted by District 21

Immanuel Lutheran Church and School

200 N. Plum Grove Road, Palatine, IL, United States

<https://aa-nia.org/event/nia-20-summer-assembly/>

Lunch (Jimmy Johns) \$15

8:00 Fellowship

9:00 Meeting Begins

The Area Assembly conducts the primary business of the Northern Illinois Delegate Area. The Area Assembly is made up of the Area GSRs, and the Area Committee members and we meet on a quarterly basis. The Assembly, through its officers and service committees, is involved in many opportunities to carry the message. There are reports from the Delegate and other officers as well as service committee chairs. The agenda will include a business meeting which will include items of interest within the Area or within AA. GSRs, Officers and service committee chairs will hold breakout sessions which will include people involved in specific areas of service. Many opportunities to better understand the service structure as well as to be active in it are available to GSRs.

September 20, 2025

2025 Kankakee Mini-Conference

There is a Solution

Life Compass Church

175 S. Wall St

Kankakee, IL

Information: Steve R. 815-263-0792

Tickets \$15

Doors 8:30 am

Conference 9:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Lunch Provided 12 to 1 p.m.

Panel Discussions on the 12 Steps of AA

November 14 - 16, 2025

2025 Illinois State Conference

Hyatt Regency Schaumburg 1800 East Golf Road, Schaumburg, IL

THEME: 90 Years of Recovery, Unity & Service

<https://www.aa-nia-il-dist40.org/ilstateconference2025/>

SAVE THE DATE!

October 18, 2025

32nd NIA Big Book Conference

Lord of Life Church, 40W605 IL-38, Elburn, IL

More information coming soon!

Follow at <https://aa-nia.org/events/>

Upcoming Events, Fellowship and Service Opportunities, cont.

Area wide:

AA Service Manual & Concepts Study: 2nd Thursday, 7:30-8:30 pm
Hosted by District 11
ZOOM: Meeting ID: 819 5925 862, Passcode: 639187

District 40: *Glen Ellyn, Wheaton, Warrenville*

GSR Meeting: 4th Friday, 7 p.m.
6:30 pm, First Presbyterian Church, 715 North Carlton Street, Wheaton, IL

Annual Picnic: SUNDAY 7/27, 10 am to 3 pm
*Herrick Lake Forest Preserve, Main entrance off Butterfield Rd
East Shelter, Pavilion #1*

District 41: *Addison, Bensenville, Elmhurst, Lombard, Oakbrook Terrace, Villa Park*

GSR & Committee Meeting: 3rd Thursday, 7 pm
Elmhurst Presbyterian Church, Calvin Hall, 367 Spring Rd, Elmhurst, IL

District 42: *Burr Ridge, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Downers Grove, Hinsdale, Oakbrook, Westmont & Willowbrook*

District 42 Monthly Meeting: 3rd Monday, 7 pm
WSAC, 17 Quincy St., Westmont, IL

District 43: *Bolingbrook, Lisle, Naperville*

District 43 Business Meeting: 3rd Wednesday, 7 p.m.
ZOOM: Meeting ID: 965 6659 0236, Passcode: 932879

For a listing of all Area 20 Districts: <https://aa-nia.org/meetings/>



Availability and payment questions
text/call: Susan M. (630) 615-0316

Other questions and partial
scholarship requests text/call:
Debbi M. (630) 290-4838*

*If you would like to contribute any sum
toward a scholarship for someone who
is not able to pay, please include it
with your payment. Any amount is
helpful & greatly appreciated!

2025 SUMMER 12 STEP CLOSED CO-ED RETREAT

For Recovering Alcoholics

Benet Lake Retreat Center in Benet Lake, WI

July 18th, 19th, & 20th

Retreat Leaders: Kim R. and Cindy R.

WEEKEND DETAILS

\$235 cost includes the following:

2 nights lodging | Friday night pizza party
Saturday & Sunday continental breakfast
Saturday buffet lunch & dinner

Please bring treats to share in the snack room.

ARRIVAL Friday any time after 4:30PM

PIZZA PARTY and snacks about 6:00PM

START First session is Friday at 7:30PM

END Last session on Sunday ends at 10:00AM

DIRECTIONS

Benet Lake Retreat Center

12605 224th Ave, Benet Lake, WI 53102

I-294 North to Wisconsin, exit highway 173. Left
on 173 (Rosecrans) - 5 miles to Deep Lake Rd.
Turn right & go 1.6 miles to North Avenue. Turn
left & go .8 miles to Nelson Road. Turn right & go
.7 miles to Abbey entrance on right.

*We look forward to seeing you
for summer fellowship and fun!*

2025 SUMMER 12 STEP RETREAT REGISTRATION (please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Special Requests: _____

Roommate Name: _____ Prefer Single: _____

(Single rooms can be requested, but are not guaranteed)

Is this your first time at this retreat? Yes No When did you last attend this retreat? _____

Menu Options (Please "X" one)

Standard Buffet \$235.00 _____ Gluten-Free Meals \$240.00 _____

Please make checks payable to: Debbi Manning – Memo: Summer Retreat

Mail check & registration To: Debbi Manning 16W585 2nd Ct, Bensenville, IL 60106 or ZELLE : raschal56@gmail.com

We are not a glum lot! Please bring puzzles, cards or games to share during the weekend!
Bonfire on Saturday night after the ice cream social.

NEW YEAR ■ NEW MEETING!

THE CHAPTER 2 CREW



A MEETING OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

WHEN

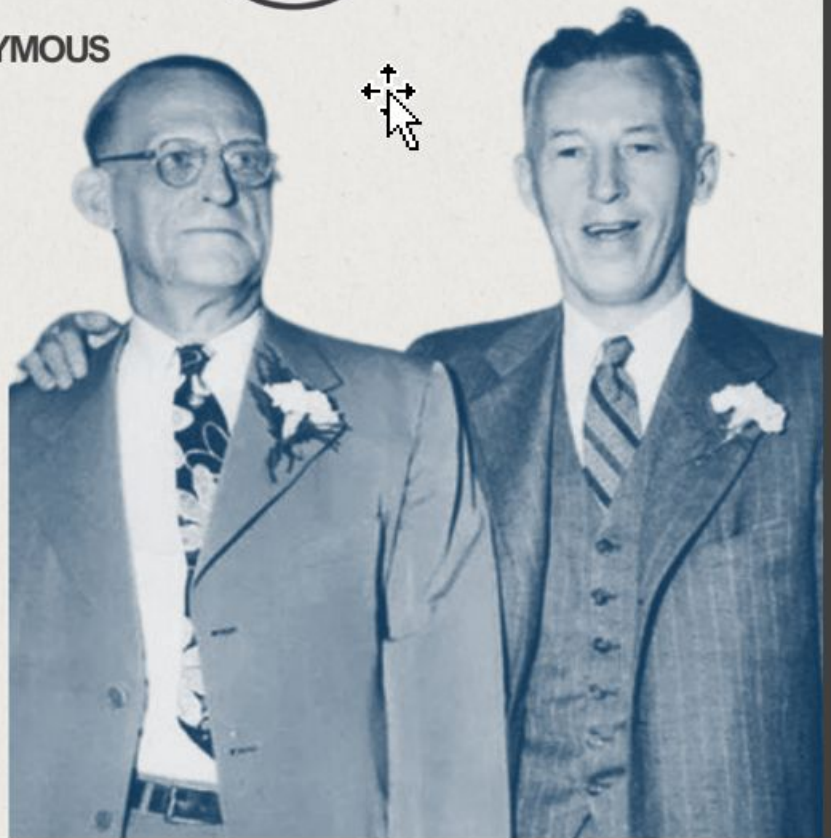
TUESDAYS
@ 8 PM

FIRST MEETING
JANUARY 14TH

WHERE

HOLY TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH

350 E MADISON ST
LOMBARD, IL



NEW BIG BOOK MEETING IN WEST SUBURBS

A.A. International Convention

90 Years - Language of the Heart

July 3 - 6, 2025
Vancouver, BC, Canada



There is still time to register and attend A.A.'s 90th Anniversary Celebration!

Did you know our room blocks are constantly being updated? Keep checking back to see what becomes available! Register here! <https://www.aa.org/international-convention>

What each attendee can expect?

Take part in the Thursday night party, flag ceremony, the stadium meetings and the Saturday night old timers' meeting.

Over 20+ Hospitality suites, collecting pins and how some people bring some to trade or share.

Over 250 different meetings to pick from. The types of meetings that take place are clergy panels, international, and of course, A.A. topic related.

There are marathon meetings overnight for those who can sleep after the convention is over!

Grapevine is onsite, we have a carry the message pavilion and the infamous GSO archives display.

The Saturday night old timer's meeting is so special, A.A. member attendees with a certain number of years of sobriety, usually around 50+, sign up starting on Thursday. Then, Saturday night, all those attendees who signed up sit together and random names are drawn for them to come up to the Stadium Podium and share for about 8 minutes how they have stayed sober. Amazing shares ensue, as you can imagine.

We understand many have never experienced an International Convention. With 10 years since the last convention, we have lost a lot of knowledge about what to expect, people think it is like their local round-up or state convention. NO.

This is the chance to hear from non-alcoholic professionals directly, international attendees, archives display – the things you don't get at other events. The clock is ticking towards the 2025 International Convention in Vancouver, British Columbia start date on July 3, 2025, through July 6, 2025, and there is so much excitement to share.

Patrick C.
International Convention Coordinator

Reflections on AA International Conventions:

From Goosebumps to Gratitude: The Spirit of AA Conventions
By Jeane Mc | Sober Since 03.23.1981

I've had the wild, wonderful privilege of attending several AA International Conventions—San Diego, Minneapolis, Toronto, and Atlanta. Picture it: thousands of alcoholics and Al-Anons taking over city centers, flooding hotels and meeting halls. Hundreds of meetings, live music, dances, hugs on every corner. Strangers giving directions like locals, everyone hanging out or moving with purpose—as if guided by something sacred. It's surreal, in the best possible way.

With 44 years of continuous sobriety, I can say without hesitation: these gatherings have uplifted, strengthened, and reaffirmed my recovery. One of my favorite AA slogans—"Live and Let Live"—has deepened in meaning as I've witnessed people from around 90 countries come together. Different races, beliefs, politics, and identities—but the same core struggle. The same hope. That simple phrase keeps me grounded in my own recovery instead of trying to control the world around me.

The Flag Ceremony: Always the Showstopper
Saturday night is the highlight. Picture a massive stadium. Every country represented by someone humbly walking in with their flag. The crowd erupts. Goosebumps are automatic. I cry. Every. Single. Time. Then come the speakers—somehow, they always say something that feels ripped straight from your own journal.

60th Anniversary | San Diego, CA – 1995

Theme: "A.A. Everywhere – Anywhere" | Attendance: 56,000

My first convention. I went alone and stayed in a college dorm that might as well have been on the moon—it was that far. After some long, hot treks, I finally broke down and rented a car. But I was energized, completely lifted by being among so many like-minded people. I soaked up the hospitality rooms, live music, dances, and of course, an incredible range of meetings.

65th Anniversary | Minneapolis, MN – 2000

Theme: "Pass It On – Into the 21st Century" | Attendance: 47,500

This one was the most meaningful—I went with my 10-year sober mom. Sharing that experience with her remains one of my most cherished memories. One unexpected highlight? Attending a meeting in Norwegian (my grandmother's language). We didn't understand a word, but we still felt connected. It was oddly beautiful. The conference offered over 200 meetings in around 10 languages. Recovery really is universal.

70th Anniversary | Toronto, ON, Canada – 2005

Theme: "I Am Responsible" | Attendance: 43,700

I went with my sponsor at the time, and we had a plan: start with some sightseeing from a budget hotel on the outskirts, then move to the InterContinental once the conference began. Yes, jazz was definitely part of the itinerary. But the trip took an unexpected turn—during the convention, she came to the short-term conclusion that she wasn't an alcoholic. It hit hard. She was unraveling in a way I hadn't seen coming. And since she was driving, the ride home was long and harrowing. That experience was, and still is, a powerful reminder of just how personal—and fragile—this journey can be.

"With 44 years of continuous sobriety, I can say without hesitation: these gatherings have uplifted, strengthened, and reaffirmed my recovery."

80th Anniversary | Atlanta, GA – 2015

Theme: "Happy, Joyous, & Free" | Attendance: 57,000

Another solo trip, but I reconnected with old AA friends. We hit many speaker meetings together. I also volunteered at the Public Information booth. Those hours of service gave me a sense of purpose and helped me stay grounded in recovery. Giving back, even in a small way, always gives me more than I expect.

More reflections and thoughts on AA International Conventions

I attended my first International Convention (IC) in 2010. It was held in San Antonio, Texas, and the theme of the convention was "A Vision for You". It celebrated A.A.'s 75th year, and although the "big meetings" were held in the Alamodome, the fellowship who showed up from all over the world during that IC took over the entire city. More than 50,000 people participated in the 75th anniversary International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous, making it the largest single event San Antonio had ever hosted at that time.

On our first night, we checked into a small hotel about a mile or so from the Alamodome. Someone had posted a note on the entry door to the hotel that said, "Today is my 25-year (sober) anniversary! Come and celebrate with me in the lobby at 5 pm." We had no idea who she was, but that didn't matter. Of course, we wanted to help celebrate her anniversary! We went down to the lobby a little before the scheduled celebration time, and there was already a good-sized crowd. Unfortunately, this ever-growing group was unintentionally getting in the way of the guest check-in process, so they moved us to a conference room. And more and more people kept coming. We all talked and laughed with our new friends as if we had known each other for years. At one point, I was sitting on the floor – sandwiched between a gentleman from Zimbabwe, Africa, and a woman with long, flowing gray hair from the Faroe Islands, a territory outside of Denmark – thinking "This is absolutely amazing. And really crowded!" When our celebrant finally came in, there were almost a hundred people crammed into the room and down the hallway, all to personally wish a complete "stranger" a very happy anniversary.

Besides the big meetings, there was a flag ceremony on Friday night featuring contingents from the more than 90 countries represented at

the convention. Smaller group meetings and workshops were held at other locations on different topics at a variety of downtown locations and many of our membership took advantage of local law enforcement for photo opportunities, with one man next to me saying "I've never had my picture taken with a cop before that didn't involve my arrest." It was such a great experience that we could not wait until 2015 and the International Convention in Atlanta.

The 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous was held in Atlanta, Georgia. It was a celebration of AA's 80th anniversary, with the theme "80 Years - Happy, Joyous and Free". The convention featured the big meeting in the Georgia Dome and smaller meetings in the Georgia World Congress Center and local hotels. All of the meetings I attended were in English, but there were also meetings available in Spanish, French, Italian, German, Japanese, Russian, Polish, Portuguese, Finnish, Lithuanian, Swedish, and American Sign Language. This IC was a little different in that the A.A. International Convention was one of three large conventions taking place that week in Atlanta. Even though this convention was one of several, the attendance was even higher than the attendance in San Antonio, and that was never more evident than the dozens and dozens of people competing to eat at the downtown Waffle House each morning! A highlight was one of the speakers from the closing meeting. A very nervous young man shared his story from the podium. He was celebrating his 4th year of sobriety. He was also incarcerated in a local Georgia prison system and was being "let out" for this one event. He shared one of the most amazing stories I've ever heard. In a crowd of over 60,000 people in the Georgia Dome, you could hear a pin drop as he shared what got him involved in the correctional system, what happened, and what's it's like now as a sober

More reflections and thoughts on AA International Conventions

Cont: member of Alcoholics Anonymous (and as an inmate firefighter) doing life, on life's terms.

We, of course, registered for the 2020 A.A. International Convention in Detroit. But the pandemic had other plans. So here we are with less than 54 days as of this writing before we find ourselves in Vancouver, BC to meet more new friends and have even more incredible experiences. There are some downsides to attending an event of this magnitude. There are lots and lots (and lots) of people. And with tens of thousands of people all gathered together, nothing happens quickly. But everyone is good-natured, relatively patient, and working towards not having to make amends later. Yet most importantly, there is nothing that compares to being in a stadium with those same tens of thousands of alcoholics, saying a closing prayer, and enjoying the fellowship of the spirit that has brought us together in unity for 90 years! -Lisa S.

Tips from a Convention Veteran

Over the years, I've learned a few things. Once the conference kicks off, stay close to the center. Trust me, proximity is peace. Before the excitement starts, though, I'm all for a less expensive spot on the outskirts to squeeze in some sightseeing. Those pre-conference days are the perfect time to adjust before the briskly moving convention begins.

This year, I'm reluctantly sitting out the Vancouver convention in person due to a knee injury. But I'll be tuning in online. For now, I'm living off the memory of past conferences—and my internal highlight reel is packed. These events have shaped me. They've reminded me that no matter how different we are, recovery gives us something profound to share. And that? That keeps me coming back. - J.M.

Top 10 Reasons I'm going to the International in Vancouver, Canada 2025

10. I wanted to go to the one in 2020 in Detroit, MI, but it was canceled because of COVID.
9. Just for today, I'm alive and sober for another 24 hours.
8. Don, Olis, and Sam from the Grapevine podcast have been talking about and going to the event.
7. I'm grateful for another opportunity to learn H.O.W. we treat our alcoholism with the fellowship.
6. I get to, I want to, and I'm willing to participate in the experience of the 5-year celebration.
5. It is an opportunity for my spiritual growth.
4. My sponsor and her sponsor (my grand-sponsor) are going to the International event.
3. It's an affordable "Super Bowl" event for people who have a desire to stop drinking.
2. I'm looking forward to meeting friends I haven't met yet, from all around the world.
1. God (my higher power's name) does for me what I cannot do for myself!

G.W.
Elmhurst, IL