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October is Gratitude Month!
 Here are some ideas on how you might show your gratitude to AA this month:

- Show up early, or stay late, to help out your home group.
- Hold out your hand to welcome a newcomer.
- Volunteer for a service position at the group or intergroup level.

A Tribute to Jack R.

Jack R. was a much loved and much respected member of the Kingsway Group, as members of the group shared with me and I will share with you.

Jack is one of the icons in AA, having been sober for almost 50 years and being selfless when it came to helping a suffering alcoholic. When he joined AA, Jack was an art director for a large printing company. During his drinking days, he would do portraits in the bar to make money for his drinks. In sobriety, he took a leap and became a fine watercolour painter because of his faith in God and a vision he had had during the prayer and meditation he practised as part of his program.

Jack walked in a hurry, talked in a hurry and, when interpreting the slogan Easy Does It, claimed he even waited in a hurry. He said he always wanted to be a comedian and indeed he had a great sense of humour. He said funny things like "Bob's your uncle, then, snip, snip, tuck, tuck and now, Bob's your aunt" to help others get through tough times. At Jack's memorial in Orillia, one of his sponsees, Paul B., recalled that a few days before his passing in reference to his deteriorating health, Jack said that his warranty had to run out sooner or later.

Jack also used to say, "I am who I am, I'm Popeye the sailor man" which seems appropriate because he was rigorously honest, calling a spade a spade, and he led

by example. Jack always spoke at small out-of-town meetings on Christmas Eve to help out, and on Christmas Day, Jack and his wife, Maggie would open their home to members of their group who had nowhere else to go. He gave his straight-forward message at many conferences, and he never said no or was too busy when asked to do something to help a suffering alcoholic.

Perhaps his greatest legacy is the great number of people he helped through his 12-step work. When he first came into AA, Jack would pick up drunks on Yonge St. and take them to meetings. He 12-stepped his wife, Maggie and together they worked tirelessly until she passed away 7 years ago. The loss of Maggie was a shattering blow to Jack.

Jack also 12-stepped his sister Ros when she was a teenager, and continuously tried to carry the message to her for many years. He introduced her to Donwood and played a great part in Ros' life of sobriety of almost 30 years to date.

As one group member eloquently put it, "Jack and Maggie contributed largely to the success of the Kingsway Group. *continued on page 4...*

— 25th Annual Archives Breakfast —

On the morning of Sunday, November 8, at the Oasis Convention Centre in Port Credit, a few hundred alcoholics and their friends will convene to celebrate the rich heritage of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Toronto region. From the dozen or so groups that sponsored Intergroup in the 1940's to the perhaps two hundred that do today, A.A. in Toronto has grown and thrived.

The Archives Breakfast, the focus of this gathering, is celebrating its 25th year. Coffee will be served at 9:00 am; we will enjoy the buffet breakfast at 10. At the open meeting, which is held after we have eaten, Joy P. from St. Catharines and Fr. Peter W. from Oakville will share their early experiences in the Fellowship.

The Archives Committee's new traveling display will be there. There will be raffles and door-prizes drawn. We may possibly have a listening station up and running so you can listen to some of the decades-old

speaker tapes in our collection that have been conserved and digitized.

A good time will be had by all! Tickets are \$25 and are available from members of the Archives Committee – see our flyer for names and phone numbers. Seating is limited, so get your ticket early!

**Roy R., Chairperson
 Toronto Intergroup Archives Committee**

2009 Archives Breakfast

Where: Oasis Convention Centre,
 1036 Lakeshore Rd East, Mississauga

When: November 8, 2009 @ 9am

Cost: \$25

Tickets are available from all Archives committee members (250 seats only)!

Changes

I suppose it's normal to be part of an organization for some time, in my case 31 years, and get to feeling that it's not like it was when I first came in to AA. For starters, treatment facilities were few and far between; most people came to AA because they had "hit bottom" or at the recommendation of a medical professional. Nowadays, people coming into AA from treatment facilities is the norm. Not that that's a bad thing, but some of my best Remember When's are of going on Twelve Step calls with my first sponsor and carrying the message "live" to someone who had called Head Office. Ah the good old days, when a drunk alternated between loving you and the whole world one minute, then hurling profanities at you the next—not to mention the ever-present threat of being puked on!

And there are other changes, perhaps seemingly insignificant to many of you. For example, how many times do we hear a speaker start a talk with, "I'm here to tell you what IT used to be like, what happened, and what IT'S like now"? This is supposedly taken from Chapter Five of our Big Book. However, if you check it out, the second paragraph states: "Our stories disclose in a general way what WE used to be like, what happened and what WE are like now." Call me picky but there's a difference in telling what our lives used to be like (IT) and what kind of people (WE) we used to be. We may not be able to relate to the circumstances of each other's lives, the jobs, families, etc., but we can surely identify when we talk about how we felt, the things we did or didn't do out of fear and the shame we felt at many of our shortcomings. So

next time you're asked to share your experience, strength and hope, try sharing what YOU used to be like and see what a difference that makes.

Strange, too, that it seems we're "not allowed" to change the wording of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow so that it applies to "people" and not just "men" but it's quite all right to change the wording of the Big Book....makes you wonder.

Another change that irritates me (there I said it!) is when the entire room feels that they have to thank anyone who participates in an open meeting or shares at a closed meeting. There's a veritable volley of "thank you's" from the floor or from around the table. It used to be left to the person chairing the meeting to do this. It's been going on for quite a while now but I'm still not used to it. Is this another treatment facility "import"?

In closing, it is appropriate that I mention the way we close a meeting. Who came up with the bright idea of asking, "Whose Father?" or "Who keeps us sober?" or the most irritating one, "Who comes to every meeting?" We are then expected to parrot in unison "Our Father". Can't we just get back to basics and say the Lord's Prayer without trying to out-do each other in how we start? Every time someone says, "Whose Father?" that loud bang you hear could be my mind closing! I am trying to grow up in AA not go back to kindergarten!

This is a snapshot of what I am like now — still working on tolerance, still praying for serenity. Let's hope no one messes with the Serenity Prayer.

Betty M., Erin Mills Group

Gratitude Month – More Than Just Money

People think that gratitude month means money. But it can mean so much more than just money. Other than with money, one of the best ways to show gratitude is through service. Show gratitude through your actions – that's a great way of showing that AA really works. Just by showing up at a meeting you're doing service, and thus showing gratitude. If nobody showed up, there would be no meeting!

Many people think that service work requires years of sobriety, but that's not the case at all. No matter how much sobriety you have, you can: greet people at

the door, set up the chairs, help make the coffee, and so on. When they ask for five people to clean up after the meeting, why not put your hand up?

Look around the room at your meeting – don't sit where you normally sit. Look for a newcomer or someone you haven't talked to before. Break out of your comfort zone.

Remember: Helping the still-suffering alcoholic helps us all to stay sober.

Participate in Gratitude Month in whatever way you can!

**By Aaron K., Yorkville Group
and Sonja T., East York Group**

What's your take on Tradition 10?

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

Being very new to Alcoholics Anonymous I was told by an old-timer that the traditions were just as important as the steps. I knew that this could not possibly be true – we never discussed the traditions at the meetings I went to. If the traditions were just as important as the steps it would make sense that we would talk about them just as much.

My ideas on the importance of the traditions took a radical turn when I moved home after being overseas. I started attending a traditions meeting, mostly because I thought that the two ladies who were the group's only regulars were funny. They discussed one tradition every Thursday night and would relate that tradition to their lives. It was during these meetings that the traditions came alive to me and I finally understood what that old-timer had been talking about.

Tradition Ten reminds me to keep an open mind, to think about, "how to do the most good for the most alcoholics". When thinking about how I can best be helpful to others I am accepting of them, even if I don't agree with their opinions. My sponsor used to tell me early on (and still reminds me) that when I'm stuck inside myself, to get to an AA meeting and to help someone else. It is when I'm helping others that I cease to be judgmental. It's when I'm sharing my experience, strength and hope, not my opinion, that I can reach another alcoholic.

I was unable to build and develop relationships on any level because of, "sheer self-righteousness while trying to enforce upon the rest of mankind some millennium of [my] own specification". I always had an idea of how people should behave, especially when it came to their interactions with me. I was always trying to change the outside environment to fix my inside problems. Whenever I try to fix other people/places/things to fit my purpose, the results are disastrous. I always seem to find myself in controversy with others and eventually within myself.

When I am trying to grow spiritually by talking to God, going to meetings, working the steps, helping others and taking the next right action, I find I am not concerned with outside issues like why my neighbour drinks too much, or what I can do to make my boss see my point of view. It is in these rare times that I am spiritually fit, that I am not in controversy with anything or anyone. I hear that the further we travel down this "road of happy destiny" (BB), the more time we spend being spiritually fit. I sure hope 'they' are right.

Jenn B.

The Birth of AA in Ontario

(cont'd from Aug. 2009)

“Dr. Little was so excited by the first meeting that he decided to report it to Alcoholics Anonymous in New York. In his letter, he outlined the fact that six alcoholics joined him and Rev. Price at the Little Denmark Restaurant and that it went so well, another was already scheduled for the following week. He received a letter back in reply, dated January 29, 1943, that began in this way: “Bill Wilson and I were so delighted to have the good news in your letter of January 22nd. It would seem that Alcoholics Anonymous is now established in Canada.” And most certainly, with good fortune, it was!

Rev. Percy Price arranged to hold meetings at the Metropolitan United Church House, the first of which was held on January 28th, 1943. Six people attended that first church meeting, unaware that the future would see thousands of members attend hundreds of churches participating in fellowship that could return them their lives. The Metropolitan United Church meeting grew swiftly and attendance tripled within a few weeks. More importantly, at the February 25th meeting, the first woman attended. This weekly meeting continued until June 10, 1943, interestingly enough, exactly eight years after Dr. Bob had his last drink and A.A. began. On June 12, 1943, two days later, meetings started at the newly acquired Clubroom at 160 Bloor St. East, Toronto.

Alcoholics Anonymous continued to grow in 1943, first to Windsor and then to London. In Windsor, a few informal and sporadic meetings had taken place to explore A.A. It then arrived for good on October 22, 1943 through the efforts of a building contractor and a lawyer. Windsor never looked back; in fact, Wilf W. got sober at this initial meeting and remained so until his death in April 1993. Windsor has a strong, established and growing membership even today. Similarly, London had conducted several meetings to investigate A.A. with both alcoholics and non-alcoholics in attendance. On November 26, 1943, the first regular open meeting occurred with the formation of the London Group. Six members of A.A. from Toronto attended this meeting, lending credence to the phrase “willing to go to any lengths.” It seemed only fitting that A.A. in London be successful, after all, Canon Quintin Warner had given his copy of the Big Book to his alcoholic friend and fortunately, he had stayed sober.”

(p. 10, 50 Years of AA in Ontario)

Máire O'B, GTA Intergroup Archivist

Recent Medallions:

Guy B.	15	Willowdale	August 22
Annette L.	1	Willowdale	August 29
Kiki Z.	1	Willowdale	August 31
Bob M.	15	New Anchor	September 3
Peter L.	5		September 4
Don H.	1	East York	September 8
Charlene G.	1	Primary Purpose	September 9
Dora M.	30	Golden Mile	September 9
Frank D.	10	Rexdale United	September 10
Daniel Jason O.	5	Eventide	September 13
Beata B.	1	Unionville	September 16
Danny S.	1		September 17
Ed B.	1	Chartwell	September 17
Laura	1	Bayview	September 20
Ennio G.	25	King City	September 21
Peter G.	15	Bellamy	September 21
Keith B.	15	Unionville	September 23
Joanne G	1	Aurora	September 27
Mary Ann R.	1	King City	September 28
Shane E.	1	Unionville	September 30

Upcoming Medallions:

Barb B.	10	Principles B4 Pers.	October 4
Darrell H.	20	Six Points	October 5
Patrick K.	1	Glenholm	October 5
Laura K.	5	King City	October 5
Kim L.	1	New Anchor	October 8
Gerard T	10	Keep It Simple	October 11
Sheila F.	35	Keep It Simple	October 18
Ashleigh M.	1	Six Points	October 19
Glen S.	1	New Anchor	October 22
Ray C.	1	Fellowship Group	October 26
Nancy H.	20	New Life	October 27
Steve F.	1	Markland Wood	October 28
Ken F.	1	Bayview	November 15

Meeting Changes:

Melrose (O) Saturday 2:30pm (WEST): Meetings will be moving temporarily to within St. Matthew's Church. On October 17, the meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall (east side parking lot, down stairs). On October 24, the meeting will be held in the Parlor, (north side parking lot, upstairs).

Mount Royal - York Discussion (C) Thursday 6pm (CENTRAL): Meeting has been moved to the Metropolitan United Church, 50 Queen Street E. Please use side door, downstairs.

S.O.S. Discussion (C) Monday 8:30pm (NORTH): Meetings are not being held at St. Timothy's Church due to construction. Therefore, until September 29, meetings are being held in church across the street from St. Timothy's church.

St. James Big Book Discussion (C) Monday 1pm (CENTRAL): Meetings are suspended due to construction.

New Meetings:

Back to Basics Beginners (C) Thursday 8pm (EAST): Meeting located at St. Peter's Anglican Church, 776 Brimley Road, Toronto.

Good Neighbours' Club Drop-in (C) Friday 4pm (CENTRAL): The Good Neighbours' Club meeting will begin again on Friday September 18th. It will be held from now on at 4pm in the basement/kitchen of the Good Neighbours' Club, 170 Jarvis Street, Toronto. This is a service meeting open to all alcoholics.

Discontinued Meetings:

Half Century of AA Group (C) Tuesday 6pm (SUBURBAN NORTH): Meeting is discontinued.

Joy in Sobriety (O/C) Thurs. 8pm (EAST): Mtg discontinued.

Augusta Discussion (C) Friday 12:30pm (CENTRAL): Meeting is discontinued.

Glenview Discussion (C) Monday 8pm (CENTRAL): Meeting is discontinued.

Lakeside Discussion (C) Monday 8pm (EAST): Meeting is discontinued.

Oakville Odyssey (Youth) Monday 7pm (SUBURBAN WEST): Meeting is discontinued.

Pourquoi Pas! (C) Saturday 11am (CENTRAL): Meeting is discontinued.

Things We Cannot Change:

Just a few months short of his 50th year medallion, **Jack R.** of the Kingsway group died peacefully at his home. A memorial meeting will be held on Mon. Nov. 2nd at 8 pm at All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church in Etobicoke, where the Prince Edward Group meets.

It is with great sadness we announce the sudden passing of **Philip M.**, a 14-year member of the Willowdale Group. His kindness, generosity and enthusiasm helped many people and he will be missed by all, especially his two young sons.

Announcements:

Markland Wood Group 39th Anniversary will be held Thursday October 15 at St. Clements Catholic Church, 409 Markland Dr. in Etobicoke. Plenty of food and fellowship to be had. All are welcome to join us in our celebration!

Toronto Gratitude Roundup will be held October 16th - 18th at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel (475 Yonge Street, Toronto) The roundup is an AA Conference with Al-Anon participation. It is hosted by GLBT members and our friends. Everybody is welcome! For more information go to www.torontograturideroundup.org

Mississauga Fall Roundup will be held Saturday October 17th at St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church, 3625 Cawthra Road, Mississauga. This year's theme is "You Are No Longer Alone". Full AA, Al-Anon and Alateen. Registration and coffee 8 am, opening Meeting 9am. Tickets \$20.00 (Alateen \$5.00) includes buffet lunch. For more info go to www.mississaugafallroundup.com

68th Buffalo Fall Convention will be held November 6 - 8 at the Marriot Buffalo/Niagra, 1340 Millersport Highway in Amherst, New York. For more information visit: buffaloaaany.org/upcomingevents.htm

25th Annual Archives Breakfast will be held Sunday November 8 from 9 - 12 at the Oasis Convention Centre, 1036 Lakeshore Rd East, Mississauga. Tickets are \$25 and available from all Archives Committee members (250 seats only).

Unity Dinner will be held Saturday, November 21 at 1883 King St East in Hamilton Ontario. There will be live Entertainment, Door Prizes, 50/50 draw All Proceeds to Hamilton Central Office. Tickets are only \$10. For more information go to <http://www.aahamilton.org>

August '09: Intergroup Report

Chairperson's Opening Remarks: Florence B. (Noon Rap), Operating Committee Chair – The number of 12 Step calls has decreased in the last while. The current Twelfth Step Committee has become very small. Part of their recent task is to go through the updated 12 Step volunteer list and contact everyone who has volunteered to a) thank them for their service; and b) confirm/update contact information. This in part will hopefully “invigorate” the 12 Step initiatives. However, this will be a big job for such a small committee. One idea to meet this objective would be for the Operating Committee members to meet for an evening and contact all the current/new 12 Step volunteers. We need people to come forward to be a part of the Committee and help with this task. The Twelfth Step Committee meets twice a month: every 2nd Wednesday at 7 pm for the purpose of looking at the new phones/12 Step initiative and implementing this; and on the last Friday of the month, also at 7 pm, for the Greeter Captains to share information, implement monthly phone schedule changes, and schedule phone greeters for upcoming months. Members were asked for feedback on the above information; a long discussion ensued.

Finance Report: No report this month, as the Finance Committee meeting was cancelled (therefore no quorum).

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
July	\$ 18,206	\$ 12,353	\$ 5,853
Comparison to Budget	+ 5,185	- 3,538	+ 8,723
July Year to Date	\$124,528	86,497	38,031
Comparison to Budget	+ 22,636	- 39,509	+ 62,145

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Access Ability: Donna McQ. (Sunnyside) – Received a letter of thanks from GSO for People in Motion and are in the process of giving some of our excess pamphlets and racks to other committees (we receive a lot of literature from New York for People In Motion, and some of it is more useful to other committees than to us). Bob has been contacted again by the caregiver for patient he had been asked to work with; he will get in touch. Next mtg: Sun. Sept. 20 at 11am at 234.

Archives: Roy R. (Trial & Error) – Committee is going through two longtime members' boxes of archival materials; this process is ongoing. Next Archives Breakfast will be held on Sun. Nov 8 at the Oasis Convention Centre in Mississauga. Tickets \$25 and are available through Archives Committee members. Next mtg: Fri. Sept. 11 at 7pm at 234.

Corrections: No report. Next mtg: Mon. Sept. 7 at 7:30pm at 234.

CPC: No report. *Followup report submitted later by Victoria B. (Steps to Serenity) – Reports:* Dist.14: a reminder of Unity Day Sept.26. Dist.22: A reminder of Service Day Sept. 12. Dist. 18 reported events of Intergroup regarding CPC budget information. Budgets for 2010 will need to be in by October. **Events:** The American Psychological Association conference was recently held at the Metro Convention Center in Toronto. All went well with scheduling and set up. Professionals were eager for info and either filled out cards for info or took pamphlets. Many existing friends of AA stopped by for GTA info and to chat. Interests extended to AI-Anon and youth programs. Ed R. of the Intergroup Operating Committee provided us with a beautiful map that outlined the 9 Districts in the GTA, and it is being utilized on our website. Some changes are still in process....The interest CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health) brought to our table last month has been diverted to the Public Information Committee and is in their hands. Next mtg: Mon. Sept. 14 at 7pm at 234.

Info AA Day 2010: No report. Next mtg: Mon. Sept. 28 at 7:30pm at 234.

ORC 2010: Jim A. (Leslie) – Committee meetings will start on Sept. 8.

Public Information: No report. Next mtg: Mon. Sept. 21 at 7:30pm at 234.

Reception: Rick McC. (Six Points), Operating Committee 1st Vice Chair – 50 reps were present at this meeting.

Treatment Facilities: No report. Next mtg: Thurs. Sept. 17 at 7:30pm at 234.

Twelfth Step: Deborah W. (Port Credit), Committee member – Committee needs more Greeter Captain volunteers (Next meeting: Sept.25 at 7 p.m. at 234). New phone system is slated for installation on Sept. 15. Next Phone Training Session: Sun. Sept.20 at 1:30 p.m. at 234. Members wanting to volunteer for the phones need one year of continuous sobriety.

Better Times/Website: Brian T. (Twelve Traditions), Webmaster – Brian thanked committee members Elaine G. and Ciara for their editing/article-writing contributions to this committee. Better Times is looking for a co-editor. Next mtg: Sat. Sept. 12 at 1pm at 234.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A Chairperson for the upcoming Winter Season Open House event needed. Motion that we nominate a WSOH 2009 Chair. Motion Carried. Vlad G. (Mississauga) is the new Winter Season Open House Chair (by acclamation). The first meeting of the WSOH 2009 committee will be scheduled later.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING: Tues. Sept.29 at 8 p.m. at Lansing United Church (49 Bogert Ave, near Yonge and Sheppard subway).

A Tribute to Jack R.

continued from page 1...

Their success was based on the principle of unity of the fellowship at large and the group in particular. Jack and Maggie shared their love with all the new people coming in the door; they took them home with them and shared their love and life with them and loved them until they were able to love themselves.” He was truly a giant in the ranks of AA and many alcoholics owe their lives to Jack R.

A memorial meeting will be held on Mon. Nov. 2nd at 8 pm at All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church in Etobicoke, where the Prince Edward Group meets.

Many thanks to Jean H., Barb J., Ros R. and Ted S., who graciously gave their time to be interviewed

Marrey P., Port Credit Group

