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The Danforth Group Celebrates 60 Years!

The Danforth Group will be celebrating its 60th anniversary this year and all are welcome to join in the festivities. The group was started in September 1947 and is still going strong. The group was founded in Tradition and continues to carry a message of strength and hope to its members and beyond.

With hundreds of years of sobriety combined with its current membership, enthusiasm is demonstrated by lively business meetings and a drive to serve the AA community through district service, the Danforth Group is an established part of the Toronto/GTA AA experience. With stalwart members like Dorothy C. and newcomers joining almost weekly, the

Danforth Group has been an important part of the AA experience for this writer.

The Anniversary party will be held at a time yet to be determined, almost 60 years to the day that the Danforth Group was founded.



There will be a special guest speaker and members will partake in the festivities in the usual manner with readings, announcements and chip distribution. There will be a sobriety countdown, and a

gift for all who attend to remember the special day. Everyone is encouraged to remain afterward for fellowship and to enjoy the food offerings. This church basement is located on the north side of Danforth Avenue at 71 Gough just west of Pape in Holy Name Church.

Submissions via mail, email or telephone with messages and memories from past members and attendees are encouraged. Say a few words to commemorate this magnificent event and we will have the messages on display at the event for all of our guests to see.

You may send in your submissions by phone at 647-889-4752 or by mail at 255 Gerrard Street East, Apt. 3, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2X1.

We hope to see you there!

Kelly B., Danforth Group

Norma B. 35 years – August 27...

When Norma B. walked nervously into the Sunnyside Group August 27th, 1972, little did she know that she was embarking on a journey which would not only change her life, but the lives of countless others.

During her first year, Norma started going to the Friendly Group where she met Phil B. who would also have a profound effect on her road to happy sobriety. After three years of courtship, they married, and together they put on meetings at the Fred Victor Mission on Tuesday nights for 15 years and

also monthly meetings at the Queen St. Mental Health Hospital. Norma is a great believer in service and has helped many people over the years, volunteering as Grapevine Rep., G.S.R., coffee maker, greeter, etc. When he retired, Phil and Norma moved to Fort Erie where he passed away. Norma came back to her roots in Toronto where she attended the Islington and Trial and Error groups for 13 years. Among her many friends were the late Yvonne L., and sponsor Betty H.

In the summer of 2006, Norma moved to Newmarket to be closer

to her family. Members in the area were quickly endeared to her kind heart and gentle ways. She became a member of A Place to Share Group in Aurora. When asked 'what are the most important ways she maintains her sobriety', she replied, "Love God and do His will; and service – you get what you give."

An open meeting honouring Norma's 35th anniversary will be held at 'A Place To Share Group' in Aurora on Saturday, September 1st, 2007, 11:30 a.m. Please join us for this wonderful celebration.

Carolyn M., A Place to Share Group

Tradition Eight

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

30 years of Sobriety and Service

Curious to find out where his wife was going every week, John D. was somewhat hoodwinked into attending his first AA meeting. That was almost 32 years ago. After about two years of struggle including trying to change the Big Book, John came to realize that it was he who needed to change. He eventually became one of the best AA members, according to his AA friends.

I will always remember John in my early years at the Back to Basics group. He was the person who seemed to be forever on my case yet encouraging me to get active and educating me in understanding the AA program. By the time I came to realize he was right, I realized he was no longer bugging me and had moved on and was "helping" some other newcomer with their program.

John D. attained his sobriety at the Richmond Hill Group. He is fondly known

as the Scotsman whose recitation of "A Touch of the Master's Hand" can bring the room to tears. John is probably one of the few old-timers left who can always be counted on to tell it the way it is. If anyone gives him any lip, he never seems to get upset nor hold a grudge. He quietly tells the person where they are wrong and encourages them not to give up. John has helped many alcoholics in many ways.

Recently when John had missed a couple of meetings, a member enquired about John from his neighbour. John told the neighbour just to say that he was 'on the bottle' but he would be back. None of us believed that but when John came back to the meetings, we saw that the bottle was oxygen. So he will be able to continue to give us a piece of his mind when we need it.

John D. will celebrate his 30 year medallion on Friday, August 17th at the Back to Basics group.

Congratulations John and please never change. We need you and love you, Scotty, just as you are.

Glen B., Back to Basics Group

What harms AA...

Recently I have noticed something at AA meetings; people with mean attitudes coming only to cause disruption. Especially at Step meetings and under the veil of participating, these offenders are quick to manipulate the 'Step' and turn it into their own agenda or beef session. That in and of itself is not bad... but what rankles the rest of us is when they interrupt a participant, criticize what they have to say as being wrong and completely wrestle control from the chairperson.

I am new to sobriety and don't know all the 'rules'. When I am asked to share... I do. What concerns me and thereby prompted me to contribute this article is when I saw a 'newbie' get interrupted and berated leaving the meeting in tears. The chairperson did nothing to control the situation even though the chair has the final say in the room and the meeting is

presided over by them. What of the 'newbie'? The poor kid no doubt came thinking he was coming to a safe haven. Instead, he was embarrassed and without question, will not be as trusting of AA again. One wonders if he 'went back out'.

So... what harms AA? I feel some groups are losing sight of just how serious these meetings are for many of us. The Chair must be 'The Chair'. Please remember that everyone in that room is 'sick'. To those of you to whom this article is directed, do try to remember that the 'group' is not about you. It is about all of us, especially so for the 'newbie'. Show some of the kindness and patience we did that encouraged you to keep coming back. Remember.... meetings are the ultimate 12th Step in that the rooms are there to bring the message to all of us who suffer.

Peter J., Markland Wood Group

The alcoholic is the only person who wakes up in the morning and says 'who did this to my pants'?

Attention Groups!

The Greater Toronto Intergroup is asking for those groups who have their group lists filed with them, to please update those lists before our yearly Gratitude month mailing!

&

Better Times is looking for a business manager, circulation people, a secretary, and more committee members!

A Celebration of a Life

On June 20th of last year, my dearest friend and confidant, Reg A. (North Toronto Group), suddenly passed away from a heart attack. When I first came to AA eight years ago, he gave me the greatest gifts that anyone could bestow. Reg taught me about loving – not being in love, but something much more. He taught me to love myself,

with all of my character defects – and to love others – even those who hurt me in the past, for they are my teachers. He taught me that life is there for the taking – but I must have the desire to take it. He taught me about appreciation; to be grateful for what I have – even if it's not exactly what I want. He taught me to be thankful for all my experiences in life – good and bad. The bad ones can be looked upon as a blessing; they educate us and help us to grow in wisdom.

This gentle soul was a quadri-

plegic who, in his younger years, was very athletic playing football and hockey. He loved to swim. At the tender age of 18, he dove into a shallow lake breaking his spine.

Reg lived to be 52 years old. That's a long time in a wheelchair. Reg was very independent and with his mechanical wheelchair, he bombed around the neighbourhood. He would take the TTC – on his own. He wasn't going to let a small thing like a wheelchair get in his way!

There is a deep void in my

soul now that he is gone. For Reg, I feel content that my dearest friend is now free. I still carry with me the memory of his warmth and compassion. I hope that I am as courageous and loving as he was. I think it's time to stop grieving his passing and celebrate his life and the informed new life he so graciously and lovingly passed on to me.

I know you are still with me, Reg.

Irene H., City Central Group

The Origin of Tradition Six

Fortunately for Alcoholics Anonymous, there has been widespread commitment of AA members to its integrity and direction. However, there are those who would use AA as a springboard for their own profit. Tradition Six was forged through experience particularly Bill W. 's. Unemployed for years, it sounded like manna from heaven when Dr. Silkworth and Charlie Towns asked Bill to bring his recovery work to Towns Hospital. An elated Bill raced to tell Lois at Loeser's department store. Though she was busy, she took time to listen to Bill's excited news of the solution to their economic woes. She was less than enthusiastic and asked if he had talked to Dr. Bob about it. That evening Bill presented the proposal to the group of alcoholics meeting in his home. If he was disappointed in Lois' reaction, it was nothing compared to the cold silence he received from them.

"Bill, you can't do this to us. For you to take money to carry this magnificent message while the rest of us give it away to keep sober would not be right." Individually they pointed out how their program would be negatively affected by his accepting the Towns proposal.

Over the years, many 'recovery' programs have blatantly violated the Traditions that AA's hold dear. Because AA does not engage in any controversy, there are few reprimands. There is, however, covert reproach and tacit disapproval within the AA community.

Late that night around midnight when Bill finally came to bed, he told Lois that he had spoken to Dr. Bob at length on the phone. He admitted that he had lost sight of AA's spiritual purpose in his desire to satisfy his ego.

In Lois' eyes, he was never as noble as when he recognized his failings.

Bernadette MacL.
King City Group

Recent Medallions

Donna P.	1	Westmoreland	July 1
Evelyn W.	1	Mississauga	July 1
Angela S.	1	Westmoreland	July 1
Christie Ann B.	1	Aurora	July 2
Ryan	1	Twelve Traditions	July 4
John P.	1	Westmoreland	July 5
Debra H.	15	Back to Basics	July 6
Jason G.	1	Woodbine	July 7
Linda McL.	10	Armour Heights	July 9
David C.	1	King City	July 9
Conni	1	Twelve Traditions	July 11
Scott M.	1	Meadowvale Fellowship	July 16
Sean C.	30	Shepherd	July 17
Richard S.	1	Wanstead	July 20
Tony Z.	1	Bloordale	July 22
Vivianne V.	5	King City	July 23
Lloyd T.	5	Back to Basics	July 27
Betty L.	1	Aurora	July 29
Dolly H.	15	East York	July 31

Upcoming Medallions:

Bev W.	15	Streetsville Action	Aug 1
Gerald H.	1	New Anchor	Aug 2
Nancy Z.	1	Aurora	Aug 5
Joe B.	15	Aurora	Aug 5
Diana N.	5	Bloordale	Aug 6
Gerry	1	Armour Heights	Aug 6
John C.	30	Rox Glen Traditional	Aug 9
Harold S.	5	King City	Aug 13
Cheri T.	1	East York	Aug 14
Eric S.	35	Markland Wood	Aug 16
John D.	30	Back to Basics	Aug 17
Tracy J.	1	Aurora	Aug 19
Scott J.	1	Aurora	Aug 19
Guelph M.	1	East York	Aug 28

Meeting Changes:

Saturday Night Crosstalk (C) 7:30 p.m. Saturdays (EAST): DISCONTINUED.

Young People's Mtg. (C) 8 p.m. Tuesdays (NORTH-WEST): DISCONTINUED.

K.F. GROUP Saturdays NORTHWEST : DISCONTINUED as of June 30

Circle of Hope Grp. (O/C) 7:30 p.m. Fridays (SUB.NW): DISCONTINUED.

Milton Sunday Night Live (C) 8 p.m. (SUB.NW): has a NEW LOCATION - Allendale Retirement Complex, 500 Childs Dr, MILTON. At Main & Ontraio St, south of Plaza. Meeting held in Senior's Activity Centre.

Heron Park Drop-In Disc. (C) Fridays (EAST): Meeting time is 12:15 noon to 1:15 pm.

Stepping Stones Disc. (C) Saturday 8 p.m. (CENTRAL) has a NEW LOCATION - St Peter's Catholic Church, 840 Bathurst St (at Bloor). Across from Bathurst subway. Steps 1-2-3, 4-12, Open Topic, and Big Book. Speaker mtg 2nd Sat. of the month.

New Meeting:

Stepping Stones Disc. (C) Wednesdays (CENTRAL): Same time,

location, and format as Saturday meeting (new info noted above).

Meetings needing support:

Friendship Room Mtg. (O) 6 p.m. Fridays (CENTRAL): Salvation Army, 107 Jarvis St & Richmond. Ring bell to enter. Last Friday of the month is a closed discussion

Things we cannot change

Nicole from Agincourt Acorn passed away in June from liver failure that was only found a week before.

Event notices:

10th Annual BIG BOOK STUDY - Duff's Presbyterian Church, RR#3 Guelph, ON (Hwy 6 & Hwy 410, exit 299). Sat. Aug. 18. Presented by James B (Jamestown, NY) and Wes B (Toronto). Doors open at 8 am. Registration 8 am - 9 am. Coffee, donuts, and refreshments. Lunch is included. For tickets, call Dennis D. (519) 763-1599.

The 56th Eastern Ontario AA Fall Conference, Aug. 31 - Sept. 2, Ottawa at the Crown Plaza Hotel. An amazing weekend of AA and Al-Anon speakers including Cliff R, Oceanside, CA; Gale C, London, ON; William K; Toronto, ON and Maggie J, Montreal, PQ. There will be a DJ Friday night, a live band Saturday night following the banquet dinner. panels, a talk-a-thon and of course AA fellowship. To register online go to: <http://www.ottawaaa.org>.

Hamilton & Districts 39th Annual AUTUMN LEAF ROUNDUP 'There is a Solution' Sept. 14-16, at the Sheridan Hotel, Hamilton. For more info, call 1-800-514-7101 or Hamilton Central Office 905-522-8392.

Come Celebrate With Us! The Danforth Group celebrates their 60th anniversary Thurs. Sept. 27 at 8 pm A special invitation goes to those past members and attendees to join in the festivities. Open meeting with a special speaker, loads of food and fellowship ensures that a good time will be had by all. Come share in the tradition, Big Book Draw, sobriety countdown and much more.

<p>GREATER TORONTO AREA INTERGROUP MONTHLY BOARDROOM BOOKINGS FOR SUB-COMMITTEES *Subcommittees meet at the Intergroup Office (234 Eglinton Ave E, Suite 202)</p>	
<p>CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES: Every first Monday of the month at 7:00 pm</p> <p>SELF-SUPPORT: Every first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm</p> <p>GRAPEVINE: Every second Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm</p> <p>ARCHIVES: Every second Friday of the month at 7:00 pm</p> <p>WEBSITE: Every second Saturday of the month at 1:00 pm</p> <p>COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC): Every second Monday of the month at 7:00 pm</p> <p>ACCESS ABILITY: Every third Sunday of the month at 11:00 am</p> <p>PHONE TRAINING SESSION: Every third Sunday of the month at 1:30 pm</p> <p>PUBLIC INFORMATION: Every third Monday of the month at 7:30 pm</p>	<p>TREATMENT FACILITIES: Every third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm</p> <p>INFORMATION AA DAY: Starting Sept. 2007, Every last Monday at 7:30 pm</p> <p>TWELFTH STEP: Every last Friday of the month at 6:30 pm</p> <p>FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE*: Second-last Tuesday of the month at 4:30 pm (*non-committee members: attendance by appointment only)</p> <p>OPERATING COMMITTEE*: Second-last Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm (*non-committee members: attendance by appointment only)</p> <p>Better Times NEWSLETTER: Last Wednesday of the month before the Intergroup meeting, 7:00 pm</p> <p>THE MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING of GTA Intergroup is held on the last Tuesday of the month at 8:00 pm at the Glebe Road United Church - 20 Glebe Rd E, off Yonge St. (near Davisville subway)</p>

BILL W. CELEBRATES THIRTY YEARS OF SOBRIETY

June 19 was a special day for Alcoholics Anonymous and the Royal York Group; Bill W. celebrated thirty years of continuous sobriety. His sponsor Keith H. of the Sunday morning Sunshine group in St. Catherine's presented Bill with his medallion on behalf of the group. The room was filled with the love of family and friends with standing room only.

His first group was Beverly Hills. When it closed in 1990, he became a member of the Royal York Group. Bill jokes about his namesake, the founder, and always refers to himself as the 'flounder' not the founder. His journey began at the doors of the old psychiatric hospital on the

Lakeshore for a little drying out. He spent the next year and a half researching AA. On one of his research projects to Ottawa he made a stop at Manresa during a weekend retreat, he never made it to Ottawa.

Service has always been a cornerstone of his sobriety: a retreat captain at Manresa for over twenty years, steering committees, GSR and Intergroup representative. He has been a committee member of the ARID Eleven Step retreats in St. Catherines since their beginnings in 1994.

For those who remember, he was in the AA play "Middletown USA" but he never made it to Hollywood. Bill is one of the giants we talk about in AA; sponsorship and a tireless commitment to helping others are testament to his gratitude in action. Over the past thirty years he has touched the lives of many, and it was evident by those in attendance.

Thank you, Bill W. and to his lovely wife, Joyce.

*Clare L.,
Midland Wednesday Night Group*

Two Years of Happiness

In May of 2005, I found myself in a hospital room under lock and key with only the pajama's the hospital had provided me. After my failed suicide attempt, I asked my Higher Power to help me have a new life without alcohol. Alcohol had destroyed my life, my children's lives and my marriage. I had many excuses for my drinking. However, at this moment in time, I began to realize that my life had the possibility of being a beautiful life filled with happiness, honesty and willingness if I wanted it to be.

One of the police officers who took me from my home to the hospital asked me why I tried to kill myself and I said "I do not know". He asked me if I had thought about my kids and I said "NO". I just thought about killing myself because of my husband.

My alcoholism did not let me see that: Yes! I can be a good mother,

a good person without any fears. I knew my life could change but because I was never honest with myself or my Higher Power, I continued to relapse for three long months during which time my father passed away. It became another excuse to drink again.

When I went back, I became totally involved in what the A.A. group taught me about recovery. I got a sponsor, I worked with others and I cleaned my house with honesty and willingness. Now after two years of sobriety, my life is filled with HAPPINESS. My relationship with my children is working better every day.

I have had to make important decisions in sobriety. I had to learn to follow what is GOD's will for me. I see myself as a baby in the program. I am learning step by step how life can be more filled with love, willingness and faith.

I continue to turn my life over to GOD. I can continue to love others and myself.

Please keep coming back because I need you.

Anonymous



June '07 Intergroup Report

It was a warm evening for new Chair of the Operating Committee Stephanie L. (Erin Mills) as she began her first meeting. There were 34 group representatives, 12 alternates, 7 sub-committee chairs and 8 Districts present as Stephanie presented Carole Keenan, our Special Worker, with a card and a lovely vase in recognition of Carole's 25 years of service to Alcoholics Anonymous in the GTA. Carole thanked everyone for the nice surprise and said that she will still be around for awhile.

Chris H., Finance Sub-Committee, had a nice report to deliver. Thanks to group and individual donations, strong literature sales and a generous donation from the 2007 ORC, income for the month of May exceeded expenses by over \$9,000 which means a year-to-date surplus of almost \$1,600! Accounts Receivables continue to be a trouble spot on the balance sheet. If your group has any outstanding invoices please ensure that they are paid as soon as possible.

No Reports from the Archives, CPC, Grapevine, Information AA Day committees.

Deadline for graphics submissions for the 2008 ORC is August 15. Please send submissions to reneworc2008@hotmail.com.

The Ad Hoc Recommendations sub-committee has halted their previous stage and is looking for new members for the sub-committee. Members from the professional community (Legal, fundraising, etc) are encouraged to participate.

The Access Ability and CPC sub-

committees were present for the People In Motion event. This is the first time 2 sub-committees worked together to carry the message at the same event.

Public Information had a display at the recent Pride Day events and continues with the folder/holder initiative. The 12 Step sub-committee is still looking for more greeters; spares are required if you are not able to commit to a regular shift.

Look for the new GTA website which is supposed to be up and running by July 31.

The Self Support sub-committee encourages all groups to submit updated group lists to Intergroup as Gratitude Month envelopes are currently being collated.

There was a great question and discussion from the floor about our responsibility and the fact that some sub-committees do not meet during the summer. The current procedures and guidelines state that each sub-committee must meet a minimum of 6 times per year.

The Better Times Intergroup Report is intended to be a summary of the Intergroup meeting. For more details please speak to your Intergroup Representative.

Did we see you? Each group is entitled and encouraged to send an Intergroup Representative to the monthly meetings. The meetings are for the groups to tell the Operating Committee what they want and need from Intergroup. Make sure that the voice of your group is heard! The Intergroup meeting is the last Tuesday of each month except in December which is as yet to be determined.

Tim R., Chartwell Group