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Tradition Ten
Alcoholics Anonymous
 has no opinion on
 outside issues, hence
 the A.A. name ought
 never be drawn into
 public controversy.

Expressions of Gratitude

Relections on a quarter century of sobriety lead me to thoughts of just what the meaning of gratitude entails. Where would I be today without my continuing journey in recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous?

Would I have a developing spiritual life, a relationship to a Higher Power who sustains my doubt and weaknesses throughout all times?

Would I know intuitively how to relate to others and complicated situations in my life with a degree of dignity, and a smidgeon of wisdom? None of the above likely...

I am sober today by the grace of God, by the gift of despera-

tion, by the ability to listen and learn from the teachers I found in the rooms of AA, and for all this I am indescribably grateful. My gratitude must be shown by action, and those actions include continuous attendance at meetings. Like those that were there for me when I first came, I am bound by gratefulness to show up and share this gift that was so graciously given to me over the years.

Recently I had the opportunity to visit the General Service Office of AA in New York, and attend a regular open meeting in the board room with staff and visitors. I gazed at the walls of the office showing historical

pictures of Bill, Bob, family and friends of AA in the early days, and felt such a wave of gratitude for the gift of inspiration that these early members had, the vision of grace and hope they brought to so many seemingly hopeless, lost and scorned people. In actions of gratitude I can carry that gift to others on a daily basis. I can offer sponsorship, service at group, set up and attend meetings, pray and meditate to develop my spiritual life, and through writings like this share my gratitude for all I have received over a quarter century!

*Andrea W.
 King City Group*

23rd Archives Breakfast

Service work in Alcoholics Anonymous is about carrying our message of hope. From setting up chairs and making coffee at our home groups to staffing a display booth at a doctor's conference, it's about carrying the message.

Archives, in a unique way, is also involved in this activity. By organizing and preserving documents and artifacts from our past, the Archives committees are preserving the message of AA. Much of our lore is passed on from grand-sponsor to sponsor to sponsor. Each generation can get the facts muddled or twisted. For example, in Toronto, we maintain a collection of Intergroup minutes back to the very early years. No need to guess what Intergroup finances were like back in the 1950s. Archives has the records.

On November 4th this year, the

Archives Committee is sponsoring the 23rd Annual Archives Breakfast at the Oasis Convention Centre in Mississauga. Coffee will be served at 9, a buffet breakfast at 10, followed by an open meeting. Our speaker will be Amy Filiatreau, the non-alcoholic archivist from GSO in New York. She will be bringing some vintage audiotapes to play for us from the early years of the Fellowship.

Tickets are \$25, available from your Group's Intergroup Rep or your group service representative (GSR). Members of the Archives committee and the staff at 234 Eglinton have tickets as well. Proceeds help pay for the ongoing restoration and preservation of the Archival collection that is kept in the repository at 234.

*Roy R.
 Chair, GTA Archives Committee*

What is Gratitude Time?

Every Fall/Autumn, Toronto Intergroup appeals to its membership for financial support. This campaign accounts for one third of the revenue and permits us to climb out of the deficit situation that we remain in almost all year round. Of the 9,600 registered members in the GTA, only 400 of those members contributed to last year's drive. It is said that 95% of the work in AA is done by 5% of its population. You can insure that a healthy Intergroup continues to function and be accessible if members of your family, or friends, need it.

This October, give generously by cheque, cash or credit card to: GTA Intergroup Offices, 234 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 202, Toronto, ON M4P 1K5 (416 487-5591)

Special Winter Events

If you have a special seasonal event this winter, please submit details to Better Times by November 10 for inclusion in our December issue!

Editor's Say...

Speaking at an AA Meeting

In 1940, the members of the Friday Forum Luncheon Club that met at the Mayflower Hotel in Akron, Ohio designed a leaflet with some suggestions on speaking at an AA meeting. Many were veterans of a year or more experience.

1) Be Brief: Put your best effort into it. You don't have to write out a speech but be organized about your subject matter. Prepare written notes. You owe your audience consideration.

2) Be Brief: Effectiveness is lost after thirty minutes. The average listener will start to wander and what good has been done is undone. The longer you talk, the less the listener will remember. Alcoholics are restless people. Don't flatter yourself by thinking you can captivate them. If you don't own a watch, borrow one and keep an eagle eye on it. After a half an hour, come to a speedy conclusion. Your audience will be profoundly grateful.

3) Be Brief: The Gettysburg Address lasted four minutes. The principle speaker of the day, Edward Everett talked

for two hours. No one remembers Everett but every school child can give Lincoln's talk verbatim.

4) Be Brief: Speak up. Don't mumble. Trained orators developed a hard and fast rule: Talk to someone in the very back row of the auditorium, then you will be sure everyone in the hall can hear you. Take your time. Speak deliberately.

5) Be Brief: Your audience knows you are an alcoholic and a member of AA. It may be necessary to give some of your drinking history to illustrate the obstacles you had to overcome to become a practicing AA but keep it to a bare minimum.

6) The chairman has advised you on the 'ground rules': you may wish to suggest to him that he not over-eulogize you. If you are the chairman, thank the speaker no matter what he/she says but make it brief. Avoid lengthy comment. Keep your eye on your watch and close the meeting on time.

Edited version
of the *AA Speakers Manual*
(1940) Akron, Ohio

Bitterness, Anger, Resentment

I'm not sure of the distinction between bitterness, anger and resentment. They all stir my gut and make me boiling mad. When I'm not careful, bitterness, anger and resentment affect the way I drive my car and my relationships with store clerks.

Only I know the pain of my bitterness, anger and resentment. When I die, that pain can die with me. No one else can feel it. But if I pass my bitterness, anger and resentment on to others, then my pain will live on after me. I don't want that.

It's bad enough now, this pain I feel inside, without it outlasting me. So I try to talk about it in a way that can defuse the bitterness, anger and resentment

without transmitting the pain. I must talk with someone, not to find a solution. God knows there are as many solutions as there are members of AA

Don't "Get mad". Getting mad keeps the pain inside.

Don't "Get even". Getting even transmits the pain to someone else.

Get calm. Getting calm helps to rid my world of pain that I can live without. I can't solve the problem that brings the pain but I can start to deal with it.

Thank You. Thank you for just listening to me. Thank you for your arm around my shoulder. Thank you for smiling as I walk towards you. You didn't know then that I was hurting, but now you do know. Let us walk together a while and enjoy the warm sunshine on our faces. We can share that, too.

Chris G.
Bloordale Group

Better Times thanks Tim R. (Chartwell Group) for his dedication and effort on the Editorial Committee. Tim was our 'point man' for the succinct and interesting monthly Intergroup Report.

He will be missed for his valuable service work in carrying the written spiritual message to our AA members and others.

Good luck in all your endeavours, Tim!

Attn: Individuals!

If you are a 12-Step volunteer, please update your info at Intergroup! We need to update our database of people who can make 12-Step calls.

— ● —

Wanted: Volunteers!

Volunteers needed for Winter Season Open House, especially a new chair! **Spiritual New Year's** is hoping to form a committee at our first meeting Oct. 20 at 1 p.m. at 234.

Humour

Along with all of life's gifts that we receive when we stop drinking, one of the most important is humour. There was very little of it in our alcoholic drinking days. Recovering alcoholics love to laugh and tell jokes and some of our jokes are corny but the laughter is real. Red Skelton said with all his heart, he wanted to hear the laughter he tried to create.

When I hear laughter, I know in my heart that AA is where I belong. There is a time and place in AA when humour is inappropriate but always a time and place to smile.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to go on many twelve step calls, especially from 2 Gerard Street. One night when I received a call, it was not a night I wanted to go out. Snow, ice and extremely cold weather made me think it would be great to stay home. I knew it might be hard to find someone

to go along. I thought was Bob C. and he said sure. I was given the address, phone number and, strangely enough was told our prospect was a geologist.

Bob and I went to the door together and were commenting on how nice the district was. A well-dressed gentleman in a suit, scarf, overcoat and hat answered the door. Leaving immediately, he reached the sidewalk then slipped and fell. His hat went one way, he went the other and I heard Bob saying – "I guess he's studying the

rocks down there."

We went to the closest meeting and on the way back, he could not find his house key. He told me his sister's phone number and we found a public phone. She asked if he was with us and if he was, could we just keep him. I will protect his anonymity but thanks be to God, he is still with us today. He promises to always keep his house keys close.

Walt C
Scarborough Group

Clarence S.

"Home Brewmeister"

With an abrasive personality and unconcealed hostility towards Bill W. and the Traditions, Clarence S. carved a place in Alcoholics Anonymous all of his own. Sobering up Feb. 11th of 1938, Clarence was brought by his wife to Dr. Bob in Akron for treatment of his alcoholism. His was an ultimatum. Seek treatment or the marriage was over.

Fifteen months after his sobriety, he organized the Cleveland Group and had the first meeting that was identified as 'Alcoholics Anonymous'; however, Nell Wing stated firmly that Bill W. used this term for AA meetings long before Clarence had.

Catholic priests in Cleveland were not allowing their parishioners to attend the Oxford Group meetings in Akron.

Clarence's defiance heralded the beginning of the end of the Oxford Group's connection with Alcoholics Anonymous.

Around this time another disgruntled AA showed up in Cleveland. Hank P., Bill W.'s right hand man in New York, relapsed and was feeding the rumour mills out to discredit Bill and Dr. Bob. Hank reportedly married Clarence's sister-in-law and was working with Clarence in a business selling porcelain mugs and figurines. When Hank divorced and remarried, the business dissolved.

Clarence enlisted in the army in WWII and when he was discharged, his wife divorced him. He refused to abide by the Traditions of AA, insisting that he was the founder of AA. He never hesitated to accept any honour or award that came his way. He never accepted anonymity as a spiritual principle and used his full name in relation to his work in AA all his life.

He moved to Florida where he married his third wife who was an AA member and belonged to the Assembly of God Church. Their retreats in 12 Step recovery became Christian fundamentalist in nature.

Clarence S. died in March of 1984 at the age of 82.

Bernadette MacL.
King City Group

Recent Medallions

Cal S.	15	East York	Sept. 4
Gerry K.	15	SOS	Sept. 7
Nancy B.	1	Lansing	Sept. 8
Penny McC.	15	Aurora	Sept. 9
Richard B.	1	King City	Sept. 10
Margie C.	25	Amazing Grace	Sept. 11
Phillip	10	Port Whitby	Sept. 11
Ken R.	1	East York	Sept. 11
Kingsley	15	Shepherd	Sept. 11
Wayne E.	10	Ajax Area	Sept. 11
Debbie M.	1	New Anchor	Sept. 13
Ben W.	45	Thorncliffe Park	Sept. 14
Jo-Ann W.	1	Bloordale	Sept. 15
Terry	1	High Park	Sept. 16
Andrea W.	25	King City	Sept. 17
Howie B.	25	Erin Mills	Sept. 17
Jeff G.	1	Shepherd	Sept. 18
Paul D.	1	East York	Sept. 18
Harold	25	Port Whitby	Sept. 18
Austin R.	15	12 Steps	Sept. 19
Bruce T.	8	Bloordale	Sept. 19
Nick W.	1	Twelve Tradition	Sept. 19
Eddie	1	Lakeshore	Sept. 23
Patrick G.	1	King City	Sept. 24
Geraldine H.	1	East York	Sept. 25
Stacey	1	Port Whitby	Sept. 25

Upcoming Medallions:

Mary M.	20	Erin Mills	Oct. 1
Brian S.	1	Westmoreland	Oct. 2
Ritu B.	1	Thornhill	Oct. 3
Aime W.	1	King City	Oct. 8
Brenda B.	5	Bloordale	Oct. 8
Marica C.	5	Royal York	Oct. 9
Dareena B.	10	Brampton Recovery	Oct. 10
Vesna K.	1	Golden Mile	Oct. 10
Sean McC.	45	Welcome	Oct. 14
Vangi C.	10	East York	Oct. 16
Jim J.	10	Port Whitby	Oct. 16
Ivan H.	5	Thornhill	Oct. 17
Tom S.	5	Golden Mile	Oct. 17
Bill B.	15	New Anchor	Oct. 19
Doug W.	20	Don Mills	Oct. 24
Joyce S.	25	Thornhill	Oct. 24
Olga P.	5	East York	Oct. 30

Things we cannot change

Ken G. Longbranch 75 years old – 30 years sobriety, memorial service was Sept. 18

Meeting Changes:

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 LOCA-

TION - 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.

The Beverly Hills Group, which celebrated 37 years of service to "still suffering alcoholics" last Nov. 11, needs help. As our group has aged, so have our members; some have passed on; others have moved on. The thing is, we have to ask members of AA to please come and Guest Chair our meetings, on Friday evenings. We are only in need of guest chairs, speakers and new members. Our meeting is held at *Greenborough Community Church, 2000 Keele St.* (just north of Eglinton Ave.) at 8pm on Friday evenings. If you are able to come and Guest Chair (bring a speaker, we'll do the rest) please contact our secretary at Mike C. (416) 322-2107, mike_c@rogers.com. If not, please forward this message to any AA members who you think can help.

Event notices:

"Joe and Charlie" BIG BOOK SEMINAR. DOWNTOWN TORONTO Sat. Oct. 20th , 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., 121 St. Joseph's St. (Bay & Wellesley area) University of St. Michael's College - Alumni Hall 400. Includes lunch & refreshments. Presenters are Jim B. (Jamestown, NY) and Wes B. (Toronto, ON). Great speakers, great fellowship, all are welcome. Tickets \$10 – Contact Adam F. at 416-428-6930 / Art W. at 647-885-3675 or Tammy T. at 416-898-1085.

GREATER TORONTO AREA INTERGROUP
MONTHLY BOARDROOM BOOKINGS FOR SUB-COMMITTEES

*Subcommittees meet at the Intergroup Office (234 Eglinton Ave E, Suite 202)

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES:

Every first Monday of the month at 7:00 pm

SELF-SUPPORT:

Every first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm

GRAPEVINE:

Every second Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm

ARCHIVES:

Every second Friday of the month at 7:00 pm

WEBSITE:

Every second Saturday of the month at 1:00 pm

COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL

COMMUNITY (CPC):

Every second Monday of the month at 7:00 pm

ACCESS ABILITY:

Every third Sunday of the month at 11:00 am

PHONE TRAINING SESSION:

Every third Sunday of the month at 1:30 pm

PUBLIC INFORMATION:

Every third Monday of the month at 7:30 pm

TREATMENT FACILITIES:

Every third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm

INFORMATION AA DAY: Starting Sept. 2007,

Every last Monday at 7:30 pm

TWELFTH STEP:

Every last Friday of the month at 6:30 pm

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE*:

Second-last Tuesday of the month at 4:30 pm

(*non-committee members: attendance by appointment only)

OPERATING COMMITTEE*:

Second-last Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm

(*non-committee members: attendance by appointment only)

Better Times NEWSLETTER:

Last Wednesday of the month before the Intergroup meeting, 7:00 pm

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)

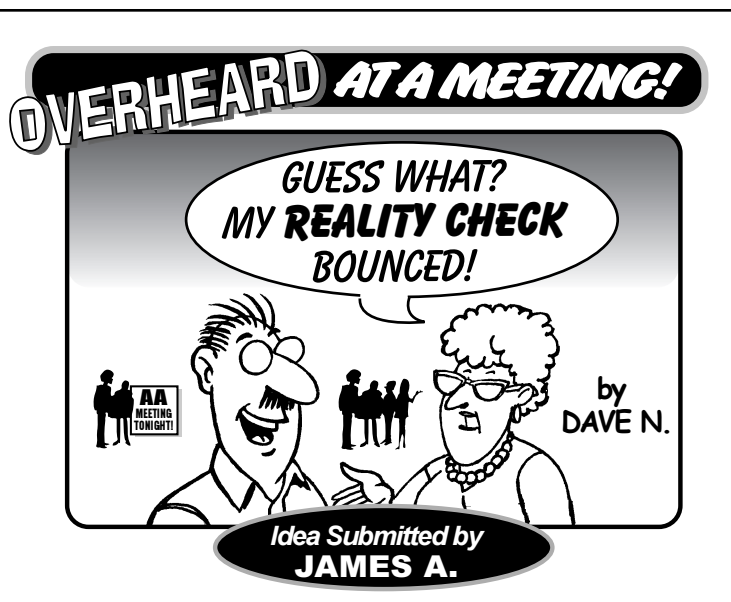
Gratitude Roundup 2007 - Willingness is the Key

The annual Gratitude Roundup, sponsored by Toronto area lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) members of Alcoholics Anonymous, with Al-Anon participation, gets back to basics this year with the theme "Willingness is the Key". The roundup started 29 years ago in Toronto, and is traditionally held on the Canadian Thanksgiving weekend (Columbus Day weekend in the USA). The conference provides an opportunity for members of AA and Al-Anon to gather and

express their gratitude for sobriety while meeting friends, both old and new. Conference participants come from various areas throughout North America, as well as from many other countries. All are welcome.

This year's roundup takes place from Friday, October 5th to Sunday, October 7th at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel on Yonge Street just north of College Street. Registration begins at 3 p.m. on Friday (and continues into Saturday for late comers). The conference program includes speakers to share their experience, strength and hope, as well as many workshops. Nightly entertainment features a talent show on Friday night, and buffet dinner/dance on Saturday. The roundup closes with a buffet brunch and sobriety countdown on Sunday.

The cost is \$46 for roundup



participation, \$44 for dinner and \$26 for brunch. Preferred rate accommodations are available at the Courtyard Marriott. For further information please contact Francois D. at 416-964-8312 or visit the Gratitude website at www.torontogratitude.com

Toronto Gratitude Roundup Committee

"Alcoholics Anonymous is like the mafia. No matter where you go, you're family. If you leave, you're dead."

August '07 Intergroup Report

Attendance at this meeting: 5 district liaisons, 5 subcommittee Chairs, 46 group reps, and 13 alternates, plus 4 additional members. Please note that there were no CPC, Grapevine, Information AA Day, Public Information, Self Support, Treatment, Twelfth Step or Winter Season Open House sub-committee reports.

Finance Sub-committee: Bar Graph for the month of July indicates an Income of \$9,321 and Expenses of \$16,025, for a difference of \$6,704. Literature sales have been slower in the summer months. The Accounts Receivable figures are improving: the current figure is \$13,023, which is doing better by \$3,000, as compared the June A/R figure. Reps are asked to request their group treasurer/librarian to call 234 for an update of their literature accounts.

2 Finance Committee members are needed. The **Ad Hoc committee** needs **volunteers** to spread awareness of previous *ad hoc* Position Paper objectives. Requirements: "Enthusiasm and commitment!"

Access Ability sub-committee is still in need of a secretary.

Better Times sub-committee: This committee needs **volunteers**; they also need a Secretary and Circulations person. **Deadline for all submissions:** 10th of every month for the next month's issue!

Corrections: There are two new Corrections

Chairs from District 10 & 22.

Archives: Tickets/Flyers provided for reps for the event, to be held Sun. Oct. 4 at the Oasis Convention Centre. Tickets: \$25.

ORC 2008: There will be a dance on Friday night, in addition to Saturday night. The winning ORC 2008 Graphics submission was Gary (Fronrunners Group).

Website: The Webmaster role has been filled. A package for new web volunteers is being created for instruction on how to update the site as required; also, a 'template page' is being created. **Volunteers are needed!**

Winter Season Open House 2008: This event needs a chair! **Please send resumes to 234.**

Unfinished Business

MOTION regarding subcommittees not meeting in the summer months: John (Thornhill) withdrew the Motion, with apologies.

New Business: Group List Update Form: Stephanie L. (OC Chair) explained the need for updated information (phone number, address, postal code, etc.) from groups/members. Historically, it was needed for the yearly Gratitude initiative; the OC would like to emphasize the need for this updated information for *12-Step purposes*. Our current database is "ancient" which makes trying to do 12-Step calls very difficult (only 312 12-Step calls were made in 2006). The decision to provide information will be up to individual members. As a result, a new Group/Member Update List will be created. **a) New Forms will be available next**

month, and b) "It's not just about Gratitude" – we need this information to help Greeters do 12-Step work.

NOTICE OF MOTION from Fran H. (Kingsway): **The Kingsway Group moves that:** Section 4.5 (Terms of Office of Intergroup Representatives) of the Guidelines Sections of the Procedures & Guidelines of GTA Intergroup outlining the quadrangle division of GTA and the biannual rotation selection method of new reps **be removed entirely from the Procedures & Guidelines**, as this has been made non-applicable due to changes made to the rep selection process, passed by the Fellowship in the last Referendum (August 2006; see *Referendum Results Attachment*).

Section 6.3 (Workshop Meetings) of the Guidelines Section of the Procedures & Guidelines of GTA Intergroup be amended to read: *'The sole function of the biannual Workshop Meetings [would] be to thoroughly orient the Intergroup reps and the Operating Committee to the Procedures & Guidelines, the GTA Intergroup structure, and the general functioning of the Office/Literature Department. All the attending OC members and reps will be given written histories and summaries of the Subcommittees off GTA Intergroup.'*

Reps were asked to take this Notice of Motion back to their groups for discussion.

Meeting adjourned with the Responsibility Pledge.

John P., Welcome Group