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Editorial Ctte: Marvyn W. (Chair), Elaine G. (Editor), Mary P. (Editor), Ciara C. (HYH), David N. (Cartoonist), Jim H. (Circ), John P. (Desktop) Opinions expressed in *BETTER TIMES* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Greater Toronto Area Intergroup.

How To Reach Us: Submit group news, medallions, other event notices, letters to the editor or articles to *BETTER TIMES* (before the 10th of the month prior to the month of issue), by mail, fax or email. Only signed submissions with a means of contact will be accepted. For subscriptions call Alexx 416-487-8110.

Submissions to Better Times should be limited to 200-350 words. October is Gratitude Month and Gratitude will also be the theme of October’s BETTER TIMES.

30 Years of Service – District 22 Service Day

In the mid 70s, Toronto East District represented over forty groups in a sprawling district which comprised an area bordered by Bayview Avenue on the west and Pickering on the east. The north and south borders were Lake Simcoe and Lake Ontario. As you can imagine, this was an unmanageable area so it was decided to redistrict. On Jan. 1, 1979, Toronto Suburban East district was created, with Pat O’B as District Committee Member (DCM). The new district’s border ran north along Woodbine Avenue, east along O’Connor Drive and Eglinton Avenue to Kennedy Road, north along Kennedy to Steeles Avenue and east to Pickering and consisted of fourteen groups. In 1981, Pat C. succeeded Pat O’B as DCM and applied to the General Service Office to have the district’s

name changed to Scarborough District 22.

How would the GSRs of this new district be informed and educated about General Service? It was decided that an annual Service Day would be held with speakers, literature displays, and service panels. Thus, on Sunday, Apr. 22, 1979, Scarborough District 22’s hugely successful and popular Annual Service Day was launched. While the format has been modified over the years, Service Day continues to further the knowledge of those already involved in service and to introduce newcomers to the world of General Service.

The district continues to develop according to service needs. District 22 has been organizing meetings in the Toronto East Detention Centre for many years. It supports a weekly service meeting at Scarborough

General Hospital. In 1998, District 22 began a commitment to the Access Ability Committee. In 2005, the Scarborough District 22 Archives Committee was formed. In 2006, the annual East Toronto Archives Breakfast, a co-operative venture with District 18, was launched.

Members of District 22 have always had a keen sense of service responsibility which is carried out in an atmosphere of good fellowship. In other words, they have discovered that service in AA is fun! **Please join us at Scarborough District 22’s Service Day on Sat., Sept. 13 at Oakridge Community Centre located at 63 Pharmacy Avenue (Pharmacy north of Danforth). Admission is free with a dance to follow at a cost of \$10.**

*Ed H., Twelve Steps Group
Member Archives Ctte, District 22*

Hill Group Celebrates 60 Years

On Thurs. Oct. 23, the Hill Group celebrates 60 Years of AA Service. The Hill Group was founded by Colonel Goodwin G., who joined AA in Oct. 1946 - the same year that his friend, Tom G., formed the Kingsway group. Though many people from central Toronto traveled every Wednesday to the Kingsway, Col. Goodwin decided to form a group closer to home. The Hill held its first meeting on Thurs., Oct. 15, 1948 at Timothy Eaton Church. The Colonel managed to talk most of the Kingsway members into joining the Hill. “He was very persuasive”, says Joe C., who is 62 years sober. “Starting

the Hill Group temporarily shut down the Kingsway group for one or two meetings. Some people were deeply offended.”

Ten people attended the first Hill meeting – six alcoholics and four wives. Goodwin was a great advocate of involving spouses. The Hill grew, and by 1957, more than 100 people were regularly attending.

It became known as the ‘Mink & Pearls’ group because Forest Hill residents frequented it and coffee was served on china cups with saucers. “It was a very classy group,” remembers Rene D., who is 52 years sober. “It was one of the largest groups in Toronto, and if you spoke there

you’d hit the big time.” Around 1965, the Hill’s discussion group began meeting on Monday nights at the Church of the Transfiguration on Manor Road. The Hill continues to evolve. The group now has signers for the hearing impaired at the Thursday night open meetings. About 200 people regularly attend this meeting.

Come celebrate the Hill’s 60th on Thurs., Oct. 23, at Timothy Eaton Church (230 St. Clair Avenue West, two blocks west of Avenue Road). Open to all members, families, friends and supporters. The meeting starts at 8:30 pm but get there early, as it will be packed!!

Jim H., Hill Group

New Life Group Celebrates 40 Years

Back in the early 1960s, there was a beginners group, started by members of the Lakeshore Group, nicknamed The Beginners Group or The Little Group. When I came in, I loved this little group... I read, I did the slogans, I chaired and I spoke there. I did these things for the first time at the Beginners Group. It was great to start off with everyone there being new.

One evening in Sept. 1968, I was at my home group meeting, the Long Branch Group, and I noticed Gord H. talking to some people and I saw he had tears in his eyes. When I asked him what was wrong, he said, "If I don't find someone to take over the Little Group by tomorrow night, they are going to close it". I asked Gord what we needed to do keep the group open. He then looked up at the sky and said, "God, you did answer my prayer. Thank you".

We went to the Little Group the next night and Gord told them that I had agreed to take it over. I was seven months sober. We set a date to open the group, Oct. 1, 1968.

When it came time to choose a name for our group, one person,

Al H. said, "If I could get sober long enough to start a group; I would call it the New Life Group". Then he got up and walked out. In the end, we all liked the name New Life Group the best. We were at Greaves Avenue for twenty-five years. When they sold the church, we moved to the Lions Hall on Rosewood. We were there for 5 years, and then we moved to St. Mary's-by-the-Sea Church at Lakeshore and John Street in Port Credit.

Excerpt from Bruce L.'s history for New Life Group's 33rd Anniversary.

The group moved back to the Lions Hall shortly after this history was written and we are still there today. Our membership now is very small, with about 15 members, and as it is with a lot of groups, there are about 10 very active members.

On Tues., Oct. 7, the New Life Group will celebrate 40 years. Please come and enjoy a wonderful night with us. I came into the program in 1983 and joined this group. I had the wonderful opportunity to get know Bruce and many of our members who are no longer with us. Bruce joined AA on Mar. 12, 1968, and in April of 2003 he celebrated his 35th anniversary. On a personal note, I was blessed to marry Bruce in 1985 and had a wonderful time with him until he passed away in Aug. 6, 2003.

Bruce L. & Marilyn L.
New Life Group

Ask BETTER TIMES

What is the importance of having Home Group representation at Toronto Intergroup?

John B., my service sponsor, reminds me that Intergroup representation involves the three legacies of AA Service – Recovery, Unity and Service. On a personal level, representing my home group at Intergroup helps me to stay sober one-day-at-a-time by getting me active in AA (Recovery). On the group level, Intergroup representation enables every group to be well informed

of activities within the fellowship and to stay connected with other AA groups (Unity). Finally, on an organizational level, Intergroup representation gives every group a forum to voice their concerns, requests and announcements and to vote on issues concerning AA (Service). Tradition One states, "Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon AA unity". I believe volunteering for this service work is vital to upholding both Tradition One and the three Legacies of AA Service.

Yours truly,
Reg S. (Melrose Group)

Special Information Meeting

Thurs. Sept. 11 7:30 pm at St. Clements Church, 59 Briar Hill Ave. GTAI is hosting the third information meeting open to ALL members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Bring your questions, concerns and even your opinions to this town-hall meeting with an open-mike style. On hand will be members of your Operating Committee and Ad Hoc Subcommittee. The purpose will be

to provide an opportunity where ideas and comments are most welcome. This is NOT to amend the motion, but to explain its points and the changes it wishes to make. Please encourage all who have expressed concerns to attend. Tradition twelve states: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place *principles before personalities.*

BETTER TIMES urgently requires a new desktop publisher for our October issue!

"God Plays 'Peek-a-Boo' with Us!"

At one time or another, we become engaged with the idea of "finding" God. We seek direction as to where he might be found, and set out on a "quest" to find him. Some say it takes a lifetime of dedication, others say it could happen anytime that *we're* ready (whenever that is?). It seems like such a "heavy" undertaking. Why does God make it so unclear as to how to find him in our life?

The truth is...he doesn't. He's made it very simple! Not many know that God invented the children's game of 'peek-a-boo', a game played by all loving parents with their babies, much to the child's delight. It involves the parent *pretending* to hide behind something, be it a chair or simply behind his or her own hand held to their face, in a very obvious way, as to not be hidden at all. The baby is told that mommy or daddy is hiding and that the child can't see them. Then, they remove the *totally inadequate* barrier, behind

which they were *hiding*, and declare "PEEK-A-BOO!" The baby's face lights up with obvious joy and excitement, in that they *now* can see their loving parent. They have "*found*" their parent's loving and smiling face...right there in front of them. What wonderful experiences the baby has in playing the game. It's so thrilling for them. So pleasurable, so reassuring! Of course the parent was never really out of sight, nor were they attempting to truly hide themselves, as that would frighten the child, thinking it had been abandoned! The child

would be very upset and begin to cry. The game would be no fun at all. The mission of *bonding* the parent to the child would be unfulfilled. God is *always* playing this "game" with his children. We're told that he's hiding...but he isn't. He's right there in front of us saying "PEEK-A-BOO!" All we need to do is to recognize that he's there and we'll be filled with joy and excitement in having "*found*" him! Try it...and see what happens. God blesses you.

Stan S.
Just for Today Group, Orillia

The "12 & 12"

Much information is available in the foreword of the publication 'Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions'.

Those who take a moment to review this much overlooked section will be reminded that the book deals with an explicit view of the principles by which A.A. members recover.

The Steps are stated to be a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole.

From its beginnings in 1935 following a meeting between a well known surgeon and a New York broker who were both 'severe' alcoholics, the basic principles were borrowed mainly from the fields of religion and medicine.

Much trial and error marked the discovery of workable tenets upon which the society could be based and resulted in the publication of a book titled 'Alcoholics Anonymous' in 1939.

In it alcoholism was described from the alcoholic's point of view and the spiritual ideas of the society were codified for the first time as the Twelve Steps.

With the publication of the book the pioneering period ended and a period of rapid growth that followed saw alcoholics flock to the fellowship by the tens of thousands.

This expansion brought with it severe growing pains and many were unsure if such great numbers of erratic people could work together in harmony and with good effect.

It was out of this combination of growth and concern that the Twelve Traditions were formed and first published in 1946 and later confirmed at A.A.'s first International Conference in Cleveland in 1950

The Twelve Traditions apply to the life of the fellowship itself. They outline the means by which A.A. maintains its unity and relates itself to the world about it.

Conglomerated from various sources

Recent Medallions:

| | | | |
|----------|----|---------------------|--------|
| James P | 15 | R & R | Aug 13 |
| Luanne H | 1 | Back To Basics (RH) | Aug 15 |
| Ann J | 1 | Back To Basics (RH) | Aug 22 |

Upcoming Medallions:

| | | | |
|-----------|----|---------------------|---------|
| Ronny H | 20 | Bellamy | Sept 1 |
| Murray O | 5 | East York | Sept 9 |
| Mary R | 10 | Golden Mile | Sept 10 |
| Paddy McC | 30 | One Day At A Time | Sept 14 |
| Jessie I | 5 | East York | Sept 16 |
| Deirdre B | 25 | One Day At A Time | Sept 21 |
| Vik M | 1 | Pine Hills | Sept 22 |
| Greg W | 1 | East York | Sept 23 |
| Doobay C | 5 | Back To Basics (RH) | Sept 26 |
| Roger L | 15 | Welcome | Sept 28 |
| Steve P | 10 | Markland Wood | Sept 28 |
| Brian B | 15 | Pine Hills | Sept 29 |

New Meetings:

The Main Purpose Group (C) Thurs. 10am (EAST): 740 Broadview Ave, Broadview subway. Big Book Study Format.

Beginners Meeting (C) Sat. 3 p.m. (EAST) (SERVICE MEETING): Alano Club - 740 Broadview Ave Ave, south of Danforth (2nd Floor). Big Book study.

Getting to Know You

He held onto me tight from high up above
 In his arms he did keep me to hold and to love
 I thought he had left me when I gave up on him
 to live in the life of addictions and sin.
 My illusions, delusions, with insanity mixed in
 was the recipe for destruction with the touch of a grin.

I learned we were sick, living in our own hell
 and now is the time for us to get well.

He holds onto us by day, afternoon
 and at night

He also puts us together with the
 gift of his Light

His amazing Grace, he brings us
 together with him
 and with each other we fight for
 this battle to win.

God has blessed me with the
 presence of you
 with all that you say and with all
 that you do.

You give from your heart with the
 best you can do

My respect and my heart I offer to you.

For you I will treat with kindness
 and care

for whatever you need I want you to
 know I'll be there.

Meetings needing support

New Life Port Credit Mtg, Lion's Hall (Community Ctr), 20 Rosewood Ave, 1 Bldk E of Hurontario from the Lakeshore; Tuesday, Discussion Gr. 7pm, followed by an Open Mtg at 8:30 pm.

Meeting Changes:

Woodbine Winner's Circle Meeting Tues. 1pm (C) (NORTHWEST): Woodbine Racetrack, Rexdale Blvd and Hwy 27, east stable gate entrance, Jake Howard Memorial bldg, west corner of building.

We Too Can Recover Fri. 7pm (CENTRAL): NOW DISCONTINUED

Events:

42nd Annual Dunnville AA Convention will take place Sept. 5, 6 and 7 at the County Inn Motel in Dunnville ON.

District 22 Service Day will be held on Sept. 13 at Oakridge Community Centre (Pharmacy and Danforth). There will be a dance afterward, tickets available for \$10

Heron Park Men's Meeting celebrates their 35th Anniversary Sept. 28 at Flippers Restaurant (Lawrence E & Kennedy). Doors open at 9am, breakfast will be served at 10 and the speaker, Dorothea Mc, will be at 11.

2008 Toronto Gratitude Roundup, Oct. 10, 11, 12 at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel, 475 Yonge St. Hosted by gay, lesbian and transgender members of AA (with Al-Anon participation).

The mistakes that we make in this battle we fight are important to learn how to do what is right. Which way do we want, and which way do we go Which way do we choose how to reap what we sow For time is a speck we are given on Earth from birth until death and then death to new birth The battles we fight through are all pre-arranged from Our Father above for our wisdom to gain.

Donna L.
 The Friendly Group

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 pm

ARCHIVES:

Every second Friday of the month at 7:00 pm

WEBSITE and Better Times NEWSLETTER:

Every second Saturday of the month at 1 pm

COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC):

Every second Monday of the month at 7 pm

ACCESS ABILITY:

Every third Sunday of the month at 11 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:

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)

THE MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING of GTA INTERGROUP is held on the last Tuesday of the month at 8 pm at the Glebe Road United Church - 20 Glebe Rd E, off Yonge St. (near Davisville subway)

Phone 234 to ensure the meeting you want to attend isn't cancelled during any particular month...

Interpretation of Concept One

For: District 06 Committee Meeting, January 16, 2008.

By 1950, membership in AA was over 100,000 and many of the dreams and ambitions of Bill W. and Dr. Bob were becoming a reality. As the fellowship grew, it became apparent that a trusteeship was needed to manage all of those special services for AA as a whole. This included production of uniform AA literature, development of a sound public relations policy, and creation of an organized network equipped to meet the ever-increasing calls for help. As the steps provided guidance for individual recovery and well being, and the traditions provided for strength and unity throughout the fellowship, the question arose as to what further precautions would be needed to guard against potential destruction.

The challenge was this: to choose between an authoritarian setup, where one group or person had unqualified authority over all, or a democratic concept which called for "checks and balances", protecting the fellowship from unqualified authority running unrestrained. Bill and Dr. Bob's design called for

a large-scale representative structure of delegates, convening at an annual conference, to which the Trustees would be accountable - an upside down organizational structure. This provoked widespread fear based on risks of politics, confusion, expense, and fruitless strife being too great.

Two influential factors intervened; one was the illness of Dr. Bob in 1948 - with the realization that the two leaders would not last forever; the second was Tradition Two: "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." The twelve concepts subsequently were born, and revealed the evolution by which this world service structure had arrived to its present form, and the rationale for its existence and functioning.

Concept 1; the final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. world service should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship seems to represent the foundational

OVERHEARD AT A MEETING!



by Dave N.

principle of this set of concepts. Through the structure of the General Service Board, and the annual General Service Conference, needs and issues are identified at the group level and channeled through District and Area forums for delegate's resolution on the conference floor.

My recent observation of this process as a participant at the Area 83 Assembly in Kingston last Oct. has proven to be an inspiring confirmation of this concept in action.

Peter N., GSR, Credit Valley Group

July '08 Intergroup Report

Chairperson Opening Remarks: Reg S. (Melrose), Chairperson John M. stepped down as Chairperson and Reg S. is the new Intergroup Chair.

Finance Report: Gregg W. (Rox Glen Trad.). As a cost savings measure, the Archives office was moved to 234 at a cost of \$1,700. Finance expects to recoup this expense by year end.

Subcommittee Reports

Info AA Day: Jim A. (Leslie), Dist. 18 Alternate DCM

This is a joint venture between 9 districts and Intergroup to provide information about the different subcommittees and what they do. Next mtg. Mon. Sept. 29, 7:30 pm at 234

Ad Hoc: Lynn B. (City Central)/Christine (Anniversary) Meeting was held to hear feed-

back and answer questions surrounding motion. Process to consider the motion will be presented at your groups. The motion will be discussed at Sept. IG meeting. If this motion passes, then it will go out to the groups for a vote. Next mtg. Thurs. Aug. 7, 7 p.m. at 234.

Access Ability: Donna M. (Sunnyside) ASL interpreters are available for meetings at no cost to AA. Interpreters are professionals and know to maintain anonymity. Please call Alexx at 234 if you need an ASL signer or for more info. Next mtg. Sun. Aug. 17, 11 am at 234.

Archives: Maire O'B. (Leslie), Archivist. Next Archives Breakfast will be held in Nov. Speakers will be Ben W. (46 years, Thorncliffe Pk) and Kay H. (55 years, Thornhill). Tickets available next month. This year's Archives National Workshop to be held in Niagara Falls. Next

Mtg. Fri. Aug. 15.

Reception centre: Rick McC. (Six Points): 43 groups and 6 groups represented tonight.

12 Step: Harold Y. (Port Credit), Past Operating Chair. Issues continue with filling phone shifts. We are looking at new scheduling software. Call tracking, new Phone Greeter training and 12 Step training being considered. Volunteer databases to be updated. Next mtg. Fri. Aug. 29 at 6:30 at 234.

Website/ Newsletter: Marvyn W. (Streetsville Action). **BETTER TIMES:** Bernadette M. (Editor) and Carolyn M. (assistant Editor) were thanked for their all work on newsletter. New co-editors are Elaine G. (Port Credit) and Mary P. (Restoration & Recovery). An annual *In Memoriam* page will be published in 2009. Newsletter needs a new printer. 12 Step Committee page was posted on website as

well as our volunteer form. Next mtg. Sat. Aug. 9 at 1 pm at 234. **Public Information:** Bryan W. (Rox Glen Trad.). PI pamphlets will be ready in Sept. The pamphlets will be presented to the GSR committees only. Meetings will resume in the fall.

Unfinished Business from Previous Meetings Bryan W. (Rox Glen Trad.)

MOTION: Exec. Secretary should be a "nonalcoholic". Secretary should be someone with a genuine and demonstrated interest in AA. Motion will go back to groups for 90 days with an IG vote to follow.

New Business Christine (Anniversary): Literature person at 234 received complaints from several groups concerning the new 30 day payment notice.

NEXT GENERALMEETING: Tues. Aug. 26 at 8 p.m. at Glebe Rd. United.