

Our Primary Purpose

www.ottawaaa.org

Stories, news and information from our fellowship in the National Capital Region

Another turning point!

Ottawa Area Intergroup of
Alcoholics Anonymous 

Looking for true “service” leaders to come forward

When Peggy F stepped up to chair Ottawa’s 2019 so-called “Fall” Conference she made it clear to the Intergroup Board that the first order of business was to take the pulse of the local AA community.

Peggy and her team soon discovered there was indeed a deep-seated desire to re-invigorate the conference experience, if...and it was a pretty big IF...the organizers could somehow recapture the “glory” of the past. And so, the conference theme was called, “A turning point.”

Fast forward three years, and we find ourselves at a similar crossroads. The pandemic – like it did to so many institutions – turned AA inside out. The challenge ahead is to literally bring people back “into the rooms.”

“What we found out three years ago was that local AAs wanted two things. They wanted to see an “Eastern Ontario” conference event that attracted members from up and down the Ottawa and Seaway valleys. They also felt a younger constituency need-

ed to have a voice at the table,” said Peggy F, who is leading a search committee which is looking for 2023 Spring and Fall Conference Chairs and Co-chairs.

“Back in 2019, we gave people what they wanted, and the result was a very dynamic Eastern Ontario Conference. Now three years later, we need to turn another corner, because we’re at another turning point.”

Still in transition

Covid-19 forced AA to pivot quickly from a traditional face-to-face format to a nimble on-line platform. The silver lining was that it made the fellowship more inclusive, it widened the program’s reach. We now find ourselves in a state of flux given the surprisingly strong interest in maintaining a virtual meeting space.

“Recent experience is showing that not everyone is ready to flood back into a banquet facility.

So once again, the challenge for conference leaders is to find out what members want, and then deliver,” said Peggy.

(Continued on page 4)

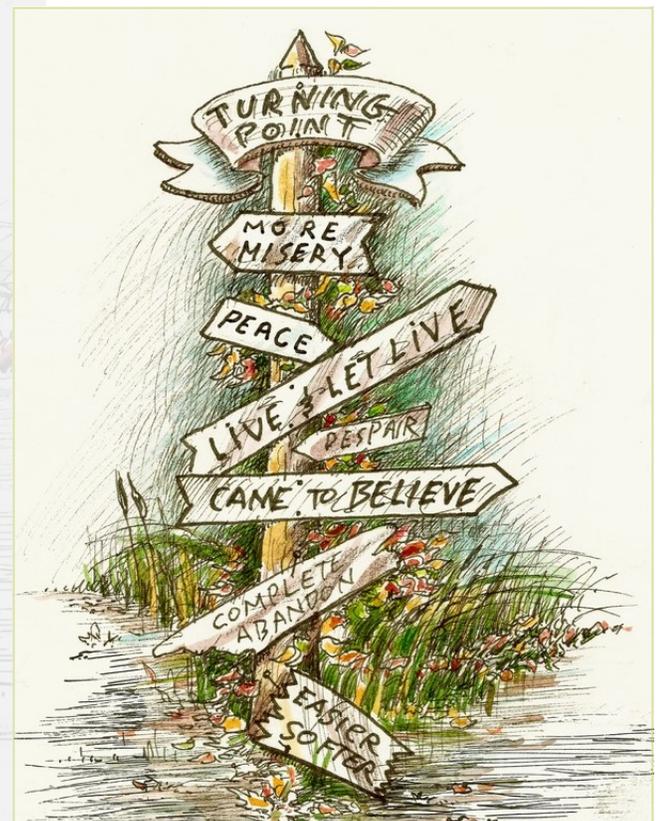


Illustration by Ron M.

**Elections at the Intergroup meeting
December 14th on Zoom**

Secretary: takes minutes; records groups in attendance at Intergroup monthly meeting.

Intergroup service positions

Treasurer: maintains books; prepares financial statements

Literature Coordinator: makes literature available; maintains inventory

Website/Email Coordinator: maintains the Ottawa Area Intergroup website.

Spring & Eastern Ontario Conferences Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons:

Put a team of volunteers together to plan conferences.

Support will be given for all positions.

For more information email: info@ottawaaa.org

OTTAWA AREA
INTERGROUP

Another Turning Point

**2023 SPRING CONFERENCE
& 2023 EASTERN ONTARIO
CONFERENCE VACANT
POSITIONS**

Ottawa Area Intergroup of
Alcoholics Anonymous 

**Intergroup is looking for Chairs
& Vice-Chairs for both of these
2023 Conferences.**

service

Intergroup Elections at the December 14, 2023 Intergroup meeting on Zoom

Candidates should have: experience in service positions at the group, Intergroup and/or District levels; working knowledge of applying the Traditions and Concepts; minimum 2 years sobriety; background in bringing together teams and working with teams on organizing projects or events; service sponsor

Responsibilities include: overall planning, organization, information management; coordination. (For further details go to the AA Ottawa Conference Guidelines at:

https://ottawaaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/FINAL_SPRING_FALL_CONFERENCE_GUIDELINES.pdf

**For more information email: info@ottawaaa.org
or peggyf1353@gmail.com**

Looking for true “service” leaders to come forward (continued from front page)

She and her search committee are fanning out across the region trying to identify AAs with both an established track record of sobriety and bona fide leadership skills.

“We need leaders with a strong sense of the AA Traditions and the Concepts, and who truly appreciate that humility is their greatest asset. It takes a well-rounded team of talented people to make a conference successful.”

How to spell “glory”

Back in the day, decades ago, the Fall Conference was held at the Chateau Laurier hotel, with long dresses and bow ties. That was glory then, what is glory now? Today’s fellowship draws from a much wider spectrum than it used to. Gender neutrality, secularism, reconciliation...these are words that weren’t in our vernacular thirty or forty years ago.

“There’s clearly a barrier to entry if we do not recruit conference leaders who speak to all members of our AA community,” said Peggy. We need to re-imagine what an Ottawa Area Intergroup Conference can look like. And it’s going to take inspired leadership.

If you know of someone who is capable of taking on one of these critical AA service roles, please reach out, in confidence, to: peggyf1353@gmail.com

Elections for these positions are taking place in the very near future.

Opportunity is knocking, are you listening? We’re at another turning point.



Ready for your first meeting?

Here’s what to expect:

Anyone with a desire to stop drinking is welcome, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, income or profession. And it’s free. You can just sit and listen and learn more about recovery, or you can share about your situation. It’s completely up to you. (Taken from aa.org)

Excerpt from AA Ottawa Conference Guidelines

This service position [Conference Chairperson] is a wonderful opportunity to practice the AA program by coordinating the organizing of a marvelous event. This event not only celebrates AA, it also carries a powerful message to the still suffering alcoholic that AA is about more than one hour meetings in basements. Additionally, the connections you make with AA members on your committee will last a lifetime. Together you will experience God's will expressed through group consensus and put into practice AA spiritual principles.

As chairperson, it is your responsibility to manage this event in a way that respects the Twelve Traditions and follows AA's principles. Ultimately you are responsible for the overall planning, organization, information management, coordination, and motivation. And finally, for passing on your experience, strength and hope to the next chair.

Link for AA Ottawa Conference Guidelines: https://ottawaaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/FINAL_SPRING_FALL_CONFERENCE_GUIDELINES.pdf


Ottawa Area Intergroup

AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

Fun in Sobriety

This month's featured section is "Fun in Sobriety," featuring some of the best stories from our newest Grapevine book, Fun in Sobriety. There's also a special section featuring gratitude over the years from stories.



Cornwall & Area—District 50

73rd Annual AA Conference

with Al-Anon participation

Be  United

November 11th & 12th, 2022

Registration Fee: \$15, Banquet Ticket: \$55 (includes registration fee)

Friday, November 11th

Registration 5:00pm
 AA Speaker Meeting 6:30pm
 Al-Anon speaker Meeting 6:30pm
 AA Speaker Meeting 8:00pm

Saturday, November 12th

Registration 8:30am
 Norma z., King City, ON 1:00pm
 Al-Anon Main Speaker 3:00pm
 Banquet 6:00pm
 Butch M., Barrie, ON 7:00pm

See Cornwallaa.com to download flyers

Ramada Inn Conference Centre

805 Brookdale Ave, Cornwall, ON
 613-933-8000

Ask for Conference special room rates of \$130 +Tax
 (Deadline to book: October 7, 2022)

For AA info call Claude P. at 613-362-7513 or email us at cornwallaaconference@yahoo.com

For Al-Anon info call 613-937-4880

Any Reserved Tickets must be picked up at Registration by 11am Sat, Nov 12th, 2022

Advanced Tickets Mail-in Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Total Enclosed: _____ #Tickets: _____

Cheques payable to "Cornwall AA Conference"

Mail cheque and registration form to: Claude Pilon - 1380 Lochiel, Cornwall, ON K6H 6N2

Note: Pre Paid Advanced Tickets will be held at the Registration Desk for pick-up during registration.

From the AA Archives....

Beyond Belief Secular Group

Founded: November 28, 2019

A relatively new AA group in the Ottawa area, Beyond Belief Secular Sobriety group started off as a sister group to the Secular Sobriety group. The meeting was established in October 2019 by Michel D who also started Secular Sobriety, Ottawa's first secular meeting in March of 2016. The group meets Thursday nights at 7 PM and met (when in person meetings still took place), at the community centre on Silver Street in the Merivale area before the pandemic hit.

Initially, the new group adopted the format of its sister group, and was a closed discussion meeting from the onset. It read from the AA book Living Sober followed by a discussion except for the last Thursday of the month where a member would share on a subject of their choice for 10 minutes, followed by a discussion.

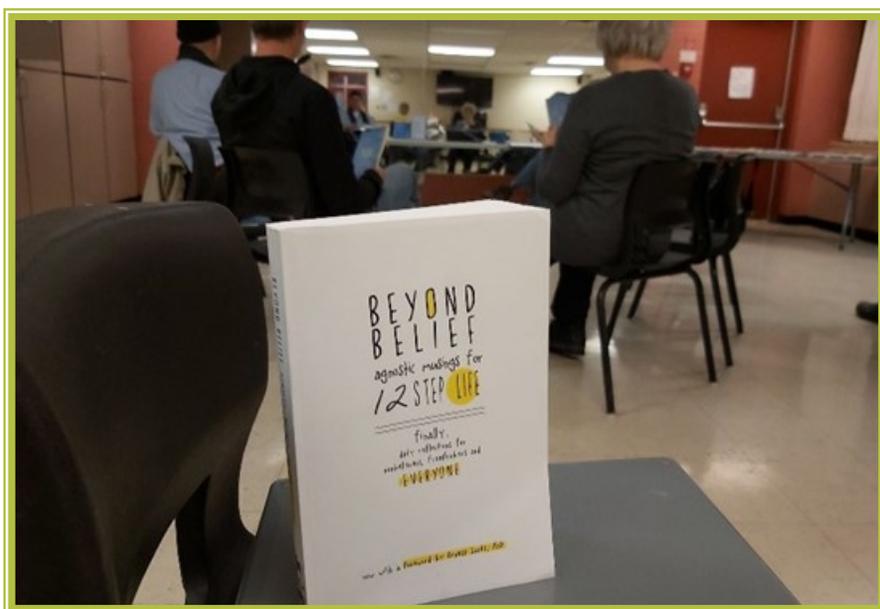
As Covid-19 began to spread in March 2020 and physical meetings everywhere began to shut their doors, Beyond Belief adapted along with many other groups by proceeding to host their meetings online via Zoom at the regular time slot.

As both Secular sobriety groups grew in its fellowship, they began to diversify their formats. Beyond Belief, after a brief foray into reading from the text "the secular steps" by Bill W (no, not that Bill W), eventually settled into its current format of reading a reflection from the book Beyond Belief (the group's namesake): Agnostic Musings for 12 Step Life by Joe C and discussing it afterwards. The group is going through each reflection as they are presented in the book instead of by date so as to not miss any of them. The group has also decided to retain its speaker and discussion

format the last Thursday of each month.

Attendance typically hovers between 15 to 25 participants who are not only from Ottawa but thanks to Zoom, other parts of Canada and other parts of the globe.

As the restrictions due to the pandemic continue to subside, the group is currently on the lookout for a new location within District 62 boundaries for when physical meetings resume. The group will continue to meet Thursdays at 7 pm via zoom until group conscience votes that it is safe enough for the physical meeting to resume. The plan is for at least one of the three secular meetings in Ottawa to remain online (Sunday night at 7:30 pm) to reach as many alcoholics as possible.



ALKATHON 2022

An Alcoholics Anonymous Event with Al-Anon Participation
Hosted by the Alkathon Committee

WE ARE BACK!



DECEMBER 24th & 25th
DEC. 31st-JANUARY 1st

Fellowship

Dance
New Years Eve

Meetings

Food,
Coffee

BRONSON CENTRE

211 Bronson Ave., Ottawa, ON

7th
Tradition

Submit your group to host a meeting by December 3rd



alkathon@ottawaaa.org
<https://ottawaaa.org/alkathon>

See reverse for details

ALKATHON

<https://ottawaaa.org/alkathon>

The basic purpose of the Alkathon is to provide a safe and sober environment for the new and still suffering alcoholic over Christmas and New Years

The Alkathon will be held at the Bronson Centre, from Noon until 7:00 AM, on December 24th to December 25th, and December 31st to January 1st

HOW CAN YOUR GROUP HELP?

HOST A MEETING

Meetings bind us together and share our message of hope. There are a total of 36 group sponsored AA meetings at this years Alkathon. If your group would like to chair one, please contact us with **(1)** the name of your group, **(2)** the type of meeting (Speaker or Discussion) and **(3)** the holiday (Christmas or New Years) you would like to be considered for. A lottery will be held after our **December 3rd** meeting to finalize the schedule. **Fill out the online form or email us.**

FOOD DONATIONS

We appreciate food donations. If possible, please let us know in advance if you are bringing any big ticket items, such as hams, turkeys (no stuffing), mashed potatoes, cooked vegetables, salads and sandwiches. Desserts are always welcome. Food may be delivered from 9 AM onwards Christmas and New Years Eve.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Your financial assistance ensures our expenses are covered. All excess funds are dispersed to Intergroup and Districts after the event. Group and individual contributions are accepted. Cheques made out to **Ottawa Area Alkathon** may be mailed to or dropped off at the Intergroup office, or you may contact us to make alternate arrangements.

Mailing address:

Ottawa Area Alkathon c/o Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue, Room 108, Ottawa, ON K1R 6H5

VOLUNTEER! VOLUNTEER! VOLUNTEER!

What makes Alkathon amazing is not the venue, not the food, but the people! 12-Step volunteers, coffee-makers, clean up crew, kitchen and serving help, security, and greeters are part and parcel of what makes our annual event a spiritual experience for so many. So please round up some volunteers at your home group - gather names, email and phone numbers, and note desired volunteer positions. **Fill out the online form on the website or email us your list.**

CONTACT US

Visit <https://ottawaaa.org/alkathon> to use our online form to volunteer or register your group for the meeting lottery. Alternately, or to make a contribution, contact Andrew B at alkathon@ottawaaa.org

JOIN OUR COMMITTEE!

Upcoming Alkathon Committee meetings will be held in Room 108 at the Bronson Centre. Contact the committee for dates and times.

All AA and AI-Anon members are welcome. We appreciate your support!



Pearls of Wisdom

This column features simple pearls of wisdom which have been imparted to me and others over the years. These statements are in no particular order in our recovery or of importance:

Expect miracles.

If it works don't fix it.

Keep coming back. It works
if you work it.

Oh well.

Live in the NOW.

Turn it over.



Nothing is so bad, drinking won't make it worse.

We are only as sick as our secrets.

Be part of the solution, not the problem.

Before you say I can't, say I'll try.

Practice an attitude.

God is never late.

Stay sober for yourself.

Decisions aren't forever.

It takes time.

Don't drink, read the Big Book, and go to meetings.

Please submit your Pearls of Wisdom to: newsletter@ottawaaa.org

Thank you for your service!

General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10115 / Telephone: (212) 870-3400

Dear A.A. Friends,

I am so excited to share the news that the General Service Office will begin welcoming visitors again beginning Wednesday, October 5. This also includes reinstating the Friday 11:00 a.m. A.A. meeting. I know this is welcome news, and we are all looking forward to reestablishing this very important spiritual component of the General Service Office.

Much has changed in the two and a half years since we last received visitors, making it necessary for us to make some adjustments. Some key highlights to help make your visit as smooth and special as possible are as follows:

We will welcome visitors on Wednesday-Friday from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

The Interchurch Center (our landlord) has instituted new security protocols that have changed the logistics of how visitors can enter the office. These protocols require that all visitors be registered into the building system in advance of their visit. We can do this when you arrive; however, contacting us prior to your visit will allow for a quicker and easier entry.

For groups of 10 or more, please contact us in advance so we can best prepare for your time at the General Service Office.

To schedule your visit, please contact us at gsotours@aa.org or (212) 870-3430.

Also of note, remote work for all employees is now limited to two days per week, with many working in the office four or five days per week.

Thank you all again for your patience as we have worked through the many challenges of the pandemic over the last several years. Your genuine support for all employees at the General Service Office is appreciated and needed now more than ever.

With gratitude, Bob W.
General Manager, GSO

Warm greetings to all,

The General Service Office US/Canada, at the request of the Canadian Corrections Working Group, is putting out a Call to Action for all trusted servants in Canada. We have been charged with increasing the awareness and participation of the Corrections Correspondence Service in Canada among those members who are in custody.

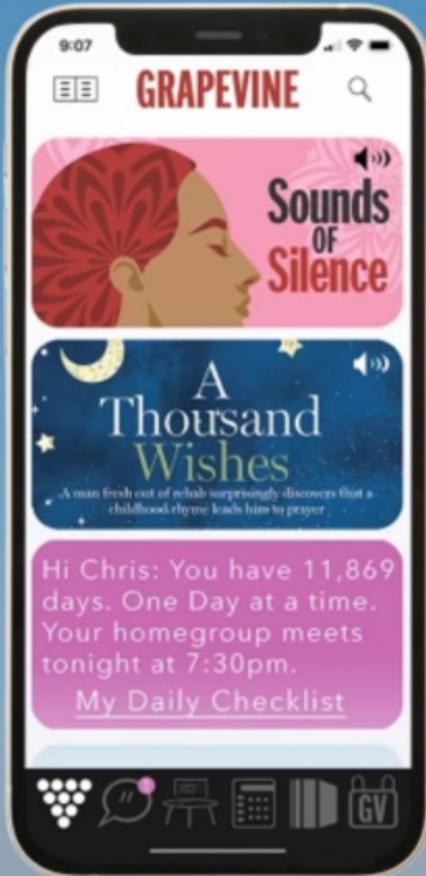
Please share this sign-up form (link <https://www.aa.org/corrections-correspondenceservice-insider-request-form>) with the members in custody at the correctional setting(s) you are serving. We have a pre-stamped envelope available for the person in custody to use when returning the envelope to the GSO to defray the cost of postage. If you need more envelopes, please contact the GSO.

You may know we assign participant matches: intra-country, i.e., US with US and Canada with Canada, to make sure members in custody can participate without the burden of international postage.

We have a waitlist of outside A.A. members waiting to participate in CCS, which is another reason why we want to increase participation by members behind the walls.

Please reach out to corrections@aa.org with any questions.
Yours in love and service, Eileen A., Corrections Coordinator

Tell us what you think...



Grapevine is developing a smartphone app for both Grapevine and La Viña magazines.

The app will be a hand-held control center for all things Grapevine and La Viña. Take a look at our list of features and ideas on the right –we want your input and ideas too. Let us know your thoughts.

Email us at social@agrapevine.org
Put **"App Ideas"** in the subject line.

Grapevine and La Viña Apps

Imagine having all of this at your fingertips:



Scroll through monthly magazine



Archives of every magazine since 1944



Search tool



Audio playlist of every current article



Popup day count



Input your meeting schedule



Create a Daily Spiritual Maintenance Checklist



Podcast link



Daily Quote



Meeting Guide



Sobriety Calculator



Build a library of favorite articles



Grapevine Store



Link to YouTube channel

Ottawa Intergroup Office

211 Bronson Avenue, Suite 108
Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 6H5
Office temporarily closed.
Curbside pickup Saturday 2-4pm
Telephone: (613) 237-6000
Email: info@ottawaaa.org

Newsletter Coordinator
newsletter@ottawaaa.org
Article submission deadline is
the 20th day of the month
preceding publication date

Ottawa Area Intergroup

Chair – Mary K.
Vice-Chair – John D.
Secretary – vacant
Treasurer – Tim W.
Website – Carolyn O.
Telephone Answering– Eric S.
Literature – Al L.
12-Step Coordinator– Jean H.
Spring Conference –
Eastern Ontario Conference–
Newsletter – Dawn-Marie M.

chair@ottawaaa.org
vice@ottawaaa.org
secretary@ottawaaa.org
treasurer@ottawaaa.org
webmaster@ottawaaa.org
tas@ottawaaa.org
literature@ottawaaa.org
12step@ottawaaa.org
spring@ottawaaa.org
eoc@ottawaaa.org
newsletter@ottawaaa.org

Ottawa General Service Districts and Committees

District 54 – Ottawa East – Kevin O. district54@ottawaaa.org
District 62 – Ottawa West – Trevor F. district62@ottawaaa.org
Cooperation with Professionals - Jo D. cpc@ottawaaa.org
Public Information/Media Contact - Jo D. pi@ottawaaa.org
Corrections Facilities & Treatment - Elaine H. cft@ottawaaa.org
Archives – Sue L. archives@ottawaaa.org

SERVICE CALENDAR

Online meeting logistics are shown for committees that have provided it.

No matter how much sobriety you have, you can help and be part of the greater whole. All AA members are welcome to attend any of the following committees:

OTTAWA INTERGROUP MONTHLY MEETING..... Second Wednesday (7:00 pm)

(ZOOM Meeting ID 824 3878 6359 Passcode OAIG2020)

DISTRICT 54 MEETING..... First Thursday (6:30 pm)

(ZOOM Meeting ID 834 9953 9650 Passcode 141892)

DISTRICT 58 MEETING* Discontinued. Please contact District 54 or District 62.

DISTRICT 62 MEETING..... Second Monday (7:30 pm)

(ZOOM Meeting ID 638 562 068 Passcode 016224)

CORRECTIONS FACILITIES AND TREATMENT..... Fourth Tuesday (6:30 pm)

(Zoom Meeting ID 815 5183 4935 Passcode 521429)

PUBLIC INFORMATION/ COOPERATION WITH PROFESSIONALS..... Third Monday (6:30 pm)

(ZOOM Meeting ID 815 4385 6025 Passcode PICPC)

OTTAWA ARCHIVES..... Third Wednesday (7:00 pm)

(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue-Room 108 (in-person meetings suspended))

Is your AA Group's meeting information correct on ottawaaa.org? Please send all updates as well as temporary closures to Ottawa Intergroup at info@ottawaaa.org.

Do you have a question for the Intergroup board? Please email us with your questions and you can also request an invitation to meet with us at our monthly virtual board meeting. Send your email to chair@ottawaaa.org.

If your group needs insurance, please contact Ottawa Intergroup at info@ottawaaa.org to discuss.

"Our Primary Purpose" publishes articles reflecting the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In determining content, the newsletter coordinator relies on the principles of the Twelve Traditions. "Our Primary Purpose" values the shared experience of individual AA members working the AA program and applying the principles of the Twelve Steps. It neither seeks to gloss over difficult issues, nor to present such issues in a harmful or contentious manner. "Our Primary Purpose" tries to embody the widest possible view of the AA Fellowship.

The newsletter coordinator of "Our Primary Purpose" reserves the right to accept or reject material for publication, based on the AA traditions. Note: this policy is consistent with that of the AA Grapevine.

Articles are not intended to be statements of AA policy, nor does publication of any article constitute endorsement by either Alcoholics Anonymous or Ottawa Area Intergroup. Submissions are always welcome!