

September 2026 Amends

Direct and Living Amends
show a commitment to new
and healthy behaviours.

SHARE YOUR STORY



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submission page.

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

How To Reach Us

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

bettertimes@aatoronto.org

or contact Alex at 416-487-8110

THE DAYS ADD UP



Yes, it's time to share my recovery in this amazing, God-given program for living. I can best do that by using the three legacies: Unity, Recovery, Service. Here is my service history in our fellowship from the start to today's date.

After three years of full-time drinking (if you're an alcoholic of my type, you know what I mean), I lost everything. I came to the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous in Toronto just two weeks before my 34th birthday. My first day of NOT drinking was on my 34th birthday, Sept. 92. At my first home group, my duties were making coffee and mopping the floor. Cleaning ashtrays (remember those?) and holding the church key for next week's meeting became my responsibility.

God has a way of putting the right person at the right time in my path to mentor, sponsor, and guide me on this journey. Now the numbers - my hope is this will encourage you to become an active member in A.A.: seven recovery sponsors, one service sponsor, one spiritual mentor, and two chaplain supporters.

Over the years: six different home groups; active member in each, served as G.S.R. three times and Corrections chair for three years. Twenty-one years bringing a message of hope to the men in a high-security prison on Thursday evenings. (Kids on the outside need a sober DAD.) Twenty years carving roast beef dinner at Cambridge One-Day Round-Up Gratitude dinner. What a fellowship! Thirty-two years as a greeter at the Ontario Regional Conference, greeting approx. 2,500-3,000 members. Thirty-three years carving hams and turkeys at the Toronto Open House Christmas dinner.

With a grateful heart myself, sponsees and their sponsees were able to go to the kitchen in Akron, Ohio, where it all began at Dr. Bob's house. As well, we went to Bill W.'s house and grave site in Vermont, placing our medallions on the headstone. So... here we are, all the numbers put together total 12,410 days sober (34 years) from Sept '92 to Sept 2026 and 68 years young.

All this came to be after my cry: "God, please help me!"

P.S. A.A. is mentioned in my will; we need to keep those doors open!

— Clarence V., Burlington

GRAPEVINE

https://www.aagrapevine.org/?srsltid=AfmBOoq6pkYTDz8fon1zHN2LOutD9zXR8hSGTn77kxjYbi_gBNuUppdy

BEYOND THE PASSING OF THE BASKET: THE TRUE MEANING OF SELF-SUPPORT IN AA



When you first stumble into an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting—arms crossed, eyes darting toward the nearest exit—one of the first things you notice is a basket making the rounds. A few crumpled bills drop in, someone tosses in spare pocket change, and the basket moves along. In our drinking days, a dollar might have felt like a terrible tip, but in AA, it looks like a whole financial ecosystem.

It is easy to view this through a basic accounting lens: paying for rent, buying Styrofoam coffee cups, cakes for medallions, and making sure the church basement stays warm. But the Seventh Tradition isn't just about avoiding a landlord's eviction notice. It's a spiritual principle designed to save us from ourselves, served with a healthy dose of responsibility.

First, let's talk about financial independence. In active addiction, many of us were Olympic-level freeloaders or master negotiators of unpaid debts. We let partners, parents, or sheer luck cover our messes. If AA accepted giant corporate sponsorships or government grants, imagine the chaos: *"This meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous is brought to you by Big Pharma!"* By strictly passing our own basket and declining outside money, we keep the program free from outside influence. Paying our own way—even if it's just tossing a couple of bucks into a hat—signals a huge shift. We go from relying on everyone else to standing on our own two feet. But money is only a tiny slice of the self-support pie. You can't pay a five-dollar bill to set up 40 folding chairs. You can't throw a Toonie at a coffee pot and expect it to brew itself.

The real heart of self-support is physical action. It's showing up early to unlock the door, scrubbing the mysterious brown rings off the bottom of the coffee urn, or making sure there are enough Big Books to go around. If nobody puts away the chairs, the group doesn't have a room next week. Service is simply self-support wearing work gloves.

Finally, there's emotional self-support—the stuff money literally can't buy. A hundred-dollar bill cannot pick up the phone at 2:00 AM when a Sponsee is staring down a craving. A basket full of cash can't give a warm high-five to a newcomer who looks like they just survived a shipwreck. A.A. operates entirely on a neighbour-to-neighbour barter system of hope. We don't have paid counsellors or professional life coaches running the show. We just have each other. When you share your messy story, listen to someone else's rough day, or walk a newcomer through the Steps, you are keeping the lights on in a way that electricity bills never could.

At its heart, self-support is really just love in action—the quiet, miraculous proof that we are never going back to the cold darkness where this disease trapped us. Alcoholism convinced us we were unlovable, unworthy, broken beyond repair, destined to fight an unbearable battle on a lonely island of our own making. But the moment we walked through those doors, terrified and empty-handed, someone else's self-support saved our lives. Someone had already set up the chairs, put a big sign out front that says **You Are No Longer Alone**, and poured a warm cup of coffee just waiting for us to arrive. When we chip in today—whether it's a Loonie from a pocket that used to hold only desperation, a gentle hand on a crying newcomer's shoulder, or twenty patient minutes listening to a heart that is finally learning to heal—we are weaving a safety net for the next desperate soul praying for a miracle. That is the sacred beauty of our Fellowship: together, we lovingly lift the weight of a burden that used to crush us alone, making sure the light in that room never goes dark for anyone searching for a way home.

— Lizzie F., GSR Anniversary Group
District 22nd Self-Support Chair



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 following format:

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...)

Have You Heard?

GTAI/District - September Subcommittee Meetings

Accessibilities – Sun. Sep. 20th, Noon – **ID:** 824 8962 1874 - **PW:** 799763
Archives – Fri. Sep. 11th, 7 p.m. – **ID:** 841 5376 9412 - **PW:** 018851
Communications – Tue. Sep. 15th, 7 p.m. – **ID:** 850 5256 7237 - **PW:** 984555
CPC/PI – Tue. Sep. 29th, 7 p.m. – **ID:** 854 7547 0291 - **PW:** 002060
Correctional Facilities – Tue. Sep. 1st, 7 p.m. – **ID:** 883 8002 9737 - **PW:** 950392
Self-Support – Tue. Sep. 1st, 6:30 p.m. – **ID:** 897 3620 8895 - **PW:** 162629
Treatment – Sun. Sep. 20th, 7 p.m. – **ID:** 868 2207 4860 - **PW:** 787289
Twelfth Step Committee – Wed. Sep. 9th, 6 p.m. – **ID:** 980 8546 4617 - **PW:** 430387
IT Sub-committee – Mon. Sep. 7th, 7 p.m. – **ID:** 814 0942 9019 - **PW:** 379691

September Birthdays

Jatinder S. – Brampton Recovery Group, 3 Years, September 7th, 2026
Rachel N. – Beaches Group, 17 Years, September 19th, 2026
Dareenna B. – Brampton Recovery Group, 29 Years, September 20th, 2026
Helen K. – Beaches Group, 38 Years, September 22nd, 2026
Kamrag S. – Brampton Recovery Group, 3 Years, September 27th, 2026
Mike G. – Beaches Group, 4 Years, September 30th, 2026

48th DISTRICT 22 SERVICE DAY

≡ Service - The Joy of Giving Back ≡



**SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 26,
2026**



**1:00 PM –
4:00 PM**



**OAKRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTRE
63 PHARMACY AVE, SCARBOROUGH**



**FREE
PARKING**



**ACCESSIBLE
SITE**



**MINUTES FROM
TTC VICTORIA PARK
SUBWAY STATION**



**NO COST
TO ATTEND**

WHEEL OF SERVICE



SERVICE SPONSORSHIP PANEL:

**KIMBERLY M – WHITBY
&
AMANDA J – SCARBOROUGH**

A JOURNEY THROUGH DISTRICT 22



"PASSPORT GAME"



**• LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED
• BRING A FRIEND**



**Together
WE CARRY THE MESSAGE**



September Medallions

Dylan B. – 5th Tradition Group, 1 Year, September 1st, 2026
Megan S. – Beaches Group, 1 Year, September 1st, 2026
Peter H. – Fellowship Group, 10 Years, September 14th, 2026
George H. – King City Group, 1 Year, September 21st, 2026
Debe M. – Anniversary Group, 20 Years, September 23rd, 2026
Steve C. – Rox Glen Traditional, 10 Years, September 24th, 2026
Aaron K. – Fellowship Group, 1 Year, September 28th, 2026
Albert N. – Open Hands Group, 10 Years, September 30th, 2026

Announcements

Saturday, September 26th, 2026, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Scarborough District 22 - 48th: Edition Service Day
Oakridge Community Centre: 63 Pharmacy Ave., Scarborough
Light refreshments - Plenty of Parking and Ramp Access.

2nd Annual

AA Family Fun Day

Monday, September 7th, 2026
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Trinity Bellwoods Park, NW corner
Crawford & Dundas,
Toronto

BBQ **Carnival GAMES!**

Live Music! **Bouncy-Castle!**

Face Painting!

Fellowship!

Tickets:
Adults \$15 Kids \$10

Ticket cost is all-inclusive for Food, Games & Activities
For presale tickets, e-transfer to: aafamilyfunday@gmail.com

See our flyer under 'Announcements' on our webpage: www.aatoronto.org

***Kid-Friendly/Family-Friendly Event* ALL WELCOME!**



**GREATER TORONTO AREA
INTERGROUP**

ANSWER THE CALL



**ONE
NIGHT A MONTH**

**OVERNIGHT PHONE
GREETERS**



**Use the QR Code
Visit our 12 Step page
Complete the
Phone Greeter Application
Select Overnight Shift option**

ARCHIVES CORNER – DID YOU KNOW?

On **Sept. 17, 1934**, Bill W. entered Towns Hospital for the third time (again paid by Dr. Leonard Strong, husband of Bill's sister Dorothy). Dr. Silkworth pronounced him hopeless & told Lois that Bill would likely have to be committed. Bill left the hospital a very broken man & sheer terror kept him sober. He found some work on Wall St., which restored his shattered confidence.

In **Sept. 1938**, Fitz M. (AA No. 8 & story in Big Book "Our Southern Friend") sister Agnes lends Bill W. & Hank P. \$1,000.00 to help get them through the Big Book project. Also, Dr. Silkworth encouraged Charles Towns to loan \$2,500 to Bill & Hank. He later increased it to \$4,000.

On **Sept. 30, 1939**, in the late 30's & early 40s, public relations had the most dramatic impact on AA membership growth. Liberty Magazine, headed by Fulton Oursler, carried a piece titled "Alcoholics and God" by Morris Markey. He was influenced to write the article by Charles Towns. The article generated about 800 inquiries, all of which were answered by Ruth Hock. Letters came throughout the US; however, only a few could be referred to the three existing in Akron, NY & Cleveland. Oursler, author of "The Greatest Story Ever Told," became good friends with Bill & later served as a Class A Trustee on the Alcoholic Foundation Board (today called the General Service Board of AA) & also served on the Grapevine editorial board.

In **Sept. 1940**, the Journal of Nervous & Mental Disease reviewed the AA Big Book and said: "of the inner meaning of alcoholism there is hardly a word".

On **Sept. 22, 1944**, Dr. George Little transferred the distribution rights which he had obtained in **August 1942**, from the AA Office in New York for the sale of the Big Book in Canada to the Toronto AA Club. The Toronto AA Club opened on **January 28, 1944**, at 1170 Yonge St., new committee every 3 months, office open everyday & meetings on Thursday nights.

On **Sept. 12, 1946**, a dispute arose over a funding solicitation letter from the National Council for Education on Alcoholism; Marty M., Dr. Bob & Bill W.'s names were on the letterhead. The Alcoholic Foundation issued a letter & an October Grapevine article to disavow AA affiliation. To preclude charities from applying AA sponsorship in their public appeals, the Alcoholic Foundation released a statement that (edited): "Alcoholics Anonymous not only fails to endorse the present solicitations of funds but looks with disfavour on the unauthorized use of its name in any fundraising activity."

In **Sept. 1948**, the August Grapevine announced that, based on a subscriber survey, the September issue would be in a new pocket-size 5 1/2" x 7 1/2" format of 32 pages.

In **Sept. 1948**, in this issue of the Grapevine, the Serenity Prayer was first printed & became a vital part of AA.

On **Sept. 17, 1957**, Re: Archives: Bill Wilson wrote: "It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way that there can be no substantial distortion".

In **Sept. 1973**, Archives was established at the General Service Office (GSO) in New York & Nell Wing, non-alcoholic and one of Bill's earliest secretaries, became the first archivist.

On **Sept. 19, 1975**, Jack Alexander, author of early Saturday Evening Post articles on A.A., died. The **March 1941** article created a national sensation: AA membership will quadruple in one year from 2,000 to 8,000.

From **Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, 1977**, the 1st Eastern Canada Regional Forum was held in Ottawa with about 500 in attendance. Dr. Jack Norris, a non-alcoholic & Chairman of the Board, introduced these in 1975 to make members more familiar with the operations of the General Service Board & the General Service Office.

On **Sept. 12, 2001**, AA trusted servants of NY Area 49 & the NY Intergroup Office organized AA meetings around the clock near Ground Zero for AA members engaged in rescue & emergency work at the 9/11 World Trade Center disaster. The Red Cross assigned AA rooms near the site. Members later constructed an iron plaque & presented it to GSO & the NY Intergroup as a memento.

GTA Groups/Meetings started in September:

Sept. 27, 1947- Danforth Group
Sept. 23, 1952- St. Clements Group
Sept. 29, 1957- West York Group
Sept. 17, 1964- Long Branch Group
Sept. 23, 1973- Heron Park Sunday Morning Open Meeting
Sept. 13, 1974- Rexdale United Group
Sept. 15, 1975- Fifth Wheel Group

Sept. 11, 1978- Deer Park Group
Sept. 6, 1979- Stepping Stones Group
Sept. 16, 1990- Sunday Scarboro Group
Sept. 17, 2007- Prince Edward Group
Sept. 24, 2009- Beyond Belief Group
Sept. 7, 2010- We Agnostics Group
Sept. 25, 2013- Sisters In Sobriety Group

— 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.

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.



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