

Produced monthly by the AA members in the Greater Toronto Area

BETTER TIMES

May
2018



LEGACY OF SERVICE INFORMATION AA DAY 2018

519 CHURCH STREET COMMUNITY CENTRE

519 CHURCH STREET, TORONTO, ON M4Y 2C9

REGISTRATION: \$5.00

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**ALCOHOLICS
ANONYMOUS**



SATURDAY MAY 26, 2018
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EVENT HOURS FROM 8:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

masthead & wordsearch

BETTER TIMES is published monthly for AA members in the Greater Toronto Area.

234 Eglinton Ave. E.
Suite 202
Toronto, Ont.
M4P 1K5

Telephone: 416-487-5591
Fax: 416-487-5855
TTY: 416-487-5062

bettertimes@aatoronto.org
www.aatoronto.org

Editorial committee:

Chair – Chris C.
Editor-in-Chief – Maija P.
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Layout Editor – Lisa T.

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Submit group news, medallions, other event notices, letters to the editor or articles to BETTER TIMES before the 7th of the month prior to the month of issue by mail, fax or email.

Submissions should be 200 to 500 words and may be made online at www.aatoronto.org or emailed to bettertimes@aatoronto.org. Only signed submissions with a means of contact will be accepted. Your anonymity will be protected.

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DON'T GET BAFFLED WORD SEARCH

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T E H M I C H I G A N A L G I V B U O I K G Z A V J U U X L T V S
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Alabama	Alaska	Arizona	Arkansas	California
Colorado	Connecticut	Delaware	Florida	Georgia
Hawaii	Idaho	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa
Kansas	Kentucky	Louisiana	Maine	Maryland
Massachusetts	Michigan	Minnesota	Mississippi	Missouri
Montana	Nebraska	Nevada	New Hampshire	New Jersey
New Mexico	New York	North Carolina	North Dakota	Ohio
Oklahoma	Oregon	Pennsylvania	Rhode Island	South Carolina
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To contact the committees, please email:

Accessibility: accessibility@aatoronto.org
Archives: archives@aatoronto.org
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Finance: finance@aatoronto.org
Ontario Regional Conference: orc@aatoronto.org
Public Information: pi@aatoronto.org
12th Step: 12step@aatoronto.org

Letter from the Editor

Greetings Friends!

It has now been a full year since I have had the honour of serving as Editor of Better Times. It has been a wonderful challenge at this point in my sobriety but also a fantastic gift and insight as to the outstanding level of service that happens outside the group level in the GTA and in AA. I thank everyone I have had the pleasure of working with and look forward to my second year and final year with gratitude (remember the Spirit of Rotation!).

I have been a big fan of the 12 Concepts of AA since I was introduced to them in

my second or third year of sobriety when I became the GSR of my home group. I had been ignorant of these critical principles of the program and when a dear friend and member of my group handed me my first Service Manual to “dive in to,” I began my study. We have been publishing the short form version of them monthly in this publication and this May we have arrived at the 11th Concept, the last of the specific concepts before we arrive at The Warranties found in Concept 12. It is a testament to those who conceived the concepts that there were some savvy business folk in the mix and we can see by studying them that these concepts can

be applied to work life in real time! The values of leadership, fair compensation, rotation and the importance of providing fair status are heavy in this month’s concept. Give it a read! It really is very fascinating.

Spring has sprung! I hope you are enjoying it wherever you are both in program and in life!

Yours in love and service,
Maija, Editor-in-Chief

My Service is My Gratitude Mon Service est Ma Gratitude

When I came to AA, my sponsor told me that gratitude is not only money but also helping others in their sobriety, so he involved me at the group and invited me to a district meeting six months later to show me the different possibilities in service.

My sobriety being September 1, 1985, I had the opportunity to serve at many positions. Keeping involved is my way to make good friends and share my good or sad moments in life with them. Rotation is important also, since many of the district members are the same for many years and the principle of rotation is alienated.

For me, to be grateful is to be of service to the fellowship.

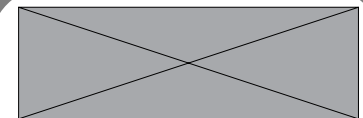
Bert J., Silverbirch,
GTAI Chair

Quand je suis arrivé chez les AA, mon parrain m’a dit que la gratitude n’est pas seulement de l’argent, mais aussi d’aider les autres dans leur sobriété. Il m’a donc impliqué au sein du groupe et m’a invité à une réunion de district six mois plus tard pour me montrer les différentes possibilités de service.

Ma sobriété étant le 1er septembre 1985, j’ai eu l’occasion de servir à de nombreuses positions. Rester impliqué est ma façon de me faire de bons amis et de partager avec eux mes bons ou tristes moments dans la vie. La rotation est importante aussi, car de nombreux membres de districts sont les mêmes depuis de nombreuses années et le principe de la rotation est aliéné.

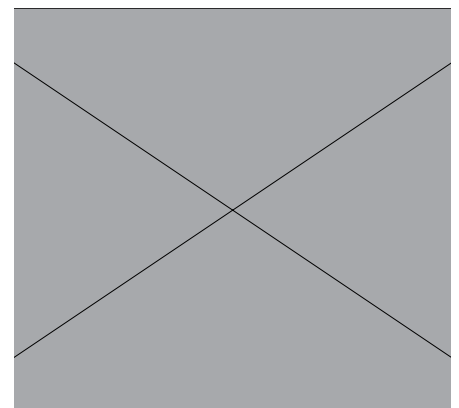
Pour moi, être reconnaissant est d’être au service de la fraternité

Bert J., Silverbirch,
Président de GTAI

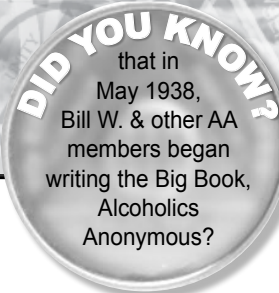


We would love to publish your stories of experience, hope and strength, your understanding of steps and traditions, and your thoughts on the principles of the program.

Please submit your ideas to
bettertimes@aatoronto.com



DID YOU KNOW... that on May 10, 1935 a business deal brought Bill W. to Akron, he attended the annual stockholders meeting of the National Rubber Machinery Company in an attempt to take over the company & lost the proxy fight? Bill remained behind at the Mayflower Hotel very discouraged and afraid he might drink.



Concept Eleven

While the trustees hold final responsibility for AA's world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Therefore, the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.

In this, the second longest of the Concepts, Bill explains in great detail the composition, functions and relationships

of the standing committees of the General Service Board, its subsidiary operating boards, the General Service Office and the AA Grapevine — as they existed in 1962. As AA has grown and changed, many of the descriptions would be different today, and some of the issues that are addressed are no longer relevant. Nevertheless, the full text is valuable as an historical document, and many of the principles still apply, as summarized below.


Underlying the service structure we have been discussing, there is another, internal structure of service consisting of the non-trustee members of the trustees' committees; the non-trustee directors of the two operating boards, and the executives and staff members. "Members of this group," declares Bill, "not only support the leadership of the trustees: they share leadership with them." The following are "several principles . . . which" apply to AA

World Services, Inc. and the AA Grapevine, Inc.:

1. The status of executives: No active service can function well unless it has sustained and competent executive direction. This must always head up in one person, supported by such assistants as he needs. That person has to have ample freedom and authority to do his job, and he should not be interfered with so long as his work is done well.

2. Paid workers, how compensated: Each paid executive, staff member or consultant should be recompensed in reasonable relation to the value of his or her similar services or abilities in the commercial world . . . Cheap help is apt to feel insecure and inefficient. It is very costly in the long run. This is neither good spirituality nor good business. Assuming service money is available, we should therefore compensate our workers well.

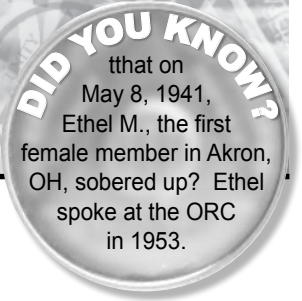
3. Rotation among paid staff workers: At AA's General Service Office, most staff members' assignments are changed every two years. When engaged, each staff member is expected to possess the general ability to do, or to learn how to do, any job in the place — excepting for office management.

4. Full "Participation" of paid workers is highly important: We have already discussed the necessity of giving key paid personnel a voting representation on our committees and corporate boards. They should enjoy a status suitable to their responsibility, just as our volunteers do. 

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DID YOU KNOW... that on May 3, 1980, the first Information AA Day was held in Toronto? It was a combined effort of Toronto Intergroup & the six districts in and around the city.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kipling group's 40th anniversary
Thursday, May 17, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Olivet New Church
279 Burnhamthorpe Road, Etobicoke

Info AA Day
Saturday, May 26, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
519 Church St. Community Centre
519 Church St., Toronto

13th Annual East Toronto Archives Breakfast
Sunday, June 3 at 9 a.m.
SSIS Banquet Hall
3474 Kingston Road

TELEPHONE GREETERS WANTED

I am responsible.

When anyone, anywhere,
reaches out for help,
I want the hand of A.A.
always to be there.

And for that, I am responsible.

Phone training is now the first Sunday of every month. To book an appointment, please call 416-487-5591 or contact the 12th Step Committee.



13th Annual East Toronto Archives Breakfast

Hi there again! Another year has gone by. Congratulations to the newcomers who have received their chips. Congratulations to everybody who has, One Day at a Time by the Grace of a Higher Power this past year, not picked up their first drink.

A sponsor of mine, who has since passed, suggested that I pray to my Higher Power daily and ask for the power to refuse the first drink. That would still give me the freedom to do whatever I chose to do, but with the power granted to me to refuse that first drink, I would stay sober. What a concept. One Day at a Time. Seems so simple.

This year, we're celebrating 75 years of Alcoholics Anonymous in Canada. The age-old principle of one alcoholic talking to another and sharing their experience, strength and hope with each other has sustained the Fellowship to be able to carry the message of **Recovery and Hope** to the still suffering alcoholic. We experience our individual miracles daily by not picking up our first drink and we

collectively extend that miracle to anybody who wants it. For those without hope, we can set an example of an approach that really works. We can become the walking, breathing, talking embodiment of a spiritual awakening which is still left open to each and every one of us to embrace as we would wish.

That being said, we invite everybody out to the **13th Annual East Toronto Archives Breakfast to be held at the QSSIS Banquet Hall, Sunday, June 3, at 3474 Kingston Road, just west of Markham Road.** We had a great time last year, and the year before that, and the year before that!

The breakfast is co-hosted by Toronto City East District 18 and Scarborough District 22. Admission is still only \$20. There are door prizes, a raffle and the sobriety countdown. Our guest speaker will share their experience strength and hope and their history in Alcoholics Anonymous.

We all love going to AA and stretching out our arms to the wide open road of Recovery. We love the gift of confidence we have been given in the Spiritual Truths that have been expressed to us by everyone who has set foot into a meeting. That's why we continue to do service. We're not perfect. It's progress rather than perfection, but hey... compared to what it was like, and what it could have been like, if we hadn't stumbled in through the doors of AA that first time... there is room for Gratitude.

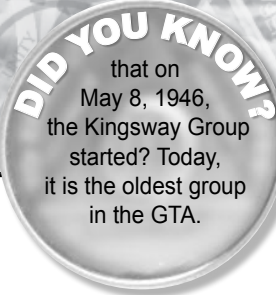
Doors open at 9 a.m. for coffee, Fellowship and historical displays of Archives material. Be sure to check out the new movie, Canadian Perspective – A History of Alcoholics Anonymous and AA in Ontario.

Please get your tickets by Wednesday, May 30, so we can plan for the number of breakfasts needed. Unfortunately, tickets will not be available at the door. Keep an eye out for our flyers with ticket information. See you on June 3!



DID YOU KNOW... that in May 1946, the long form Twelve Traditions (12 Points Assure Our Future prior to name 12 Traditions) are published in the AA Grapevine?

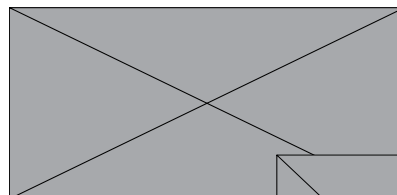
medallions & archives



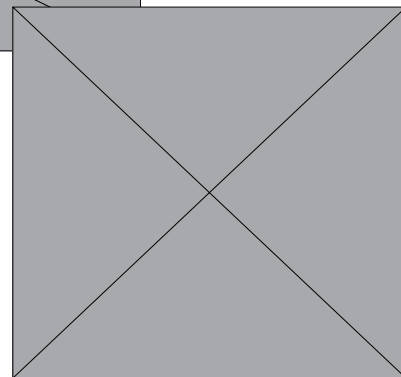
MEDALLIONS

Vasili K.	1	Bayview	Apr. 22
Dianna T.	35	Erin Mills	Apr. 23
Susanne F.	1	Golden Mile	Apr. 25
Greg C.	30	Cornerstone Big Book	Apr. 27
Barry W.	10	Church St.	Apr. 28
Stanley G.	10	Erin Mills	Apr. 30
Mike M.	30	Glenhome	Apr. 30
Chris D.	5	Willowdale	May 3
Tony F.	1	Richmond Hill	May 4
Laura S.	10	Aurora	May 6
Dave McC.	1	Pine Hills	May 7
Dae L.	40	Willowdale	May 10
Lonnie D.	40	Sobriety Plus	May 15
Coly K.	20	Willowdale	May 17
Phyllis L.	35	Willowdale	May 19
Sheila J.	1	Morning Discussion	May 20
Dave M.	5	Beverly Hills	May 25
Zin W.	25	Bloordale	May 27

Due to ongoing submissions, this list may not be current.
For the latest information, please visit www.aatoronto.org



- Old books,
- brochures,
- flyers,
- photographs,
- CDs,
- DVDs
- & other materials from AA in Ontario!



To donate AA and GTA archival items to the GTA Archives, please contact the GTA Archivist Eddy G. at 416-536-7536.

Old GTA meeting books are needed for the GTA Archives.

From the archives with GTA Archivist Eddy G.

Recent items donated to the GTA Archives:

- Lakeshore group Feb. 22, 1948 table cover (41"x 27") with three name tags (Wayne McG., Harry B., George S.), donated by the Lakeshore group
- General Service Conference (GSC) Report 2016
- AA Conference-approved literature catalog 2016 & 2017, donated by Bob D. (Sobriety Plus group)
- Prayer card - Ronald Thomas R. "Rocket Ron" Dec. 2, 1932 – Jan. 24, 2018, donated by Marrey P. (Streetsville group).
- 12"x 18" stock card paper printed in Spanish the Serenity Prayer & 25th Anniversary "Grupo Sendero De Vida" – Toronto, May 29, 1989-2014
- 8"x 9" plastic 1/8" sheet printed in Spanish 28th Anniversary Grupo "27 De Mayo" in Hamilton, 1989-2017 donated by Angie R. (Kitchener)
- The AA Service Manual (1969 copyright)
- The AA Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service 2002-2003 Edition donated by George D. (St. Clements group).
- Erin Mills group 40th anniversary items: Historical with thanks to members, interview notes from long-time members, Erin Mills word cloud, Better Times article, Better Times January 2018 Issue (8 pages), donated by Mary M. (Erin Mills group)

Eddy G., Archivist



DID YOU KNOW... that in May 1949, Bill W. presented a talk to the American Psychiatric Association's 105th Annual Meeting in Montreal, Canada?

DID YOU KNOW?
that on
May 8, 1971,
Bill W. is buried
in a small private
ceremony in
East Dorset,
Vermont

I'm a member of the Intergroup Executive Committee and a liaison to the 12 Step Committee. I also serve on the overnight phones on rotating basis, and have served on the phones during regular hours as well.

The purpose of the Committee is the same as the primary purpose of AA: to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. Using the steps and traditions as guidance, we staff the main phone line at Intergroup to provide information to those who are attracted to us. We advise them of how the program works, where and when meetings are located, and on more nuanced questions.

One could interpret every phone call we take as a “12-Step call”, but in practice it is an in-person visit from 2 or more recovering alcoholics to carry our message to a suffering one. It’s usually requested of a group member by a loved one or acquaintance of the subject, but the phone greeters sometimes field requests and refer to our massive lists of 12-Steppers to find someone located close by and ideally with some similarity (age, gender, language, etc.).

Training is a misnomer – it's really orientation to the vast array of information we have available. We have lists of 12-Step call volunteers by geographical area, languages spoken, gender, age, availability to travel, and so on. We also have lists of detoxes, nearby Inter-

The Committee looks for regular and permanent commitments: it's better that one commits to a short shift once every four weeks and always shows up, than committing to Saturday evenings every week and cancelling half of their shifts. We can accommodate all sorts of schedules and there are shifts in 2, 2.5, 4, and 5 hour blocks, arranged in four week schedules. The sobriety requirement is one year of continuous sobriety.

I really like being able to pass on our program's complex and intimidating principles in digestible and simple ways to people who are just "dipping their toes in". Often you can actually hear their relief over the phone when they realize AA is probably a good idea and they aren't alone, and that what we're offering isn't scary at all.

I've only been doing this for a year-and-a-half, but from what I've heard, they have dropped off dramatically. A lot of our meeting information and our program's material is available for free online. We tend to get calls from people who are looking for meetings, have specific questions, or are what we call "se-

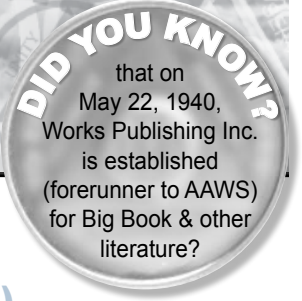
Call Intergroup between 9 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. and express your interest. Ask for the next training date and show up, and you'll be in the trenches in no time.



God grant me
the Serenity
to accept the things
I cannot change,
Courage to
change the things I can,
and Wisdom to
know the difference.



BETTER TIMES MAY 2018 7



History of Information AA Day:

Six Districts and Toronto Intergroup - 1995 (Seven Districts)

The following Information AA Day history was obtained from Tommy Hills Fonds (records) from cooperative meetings: General Service and Toronto Intergroup, Information AA Day, Feb. 20, 1996. All text is original except 2005 to 2015.

1979 preliminary discussions:

- The three people primarily responsible for this day were Tom Hills, Sandi Taggart & Murray Dorey.
- Initially the tickets of admission were \$1. It was held in a high school because there were many rooms where various committees could have meetings. The panel participants were split evenly between Intergroup and the service Districts.
- The name Information AA was chosen to share information available in Toronto from all sources with all members in Toronto. The day was also for the Delegates to give their report from the General Service Conference in New York to all members of AA in Toronto as soon after the Conference as possible. It was also used to introduce one member of the staff from New York.
- Re-districting had just occurred. Districts had increased from four to six as of Jan. 1, 1980. It was felt it would save money by having the Delegate come once for all six districts.
- It was emphasized that members participating were to be chosen evenly from Intergroup and the General Service Districts.
- Information AA Day committee was to consist of the DCMs and the Operating Committee members of Toronto Intergroup.
- The chairperson of the first Information AA Day on May 3, 1980, was Tom Hills, DCM Toronto City East.

Price of tickets:

1980 - 1981	\$1
1982 - 1988	\$3
1989 - 2018	\$5

Information AA Day locations:

1980 - 1986	Bathurst Heights Secondary School
1987 - 1988	Downsview Secondary School
1989 - 2004	Lansing United Church
2005	Walmer Road Baptist Church
2006 - 2011	Lansing United Church *
2012 - 2014	Thornhill Community Centre
2015 - 2018	519 Church St. Community Centre

* The move to Lansing United Church was made because the high schools were raising their prices and it was becoming difficult to meet the costs of the location, the Delegate and the person from New York. It also meant the format of Information AA Day had to change since there was no longer the number of rooms available to permit meetings of all the service committees.

Researched by Eddy G., GTA Archivist, on May 24, 2012.
Revised on September 26, 2012, and May 29, 2015.

The following excerpt is taken from a May 11, 1980, letter from Tommy Hills to Bob Dobson:

"I wish to Thank You on behalf of the committee & myself for your participation in our Information AA Day. It was the first time that the six General Service Districts in and around Metropolitan Toronto and Toronto Intergroup have combined to inform the membership about the services being performed.

There has always been confusion and to some people a mystery about what is being done and by whom. I suspect there is still a great deal to be explained and only the tip of the iceberg has been revealed, but the initial attempt has now been made to have everyone involved. Hopefully this first approach will be expanded and become at least an annual gathering in Toronto."

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519 CHURCH STREET, TORONTO, ON M4Y 2C9

REGISTRATION: \$5.00

DID YOU KNOW... that in May 1938 Bill & Lois visit Bill R. in Hackettstown, NJ? It was Hackettstown Courier Post that ran the first newspaper article on AA.?