

JUNE 2025 CARRYING THE MESSAGE

The Sixth Tradition speaks about the AA name. AA's Primary purpose is to "carry the message to another alcoholic".

SHARE YOUR STORY



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BETTER TIMES is published monthly for AA members in the Greater Toronto Area.
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Submit Group News, medallions, event notices, letters to the editor and articles to Better Times, before the 10th of the month prior to month of issue by email to

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THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A MILESTONE TO REEVALUATE SOBRIETY



I was over 14 years sober and thinking about how far I had come leading up to my 15-year medallion. I didn't ever leave AA because of a problem with the program, it was life that got in the way. I had been discovering other avenues for my spiritual journey through the communities of yoga, Buddhism and eventually Codependence Anonymous throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic.

At the age of 58, after a couple of failed marriages and now grown children, it was the first time in my life that I was living totally alone. That was a huge lesson in itself, because similar to getting sober in 2008, it was a time for self-reflection and self-awareness that it was just me who I had any right to change. I was feeling left out and lonely, and with that hollow feeling in my soul, I once again felt that something was missing, and I knew the answers could be found by being part of the in-person fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I decided to focus my attention on the program again and get back out there to new meetings so I could be in the middle again. I started "shopping around" for a new homegroup, even though it was very uncomfortable to be new to meetings, but not new to the program. I picked up a chip to recommit, joined the group, and became as active as I could. That was the new beginning...

Fortunately, I had a pretty solid recovery in the past. Having begun my journey through detox and treatment, then a homegroup and sponsor, I had a pretty large toolbox to utilize over the years. Although my original sponsor passed away, I remained close with a small group of AA friends, and one stepped in as a new sponsor. This helped me stay sober, but my emotional sobriety was becoming a wreck. I have heard it said in many meetings that before someone had a relapse, they stopped going to meetings, stopped working with a sponsor and lost track of the whole program. I, too, was afraid of this and recognized some new defects of character that were totally messing up my state of mind. I was an emotional wreck, full of fear and blame and could not get myself "back on the beam".

Remembering how, during my first AA talk, I was so grateful for the program and the people in it, I vowed to myself that when the time was right later in my sobriety, I would give back by sponsoring and doing service.

I realized that I was now that woman with years of sobriety and was able to commit to helping others. I literally prayed to my newfound God that I was ready for service again and put the idea back out into the universe. I just had to show up for the magic to happen again. I finally joined a large group, chaired the meeting, and a newcomer asked me to be their sponsor. At the business meeting, I committed to being the key holder to open the meeting. I found a new sponsor that has been working with me since.

Fast forward to now... After receiving my 15-year medallion and digging into the step work with my sponsee, life is incredible. I have had another Spiritual Awakening as a result of working the program, having an open mind and practicing the principles in all my affairs. I am trying to be more kind and understanding to all people in my life and have continued to work on myself, constantly handing things over to the god of my understanding. I go to book studies, new groups, retreats, and push myself outside my comfort zone while also sharing my insights and practicing balance through self-care and self-love. Some days are not easy at all, but a quick "remember when" to the days and feelings before sobriety are all I need to trust that God and AA are always within my grasp.

In closing, what I have heard in meetings and now know for myself is that you cannot stay sober physically and emotionally today on yesterday's sobriety. It is a gift just for today, and I have to work at it. What I hear in meetings and the support from showing up is the medicine I need to keep my addiction at bay. It is always there, waiting for me to slip up and mess with my mind. I can't keep it if I don't give it away, so I help others when I can and keep an open mind to learn something new every day

I am truly blessed!

-Heidi B., Toronto

Post Event - 20th Annual East Toronto Archives Breakfast (ETAB)

On Sunday, April 27, 2025, the 20th Annual East Toronto Archives Breakfast was held at Qssis Banquet Hall.

Sunday morning members came into the large banquet hall, found a seat with their group members or friends, had coffee, tea & fellowship. Others were looking at all the display tables that were set up. On one side of the wall, on 6 ft. tables, there were 3- GTA Archives Displays- Early AA, Early Toronto AA & ORC histories. At the opposite side of the wall, there were District 18 & 22 Archives Displays set up with group & meeting histories & TVs showing group photo slides. Also, a Grapevine Display was set up with many books for sale & two large cardboard cutouts of Victor E. & Clara T. The room was filled with The Fellowship of the Spirit.

The Host, Lynn E. DCM District 18, invited Eddy G. from the Beaches Group to give a brief East Toronto Archives Breakfast (ETAB) history presentation.

In 2005, District 22 set up an Archives Committee consisting of Eddy G. (1st District 22 Archives Chair), Ed H. (Twelve Step Group), Matti H. (Wanstead Group) and a few other individuals. It was Matti's idea to set up an Archives Breakfast in the east end with District 18, like the Gratitude Dinner (held from 1973-2000 by Districts 18 & 22). The purpose was to bring awareness about archives & preserving archives in each district.

An Ad hoc Committee was formed consisting of Eddy G., Ed H., Matti H., Joe C., Cathie D. & Marie C. from District 22 & Mike F. (1st District 18 Archives Chair) from District 18. GSR's in District 22, over a period of three months were asked if their group members were interested in a lunch or brunch. With positive feedback & support from the district the committee started to develop this special event.

On Sun., May 28, 2006, the first East Toronto Archives Breakfast was held at Embers Banquet Hall on Warden Ave. The first speakers were Ron D. (Bellamy Group) & Dorteia McL. (12 Traditions Group). The event combined a Breakfast & Brunch Buffet with the cost of \$25 per ticket. 64 people attended. It was successful & the proceeds after a reserve was established were split between Districts 18 & 22 Archives Committees.

Over the years, ETAB has been held at Flipper's Fish House (2007), Ellas Banquet Hall (2008), Embers (2009 & 2010) & Qssis Banquet Hall (2011 -2019). The 15th ETAB in 2020 was cancelled because of the Covid Pandemic. The 16th & 17th ETAB were held virtually online. After Covid, in 2023 ETAB 18 was back in person at Qssis Banquet Hall & also the 19th (2024) & the 20th (2025).

We have had many great speakers at ETAB, some have passed away, but all gave inspiring talks, some comical others serious, but all had one theme & that was to carry the AA message to all who are willing to sit & listen.

Back to today's event, the Host, Lynn asked Carol C. from the Fifth Tradition Group to say Grace. Then the 105 members that attended the event enjoyed the company & conversations with each other at the table while having breakfast.

Then it was time for the open meeting. The chair Joe A. District 22 DCM asked for memorial mentions, to call out members names & the group they belonged to that have passed away in the last year. When there was stillness, A Moment of Silence & the Serenity Prayer was recited by the members.



The guest speaker, Ed H. of the Pine Hills Group, with 53 yrs of sobriety, shared his experience, strength & hope. What it was like, what happened & what it's like today. The message was powerful & it was a good old-fashioned AA talk.

The sobriety countdown was done by Kat M. from the One Paragraph at a Time Group, who was so excited (this evening, Kat will celebrate her 1yr medallion). She called out every year from 65 years down to having a desire to stop drinking. Ben W. of the Thorncliff Park Group had the longest time sober with 63 yrs. He handed out Big Books to the four members with the least amount of sobriety.

Door & Raffle Prize Tickets were pulled out of a container; numbers were called out & members were jumped for joy as they won books & 2 free tickets to next years ETAB.

The 20th ETAB event closed with the Responsibility Statement. Members were hugging & acknowledging each other's company as they were happy to see old friends & meet new friends. The 105 members that attended, some have attended all the ETAB events, some many, some a few & there were approx. 15 members that attended for the first time.

The ETAB Archives Committee would like to Thank Everyone who attended this year's event & for their continued support in helping "Archives Stay Alive" in the East End.

-Eddy G, Beaches Group



US - Steve H. (1984) Westport By The Book

How many times do we go through the pain?
And just put it off, that we're only insane.

It's like hitting a wall for no reason at all.
The feeling was there, so why should we care?

The damage we do, without even a thought,
We're quick to criticize and are easily bought.

For that is our life, we know no other way,
We drown out our blues for another day.

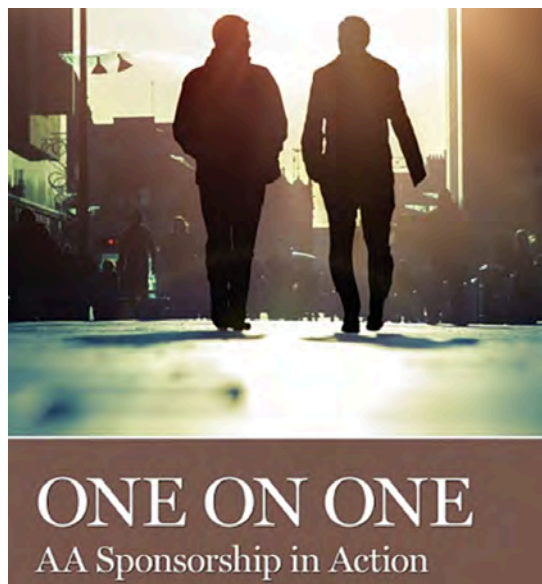
Have we ever begun and gotten scared just to finish?
We know how to start, but the rest will diminish.

We're so shallow and weak, we look for an out,
How do we live with ourselves and our doubts?

No need to answer, we've heard it before.
Follow us now and walk through the door.

Just sit and listen, we'll talk about "US",
You're not alone anymore, and help is a must.

GRAPEVINE BOOK OF THE MONTH



"In this collection, AA members write about their experience with sponsorship, including how to choose one, getting the courage to ask someone to be a sponsor, sharing their past and present with them, working with those having trouble staying sober, dealing with the loss of a beloved sponsor and more. From the program's early days, this special one-on-one sponsorship bond has been considered vital to getting sober, staying connected, and living a full, happy life."

<https://www.aagrapevine.org/store/one-big-tent?srltid=AfmBOorB7x9aX-Jl3ojrgZOA8SSFvW2Xlg1dPbHXbwS-XLSEfdRbbCfW>

-Imran R. Grapevine

GTAI/DISTRICT - JUNE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Accessibilities - Sun. June 15

ID: 824 8962 1874 - PW: 799763

Archives - Fri. June 13 - 7 p.m.

ID: 841 5376 9412 - PW: 018851

Communications - Tues. June 17 - 8 p.m.

ID: 850 5256 7237 - PW: 984555

CPC/PI - Tues. June 24 - 7 p.m.

ID: 854 7547 0291 - PW: 002060

Correctional Facilities - Tues. June 03 - 7 p.m.

ID: 883 8002 9737 - PW: 950392

Self-Support - Meets every other month.

Next Meeting: TBA

ID: 820 9238 0206 - PW: 319853

Treatment - Sun. June 15 - 4 p.m.

ID: 868 2207 4860 - PW: 787289

Twelfth Step - Wed. June 11 - 7 p.m.

ID: 813 0646 6967 - PW: 572531

IT Subcommittee - Mon. June 02 - 7 p.m.

ID: 814 0942 9019 - PW: 379691

Information AA Day - (TBA)

ID: 811 827 5978 - PW: 587553

SHARE YOUR STORY

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR BETTER TIMES' SPRING ISSUES

Spring Has Sprung- More Daylight - Do you have any tips for staying sober in spring?

Please scan the QR Code or tap this box and you will be directed to our anonymous content submission page.



Join the 12 Step Help Line Phone Greeter Team

Do you have 4 hours a month to do service outside your home group?

TRAINING AVAILABLE

ANSWER CALLS
REMOTELY OR IN THE
OFFICE

ONE YEAR SOBRIETY REQUIREMENT

COULD BE THE MOST
GRATIFYING SERVICE
OUTSIDE THE GROUP

phonegreetercoordinator@aatoronto.org

OR VISIT AATORONTO.ORG

LOOK FOR SERVICE COMMITTEES AND CLICK
ON 12TH STEP COMMITTEE

ARCHIVES CORNER

Did you Know ?

On June 10, 1935, Dr. Bob took his last drink. AA marks this date as the founding date of AA in Akron, Ohio by AA co-founders Bill W. & Dr. Bob. In his Big Book story, Dr. Bob describes his 3-day binge at an American Medical Association (AMA) Meeting in Atlantic City, NJ. On returning to Akron, Bill helped him through three days of sobering up to prepare for a scheduled surgery. Dr. Bob had his last drink on the day of the surgery outside Akron City Hospital.

On June 11, 1935, Dr. Bob suggested that he and Bill start working with other alcoholics. A local Minister, J C Wright, provided a prospect who lived down the street from Dr. Bob. He was quite a character, Bill & Dr. Bob tried in vain throughout the summer to sober up Eddie R., described as an "alcoholic atheist able to produce a major crisis of some sort about every other day." Eddie missed the chance to be AA #3 but later showed up at Dr. Bob's funeral in 1950. He was a year sober & attending the Youngstown, OH group. Eddie is mentioned in Dr. Bob & the Good Old Timers as the member who chased Anne (Dr. Bob's wife) with a butcher knife.

In June 1935, Bill W. moved to Dr. Bob's house at the request of Anne. He insisted on keeping liquor in the kitchen to prove that he & Bob could live in its presence. They all went to the Oxford Group meetings at the home of T Henry & Clarace Williams. T Henry, an executive with the National Rubber Machinery Co., lost his job due to the proxy fight that brought Bill to Akron. Favoured Scripture readings at the meetings were "The Sermon on the Mount," "First Corinthians Chapter 13," & the "Book of James."

On June 28, 1935, Bill W., Dr. Bob & Eddie R. visited Bill D., the "Man on the Bed," whose Big Book Story is "Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three" at City Hospital in Akron, Ohio. Bill D., a prominent attorney in Akron, was hospitalized 8 times in 1935 for his drinking. It took five days before he would admit he could not control his drinking. On Independence Day, July 4, he checked out of the hospital, never to drink again. Akron's Group #1 (AA's first group) marks its beginning as the date that Bill D. left the hospital. Although he is anonymously discussed in the Big Book chapter "A Vision for You," Bill D.'s personal story did not appear in either the original manuscript or the 1st Edition Big Book. The reasons are not clear. Bill W. went to Akron to personally record Bill D.'s story for inclusion in the 2nd Edition Big Book published in 1955. Bill D. spoke at the ORC in 1953.

In June 1938, Bill W. wrote to Dr. Bob (edited): "...I have...dictated...two chapters of the proposed book...an introduction and ...my own story...together with a rough outline of the contents of other chapters...use this...for discussion of what you folks out there believe the book ought to contain...the completed book should represent the work of many people, particularly the individual stories... They will naturally be the heart of the book...the chapter outline calls for nine stories of a chapter each...about the same length as my own... My feeling is that Anne should do the one portraying the wife of an alcoholic." Anne declined, and Bill wrote the chapter "To Wives," much to the dismay of his wife Lois. Bill also wrote to Dr. Bob, "By the way, you might be thinking up a good title. Nearly everyone agrees that we should sign the volume 'Alcoholics Anonymous'... What would you think about the formation of a charitable corporation to be called...Alcoholics Anonymous?"

In June 1939, The New York Times reviewer writes that the Big Book is "more soundly based psychologically than any other treatment I have ever come upon."

In June 1939, appearance of Morgan R. on Gabriel Heatter's radio program gives AA wide recognition. Before the show Morgan was kept under round-the-clock surveillance to make sure he didn't drink.

In June 1939, AA work spread from Towns Hospital to asylums in Greystone, NJ and Rockland, NY.

In June 1940, 100 people attended the first meeting at the first AA Clubhouse, "open every day" at 334-1/2 West 24th St., NYC.

In June 1974, in order to maintain subscriber anonymity, the legal name of "The AA Grapevine" was changed to "Box 1980" to comply with postal regulation requiring the corporate name of an organization be placed on official envelopes & on the magazine itself.

In June 1996, the first issue of La Vina was published on a bi-monthly basis.

Greater Toronto Area Groups That Started in June

June 11, 1946 - North Toronto Group

June 17, 1953 - Scarborough Group

June 6, 1958 - Silverbirch Group

June 23, 1968 - Mississauga Group

June 23, 1990 - Thursday East End Group

June 22, 1995 - Streetsville Saint Andrews Group

June 27, 2009 - Dry On Danforth Group

June 1, 2010 - Love and Tolerance Group

JUNE MEDALLIONS

Aman, Brampton Recovery Group, 1 yr, **June 18**

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Paul M., Friendly Group, 13 yrs, **June 05**

Manuel L., Portugese Group, 33 yrs, **June 10**

Adrian P., Birds of A Feather, 2 yrs, **June 12**

Jeff N., Friendly Group, 24 yrs, **June 19**

Paul W., Brampton Recovery Group, 2 yrs, **June 30**



TO DONATE AA/GTA ARCHIVAL
ITEMS TO ARCHIVES PLEASE
CONTACT ARCHIVIST EDDY G. 416-
536-7536 or archives@aatoronto.org
OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS ARE
NEEDED FOR THE ARCHIVES.



Scan this QR code to access more
"Better Times" issues!

IS THERE AN UPCOMING MEDALLION?

Please send your medallion details to bettertimes@aatoronto.org
in the format of:

name - homegroup - year(s) of sobriety - medallion date

Kindly note that Better Times only publishes the first year of continuous sobriety birthday celebrations or every subsequent 5th year of continuous sobriety (i.e. 1, 5, 10, 15, 20...)

GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE FOUNDERS DAY MEETING

King City Group
All Saints Anglican Church
12935 Keele Street
King City, ON L7B 1G2

Monday, June 16th, 2025 @ 8:00 P.M.

Chairperson: George H.
Speaker: Martin A. - The Forum Group,
Hamilton