

August 2026 Business Meetings

Home Group business meeting attendance is important for all members.

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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SERVICE IN AA: A PATH TO GROWTH AND GRATITUDE



Service has become one of the most important parts of my recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous. When I first came to AA, my focus was on staying sober and learning how to live without alcohol. Over time, I learned that recovery is about much more than abstinence. It involves personal growth, spiritual development, and helping others who struggle with alcoholism. Through serving as a greeter, sponsor, group secretary, and meeting chairperson, I have learned that service strengthens both the fellowship and my own recovery.

One of my current service commitments is serving as a greeter. Although it may seem like a simple role, it is often one of the most important. Many newcomers arrive at their first meeting feeling nervous, ashamed, or uncertain about what to expect. Some have spent years struggling alone and may feel isolated and hopeless. As a greeter, I have the opportunity to be one of the first people they meet. A warm smile, a friendly welcome, and a willingness to help can make someone feel accepted and comfortable enough to stay.

I remember how anxious I felt when I attended my first AA meeting. Because of that experience, I understand how important it is to create a welcoming environment. Greeting teaches me humility because it is not about recognition or praise. It is about helping others feel that they belong. Sometimes a small act of kindness can have a lasting impact on someone who is seeking recovery.

GRAPEVINE

https://www.aagrapevine.org/?srsltid=AfmBOoq6pkYTDz8fon1zHN2LOutD9zXR8hSGTn77kxjYbi_gBNuUpdd

SERVICE IN AA: A PATH TO GROWTH AND GRATITUDE (CONTINUED)

Another important service role I offer is temporary sponsorship. Sponsorship allows me to share the experience, strength, and hope that were freely shared with me. As a sponsor, my responsibility is not to tell someone how to live or to have all the answers. Instead, I help guide them through the Twelve Steps and encourage them in their recovery journey.

Sponsorship benefits both the sponsor and the sponsee. Sponsorship teaches patience, compassion, and understanding, as every individual progresses at a different pace. One of the most rewarding aspects of sponsorship is witnessing positive change. Watching someone gain confidence, develop hope, and begin rebuilding their life reminds me of the power of the AA program. It reinforces the principle that we keep what we have by giving it away.

In the past, I served as the secretary of my home group. This position involved responsibilities such as organizing meeting materials, making announcements, coordinating schedules, and helping ensure that meetings operated smoothly. While much of the work happened behind the scenes, it was essential to the group's functioning.

Serving as secretary taught me responsibility and dependability. The group relied on trusted servants to fulfill their commitments, and I learned the importance of showing up consistently and following through on my responsibilities. This role demonstrated that service is not always visible but remains vital to the fellowship's success.

I have also had the opportunity to chair meetings. Chairing requires preparation, leadership, and a commitment to serving the group. The chairperson helps create an atmosphere where members feel comfortable sharing openly and honestly. Responsibilities include introducing the meeting, keeping discussions focused, and ensuring that everyone is treated with respect.

When I first started chairing meetings, I felt nervous speaking in front of a group. Over time, the experience helped me become more confident and improved my communication skills. More importantly, it taught me the value of listening. A good chairperson is not the focus of the meeting but rather someone who helps create space for others to share their experiences. This role reinforced the AA principle that leaders are trusted servants whose purpose is to serve rather than direct.

Each of these service commitments has contributed to my growth and recovery. Greeting has taught me compassion and hospitality. Sponsorship has strengthened my understanding of the Twelve Steps and my commitment to helping others. Serving as secretary taught me responsibility and reliability, while chairing meetings helped me develop confidence and leadership through service.

Most importantly, these experiences have shown me that service is a cornerstone of recovery. AA continues to thrive because members willingly give their time and energy to help others. Service keeps me connected to the fellowship.

Today, I see service not as an obligation but as a privilege. The people who welcomed me, sponsored me, chaired meetings, and performed countless acts of service helped make my recovery possible. By serving others, I have the opportunity to give back what was freely given to me. In doing so, I strengthen my own sobriety while helping ensure that AA remains a place of hope and recovery for those who still suffer from alcoholism.

— Anonymous, GTA A.A.



SHARE YOUR STORY

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR BETTER TIMES'

Reminder that the Better Times **deadline for Submissions are due the 10th** of the month prior to the publication.

Share Your Thoughts and Pen a Letter to Better Times

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

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...)

GTAI/DISTRICT - AUGUST SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Accessibilities – Sun. Aug. 16th, Noon

ID: 824 8962 1874 - PW: 799763

Archives – Fri. Aug. 18th, 7 p.m.

ID: 841 5376 9412 - PW: 018851

Communications – Tue. Aug. 25th, 7 p.m.

ID: 850 5256 7237 - PW: 984555

CPC/PI – Tue. Aug. 25th, 7 p.m.

ID: 854 7547 0291 - PW: 002060

Correctional Facilities – Tue. Aug. 4th, 7 p.m.

ID: 883 8002 9737 - PW: 950392

Self-Support – Tue. Aug. 4th, 6:30 p.m.

ID: 897 3620 8895 - PW: 162629

Treatment – Sun. Aug. 16th, 7 p.m.

ID: 868 2207 4860 - PW: 787289

Twelfth Step Committee – Wed. Aug. 11th, 6 p.m.

ID: 980 8546 4617 - PW: 430387

IT Sub-committee – Mon. Aug. 3rd, 7 p.m.

ID: 814 0942 9019 - PW: 379691



Meetings to Go

A Mobile AA meeting for any fellowship member who, for whatever reason, cannot attend a regular AA meeting in the GTA due to accessibility barriers. Two AA volunteers will come to your residence with AA readings and a Big Book. You can also arrange an online zoom meeting. To learn more or to volunteer please contact:

accessibility@aatoronto.org or call 416-487-5591

GTA Intergroup Accessibility Committee



MEETINGS To GO ~ we'll come to you

Whatever reason:

Curfew
Homebound
Hospitalized
House arrest
Parents
Relocated
Sick
Shut-In
Travellers



Call 24/7 Help Line 416-487-5591 to arrange an AA meeting

Email us to bring a meeting to you: accessibility@aatoronto.org

August Medallions

Liz K. – Richmond Hill Group, 1 Year, August 9th, 2026

John C. – Pine Hills Group, 5 Years, August 10th, 2026

Stephan L. – Prince Edward Group, 1 Year, August 10th, 2026

Pedro T. – Brampton Recovery Group, 20 Years, August 12th, 2026

Laurie M. – King City Group, 1 Year, August 17th, 2026

Carolyn B. – Sunnyside Group, 25 Years, August 20th, 2026

Susan Ida B. – OISE Morning Discussion Group, 50 Years, August 22nd, 2026

Carmelo C. – Richmond Hill Group, 1 Year, August 26th, 2026

August Birthdays

Jim V. – Brampton Recovery Group, 3 Years, August 12th, 2026

Hafiez H. – Richmond Hill Group, 4 Years, August 12th, 2026

Gary W. – Brampton Recovery Group, 7 Years, August 21st, 2026

Mike P. – Brampton Recovery Group, 8 Years, August 29th, 2026

Announcements

Scarborough District 22 - 48th Edition Service Day

Saturday, September 26th, 2026, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Oakridge Community Centre: 63 Pharmacy Ave.

Light Refreshments provided - Plenty of Parking and Ramp Access

"SERVICE - THE JOY OF GIVING BACK"

You are warmly invited to join us for the 48th edition of **Scarborough's District 22 Service Day**. A community-focused event dedicated to sharing clear, accessible insight into what Alcoholics Anonymous is, how it works, and how it continues to help people around the world recover from alcoholism. Whether you're a professional in the community, a family member, a friend, or simply someone seeking understanding, this day offers an open door to learn, connect, and ask questions in a supportive environment.

Oakridge Community Centre. 63 Pharmacy Avenue, Scarborough. (Not far from Victoria Park Subway Station. **Saturday, September 26, 2026, from 1 pm - 4 pm.** Light refreshments.

Throughout the day, you'll hear from AA members who will share their personal experiences with alcoholism and recovery, offering honest perspectives on how the program has changed their lives. The theme this year is Service - The Joy of Giving Back. New this season is an interactive activity informally entitled *A Trip Around District 22 Awaits!* (The Passport Game). Attendees are encouraged to visit different service sub-committee booths by means of conversation to learn more about General Service and help carry the message, be it through the likes of Public Information, Correctional Facilities, and Grapevine.

There will be a two-person panel about service sponsorship. The Wheel of Service is making a return. Spin the wheel to share on a random topic associated with 12th Step Work. We'll also highlight how AA cooperates with, yet remains independent from, outside organizations such as healthcare providers, treatment centres, and social services, all the while maintaining the spirit of anonymity.

District 22 Service Day is designed to be welcoming and pressure-free. There is no cost, no registration required, and no obligation to participate beyond listening. There is plenty of free parking at the centre with a ramp; fully accessible. Our goal is simply to provide accurate information, dispel misconceptions, and offer a space where anyone can learn more about AA's purpose and principles.

We encourage you to attend, bring your questions, and engage with members who are committed to sharing AA's message of hope. Whether you're exploring resources for yourself, supporting someone you care about, or seeking professional insight, this Service Day is an opportunity to deepen your understanding of recovery and community.

We look forward to seeing you there!

— Charlene H. Anniversary Group

ARCHIVES CORNER – DID YOU KNOW?

On **Aug. 8, 1879**, AA's Co-founder Dr. Bob (Robert Holbrook Smith) was born in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. Dr. Bob took his last drink on June 10th, 1935, which is the founding date of AA in Akron, Ohio, by AA co-founders Bill W. & Dr. Bob. He was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 1948; his last appearance was a talk at the 1st International Convention in 1950 in Cleveland, Ohio. He died on November 16, 1950, of cancer, with 15 years of sobriety.

In **Aug. 1934**, Bill's third admission to Towns Hospital in NYC (again paid by Dr. Leonard Strong, who was married to Bill's sister Dorothy). Dr. Silkworth pronounced Bill a hopeless drunk & told Lois that Bill would have to be committed. Bill left the hospital a deeply frightened man & sheer terror kept him sober. He found a little work on Wall St., which began to restore his badly shattered confidence.

In **Aug. 1934**, Cebra G. & Shep C. vacationed at Rowland H.'s house in Vermont & learned that Ebby T. might be committed to the Brattleboro Retreat Asylum for the insane. In July 1934, Ebby was approached in Manchester, VT., by his friends Cebra & Shep. Both were Oxford Group members who did considerable drinking with Ebby but were abstaining from drinking. They informed Ebby of the Oxford Group in VT., but Ebby was not quite ready yet to stop drinking.

Rowland H. and Cebra G. attended Ebby's trial & persuaded a Vermont court to parole Ebby T. into their custody. The presiding judge was Cebra's father, Collins G. Ebby had met Rowland only shortly before. Later, in the fall, Rowland took Ebby to NYC, where he sobered up with the help of the Oxford Group at the Calvary Episcopal Mission. Sam Shoemaker was the rector at the Calvary Church, which was the Oxford Group U.S. headquarters. In late November 1934, Ebby heard about Bill's drinking problem & phoned Lois, who invited him over for dinner. Ebby visited Bill & shared his recovery experience in the Oxford Group. Ebby later returned with Shep C. & they both spoke to Bill about the Oxford Group. Lois recalled Ebby visited several times, once staying for dinner.

In **Aug. 1934**, Ebby T. Bill W.'s school friend & sponsor, sobers up for 2 years.

In **Aug. 1935**, Bill W. returned to NYC from Akron, and he sought out alcoholics at the Calvary Mission & Towns Hospital. Meetings were held at Bill & Lois's house at 182 Clinton St. on Tuesday nights. The house also became a halfway house of sorts.

On **Aug. 26, 1936**, Frank Buchman & the Oxford Group experienced a public relations disaster. A NY World Telegram article by William H. Birnie quoted Buchman as saying, "I thank heaven for a man like Adolph Hitler, who built a front-line of defence against the anti-Christ of Communism." Although taken out of context, it plagued Buchman's reputation for years & marked the beginning of the decline of the Oxford Group. Over time, Bill was criticized by the NY Oxford Group members for working only with alcoholics. In Akron, T. Henry & Clarice Williams were also criticized by Oxford Group members who did not support their efforts with alcoholics. The Oxford Group was out to save the world & sought out famous public figures to join their ranks for the publicity it would generate. Bill simply was out to save alcoholics.

In **Aug. 1937**, Bill & Lois stopped attending Oxford Group meetings & the NY AA separated from the Oxford Group. This was the beginning of AA separating itself from outside affiliation & set the groundwork for what would later become Tradition 6. The Akron group remained affiliated with the Oxford Group for two more years.

In **Aug. 1938**, the Alcoholic Foundation was created as a charitable trust with a board of 5 Trustees (3 non-alcoholics & 2 alcoholics). The trust indenture document specified that non-alcoholic board Trustees were to make up a majority. The terms "Class A" & "Class B" Trustees were used to distinguish between non-alcoholics & alcoholic board members. Class A Trustees were Willard Richardson (who proposed the Foundation), Frank Amos (Secretary & Treasurer) & attorney John Wood (a friend of Frank Amos). One of the challenges facing Wood in preparing the original Trust Agreement document was legally defining the difference between an alcoholic & non-alcoholic. Class B Trustees were Dr. Bob & NY member Bill R., who was the first Chairman of the Board (the actual title used at the time & up until 1955 was President). Bill R., whose Big Book story is "A Business Man's Recovery," returned to drinking & had to resign in February 1939. An advisory committee to the board was also established consisting of A. Leroy Chipman, Bill W., Albert L. Scott & Hank P.

On **Aug. 2, 1939**, Dr. Bob & Sister Ignatia started work at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron. It was the first religious institution to open its doors to AA & later had a full wing dedicated to alcoholism treatment. The NY group had a similar arrangement with the Knickerbocker Hospital in NY City. On Aug. 16, Sister Ignatia, who was in charge of admissions, arranged for the first AA admission, Walter B., at the request of Dr. Bob. Walter, a notorious alcoholic & regular consumer of paregoric (over-the-counter) opiate, Sister Ignatia labeled problem acute gastritis & put him in the flower room. Dr. Bob & Sister Ignatia treated 5,000 cases in the next 10 years.

In **Aug. 1941**, Clarence S., founder of AA in Cleveland, joined with Abby G. & other Cleveland members to help start AA's first Central Office (see Dr. Bob & the Good Oldtimers book pg 202). Bill W. also credits the Cleveland Central Office with introducing the principle of rotation to AA. There is reasonable debate over whether Cleveland or Chicago should be recognized as AA's first Central Office. In AA Comes of Age book pg 23, Bill discusses Chicago AA following Jack Alexander's Saturday Evening Post article & notes "This was AA's first organized local service center, the forerunner of the many Intergroup Associations we maintain in large cities nowadays."

In **Aug. 1942**, the AA Office in New York granted distribution rights for the Big Book to Dr. George Little. Dr. Little formally transferred these rights to the Toronto AA Club on Sept. 22, 1944.

— Eddy G. GTA Archivist

To donate AA/GTA Archival items to the GTA Archives, please contact the GTA Archivist.

Eddy G. @ 416-536-7536.

Old GTA meeting Books are needed for the GTA Archives.

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