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12 Step Committee Needs Members to help keep up with the GTA area 12 Step work!

To volunteer, please come out to help at one or more of their monthly meetings.

Visit www.atoronto.org to find the next 12 Step Committee meeting.

Perhaps Mother *Does* Know Best

Lest we forget, this article is about someone with both AA and military experience.

I was an only child, raised in a family with difficult parents who fought continually. So, I guess it's not too surprising that joining the navy seemed like a wonderful chance to start again after escaping high school as soon as I could.

I ended up on the HMCS Haida, the famous ship built in the early 1940s. I was just 17 when I joined. I was on the Haida for three years: 1960 to 1963. The trade I was to learn was "Weapons Underwater" which involved maintenance and use of depth charges and torpedoes. The highlight of my military career though was being involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis in October, 1962. We were closest to the action for five strenuous, exciting days.

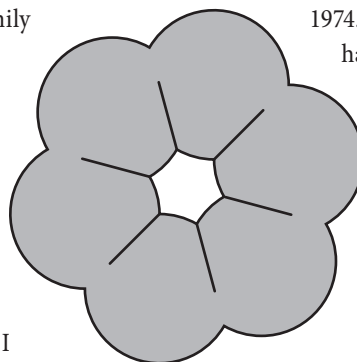
Being in the navy was wonderful in many ways; I saw many parts of the world. It was exhausting — for three days once we were battling 85 foot waves! Sometimes, though, it seemed tedious and we wouldn't see land for weeks on end.

My drinking career essentially began in the navy. From the start, I believe, I drank to get drunk — I never knew moderation. There was lots of drinking onboard. For someone who liked to drink, the military provided plenty of opportunities. I'm not saying being in the navy turned me into an alcoholic; I believe I was born this way.

There were many ports of call, of course. In Bermuda you could get a double drink for 15 cents! We would also bring booze we had bought on board.

The navy, believing alcohol perhaps to be almost medicinal, or a small treat to be rationed out carefully, would give us each a kind of stipend of booze every day: a tot, it was called. It was perhaps a shot-glass full of rum. We all learned how to save up the daily tots and once a week or so, my comrades and I would drink the whole amassed amount in one go.

Pretty much everyone drank, and I don't believe I developed problems with alcohol until long after I was out of the navy. (I didn't find my way to AA until



1974.) But someone near and dear to me had a different view of my drinking, even back then.

My own mother must have been concerned about my drinking since I probably came home drunk on every leave I had. Indeed, she must have written a letter to my commanding officer requesting that my heavy drinking be discussed. I now know this because a few years back, when I was 60, I came across a letter from the navy to my mother. The dear woman had long since passed away.

I smiled when I found the letter. She obviously wanted to protect my dignity; she requested that the navy not disclose to me that she had written to them. My divisional officer interviewed me and apparently my "heavy drinking" was not apparent to him. This must have all been done in a very discreet way, for I have no recollection of such a discussion and would have been quite embarrassed had I known that my mother had written to them.

My mother must have been able to see where I was headed: she thought I had a problem long before I thought so. However, she never said a word about it to me. As I said, I didn't really see a problem until 1974, when I first crossed the line and started attending AA meetings. Before, I had been able to go for long stretches without a drink, but once I started I didn't want to finish until I had passed out. Toward the end, though, I had become a daily drinker.

Life is good these days. After the Haida, I left the navy and pursued a successful real estate career. I have four wonderful grown children. I love being a "geek". I have a real estate computer program that I now sell and I'm planning to learn to relax. I'm going to see if I can handle a whole month in Florida.

I am proud to say that after some "research" my dry date is July 21, 1989. I recently received my 20 year medallion. My mother would also be proud, I'm sure.

Ed R., Rouge Valley Centenary Group interviewed by Sonja T., East York Group

A Look at Tradition 11:

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

Bryan W., Public Information Chair, shares his experience with Tradition 11, both at the PI chair level and in his personal life:

When telephone calls come in to GTA Intergroup from the public asking about Alcoholics Anonymous, they can be about anything: media interviews, student interviews, etc. Most of the general public doesn't know what we are or what we do. They think we might be a cult or a self-help organization, or they just don't know.

We (who address the public) need to have a solid understanding of Tradition 11 as we are often asked to break this Tradition in our responses. It is important that the world sees what Alcoholics Anonymous really is, not what Bryan thinks it is on any given day. My opinions are not important. I just try to represent the facts with all the Traditions in mind.

The information I pass on is about Alcoholics Anonymous, not about me. The fact that I am sober speaks for itself. I have tried to instill this into all the people on the PI Committee. When we are representing Alcoholics Anonymous to the media or at schools or at big corporations, anywhere outside our AA membership, we are there to tell people what Alcoholics Anonymous is and, just as important, what it is not. We are not there to give personal opinions.

Recently I got a call from the media asking for Alcoholics Anonymous' opinion on a statistic published by a psychiatric group in the U.S. that maintained that Canadians drink much more alcohol than Americans. The reporter wanted to know what Alcoholics Anonymous thought about this finding. My answer was that we have no opinion on medical studies of any kind. I told her Alcoholics Anonymous does not engage in any controversy (Tradition 10). I did, however, give the 3-minute version of what I was like and what happened to me and what I am like today. Still angling for a story, the reporter asked me if I would be willing to be interviewed on TV. When I told her they would need to keep my face hidden, that they could not use my last name and possibly change my first name to uphold Alcoholics Anonymous' Tradition 11 regarding anonymity, she became less interested, saying that her producer would not agree to those terms.

The most important thing I need to remember about Tradition 11 is that Bryan does not speak for Alcoholics Anonymous. There are no leaders in Alcoholics Anonymous. It is possible for me to let my position as Public Information Chair become an ego thing. We strive for humility in Alcoholics Anonymous and it can be difficult to be humble when you are before the media and are being questioned about things on which you may have a personal opinion. I have to remember that I as one person in this great fellowship am not important, and that by remaining anonymous, I will not inflate my ego. My ego will get me drunk. This is about Alcoholics Anonymous, not about ME.

This Tradition is about humility; it not only protects Alcoholics Anonymous, it protects the alcoholic from him or herself.

**Bryan W., PI Chair, Rox Glen Traditional Group
interviewed by Joanne L., Unionville Group**

Celebrating Sobriety!

Even though we're still enjoying the first few weeks of fall we want to remind you that the 2010 Ontario Regional Conference is only a little over 4 months away.

This year's theme really rings true to me. Whether we are sober ourselves or it is our spouse, our child or our parent who is sober we all have something to celebrate. Many people consider sobriety to be a gift and I believe that all gifts should be enjoyed to the fullest.

The Big Book is quick to remind us that "we are not a glum lot" and this is something I noticed at my first ORC. I was about 3 months sober when I attended my first event. The one thing that I remember wondering was, why are all these people so gosh-darned excited? However, it did not take me long to realize that they were simply happy to be sober. They were Celebrating Sobriety. There is a certain magic about these annual get-togethers that brings out the spirit of the fellowship.

The 2010 event will be held at The Royal York Hotel from March 19-21. All registration prices will remain the same as the 2009 event and room rates will only increase by \$1.00 per night. There will be a full slate of Al-Anon, Alateen and AA meetings throughout the 3-day event.

Pre-register for the chance to win early-bird prizes and please remember to mention the ORC when you book your rooms at the Royal York Hotel.

For more information, go to www.aatoronto.org.

We look forward to seeing you all there!

**Jim B
ORC Chair 2010**

Thoughts from the East York Group on "What does Gratitude mean to you?"

Gratitude is to be able to feel – love, hate, joy, pain, all of it. – *Charles W.*

I'm grateful for the mending of relationships. – *Kevin M.*

Gratitude gets me out of my personal pity party. – *Sari S.*

I'm grateful to be here in these rooms. – *Paul C.*

When I'm having a bad day, I'm grateful I can call somebody. Help is there when I need it. – *Earl L.*

haveyouheard

Recent Medallions:

Barb B.	10	Principles Before Pers.	October 4
Darrell H.	20	Six Points	October 5
Lee-Anne G.	1	Bathurst	October 5
Patrick K.	1	Glenholm	October 5
Laura K.	5	King City	October 5
Debra P.	1	Chartwell	October 6
Kim L.	1	New Anchor	October 8
Gerard T	10	Keep It Simple	October 11
Eleni	1	Primary Purpose	October 14
Hartly	1	Primary Purpose	October 14
Iris	1	Eventide	October 18
Sheila F.	35	Keep It Simple	October 18
Vesna K.	1	City Central	October 18
Ashleigh M.	1	Six Points	October 19
Glen S.	1	New Anchor	October 22
Adrian A.	15	Parklawn	October 23
Susan G-M.	10	King City	October 26
Ray C.	1	Fellowship	October 26
Nancy H.	20	New Life	October 27
Kulam V.	1	Chartwell	October 29
Murray	1	New Anchor	October 29
Steve F.	1	Markland Wood	October 29

Upcoming Medallions:

Gladys O	1	Principles B4 Pers.	November 1
Sheheen S.	5	Markland Wood	November 5
Doug P.	1	Responsibility	November 10
Linda S.	1	Amazing Grace	November 10
Andrew C.	1	Meadowvale South	November 12
Ken F.	1	Bayview	November 15
Wayne S.	1	Westmoreland	November 15
Rob M.	1	New Anchor	November 19
Ron S.	1	Reaching Out	November 24
Steve G.	20	Westmoreland	November 24
Francis A.	20	Crossroads	December 6

Meeting Changes:

Scarborough (O) Friday 8pm (EAST): As of October 30th, meeting time will be changed from 8pm to 7pm.

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.

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

New Meetings:

Top Of The Stairs (C) Friday 12pm (EAST): Meeting will be located at the Alano Broadview Club, 740 Broadview Ave (just south of Danforth Ave.)

Beyond Belief Agnostics (O) Thurs. 6:30pm (CENTRAL): Meeting will be located at the OISE building, 252 Bloor Street W, 2nd floor (consult bulletin board on the 2nd floor for exact meeting room).

Conscious Contact (C) Saturday 10am (SUBURBAN WEST) Meeting will be located at Bloordale United Church, 4258 Bloor Street W., Room 15. Meeting focus will be on Step 11 meditation.

New Phoenix (O) Saturday 4:15pm (WEST): Meeting will be located in the Post Office building at 330 Keele Street

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.

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.

Announcements:

68th Buffalo Fall Convention will be held November 6 - 8 at the Marriott Buffalo/Niagara, 1340 Millersport Highway in Amherst, New York. For more information visit: buffaloaa.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>

Winter Season Open House will be held Christmas Day at Emmanuel Howard Park United Church. More information to follow. The committee is currently looking for volunteers, contact Vlad G. at winter@atoronto.org.

archivesalley: The Forties, the Growth and the Message.

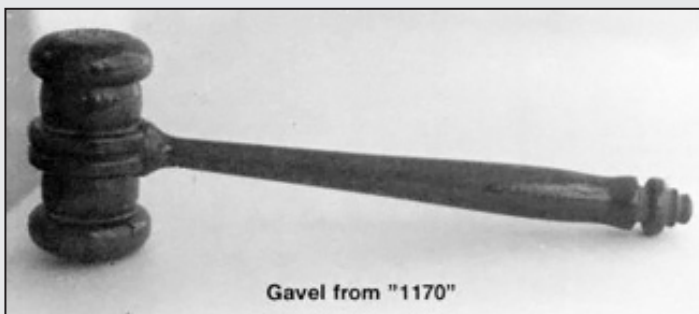
One year ended and already so much had occurred; the membership was burgeoning, so much so that Toronto members rented a building at 1170 Yonge St. from the Royal Bank of Canada. It was January 28, 1944. The building was in need of a cleaning and obviously had to be furnished; both needs were handled eagerly and earnestly by A.A. members. The new location was open every day and a regular Thursday night meeting immediately established. A committee was selected every three months to look after 1170 affairs.

This is the gavel used to keep order at the meetings at "1170." It probably should be stated as "keeping order in the A.A. way." A.A. was less orderly in those early days, since the Traditions were only written in 1946 and then took some time to take hold.

In June of 1944, Alcoholics Anonymous in New York began publishing the A.A. Grapevine. This was significant as every issue announced new groups and Ontario rarely failed to report several in each issue. The Grapevine went on to become a vehicle for communication of all alcoholics worldwide. Gratitude was an oft used word and

members from Toronto, Windsor and London, grateful for their new-found sobriety, continued to travel and carry the message always reaching out to the still-suffering alcoholic and reach out they did. (pp.12-13, *50 Years of AA in Ontario*).

Máire O'B,
GTA Intergrout Archivist



September '09: Intergroup Report

Chairperson's Opening Remarks: Florence B. (Noon Rap), Operating Committee Chair – Florence commented that it was “exciting seeing such a big crowd here tonight”. She also took the opportunity to welcome new Group Reps. She asked reps to please take back to the groups the need for volunteers for various endeavours (See committee reports).

Finance Report: Bruce L. (Back To Basics), Finance Chairperson – August income is in line with the budget. Expenses are over budget because payment for new phone system. The year-to-date surplus in income is mainly explained by the ORC contribution. Some of the salary and operating costs associated the installation of the new phone system, Gratitude mail out, financial audit and the restructuring of Intergroup have been delayed into September and beyond. Prudent Reserve as of August 31, 2009 – Book value + accrued interest: \$125,099. Annual Gratitude appeal mailing has been completed. There are no numbers as yet to report. The Budget for 2010 is in progress. Finally, the committee is looking for volunteers. The sobriety requirement is 5 years of continuous sobriety, and some business/accounting background would be helpful, but not necessary. This is a 2-year commitment. Please send Service resumes to the Operating Committee c/o 234.

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
August	\$13,680	\$29,572	\$ -15,892
Comparison to Budget	\$ -206	\$9,388	\$ -9,965
July Year to Date	\$138,170	\$116,266	\$21,904
Comparison to Budget	\$22,392	\$29,924	\$52,316

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Access Ability: Donna MacQ. (Sunnyside), Chairperson – Attended District 22 Service Day on Sept. 12, good day. Free ASL Interpreter Service consists of one interpreter for a 2-hour commitment; this service doesn't cover all-day events. John B. (High Park) asked about the procedure for obtaining the services of an ASL interpreter for meetings, Donna explained usually the deaf person takes care of this; however, there is a phone number for the Ontario Interpreter Service available at 234. Interpreters need 24 hours notice. Next mtg: Oct. 18 at 11am at 234.

Archives: Roy R. (Trial & Error), Chairperson – Archives Breakfast will be held on Nov. 8 at the Oasis Convention Centre (Mississauga). Tickets are \$25 and are available through Archives Committee members. Flyers for the event were made available to members at this meeting. Speakers are Joy (St. Catharines) and Pete W. (Oakville). Door prizes available to be won! Next mtg: Oct. 16 at 7pm at 234.

Correctional Facilities: Bill M. (One Day at a Time), committee member – The New Phoenix Group is now occurring at 4:30 pm on Sat. in a room within (but technically 'outside' the confines of) the Keele Centre Correctional Facility. For more information, please contact Niels B. at nilbo@sympatico.ca. The DCM for Dist.02, Dareena B., has requested and has been given the contact information and a list of potential volunteers for the Roy McMurtry YDC located beside OCI. Dist.18 has 2 volunteers in the process of clearing for the Don. Will need to build a new team for a Wednesday night meeting soon, as team retiring in near future. Next mtg: Oct. 5 at 7:30pm at 234.

CPC: Victoria B. (Steps to Serenity), committee member – Committee was present at District 22 Service Day; all went well. Comments have been posted regarding the recent American Psychiatric Association Conference held recently. CPC made the commitment to utilize their budget via the service districts. There were some problems with CPC getting to the recent Unity Day held in King City on Saturday Sept. 26. Next mtg: Oct. 12 at 7pm at 234.

Info AA Day: Phil M. (Bloomdale), OC Liaison – The 2010 date has been set for Sat. May 29, 2010. The GSO Speaker has also been booked. Marv W. (Mississauga) has resigned from the 2010 Chair position due to work commitments. Need to find a new Info AA Day 2010 Chair from Intergroup, as this event is a joint venture of GTAI and District; Dist.22 DCM was last year's Chair. 1 year of continuous sobriety is required. Please send Service resumes to the Operating Committee c/o 234. Next mtg: Oct. 26 at 7:30pm at 234.

ORC 2010: Jim B. (Saturday Morning Disc.), Chair – The event will be held March 19, 20 & 21, 2010 at the Royal York Hotel. All committee positions are filled. All out-of-town speakers are booked. The registration, Al-Anon registration, and banquet ticket prices remain the same. Room rate per night is \$170 (please mention the ORC when booking for rooms). Event flyers/placards available soon.

Public Information: Bryan W. (Rox Glen Traditional), Chair – Bryan is rotating out of the P.I. Chair position, a member has stepped forward and will submit her resume to the Operating Committee for consideration. P.I. attended the recent APA Conference in tandem with CPC. Dist. 14 is collecting Grapevine and beginner pamphlets to be sent to jails. Dist.18 continues its beginner pamphlet holder/folder campaign (putting these in doctors' offices, pharmacies, etc.). Workshop for Speakers in Schools, etc. was held in July; another is being considered for December. Next mtg: Oct. 19 at 7:30pm at 234.

Treatment Facilities: No report. Next mtg: Oct. 15 at 7:30pm at 234.

Twelfth Step: Jim O. (Markland Wood), Chairperson: Committee is holding a 12-Step Call Workshop on Oct.13. Wes B. (Long Branch) asked when the new phone system (handsets) will be installed; they will be installed this Wed. and Thurs. Bryan W. (Rox Glen Traditional) asked if the members on the current 12-Step List will be contacted; yes they will be called. Bill R. (Bellamy) inquired when the dialing out feature for the phones will be installed; this will be 'Phase 2' and will be installed at a later date. Next meeting: Oct. 30 at 7pm at 234.

Website/Better Times: Aaron K. (Yorkville), Chairperson – Better Times is always looking for submissions and/or ideas for articles, submit anything to us by the 10th of the month. Better Times welcomes two new Co-Editors, Sonja T. and Joanne L. Next mtg: Sat. Oct.10 at 1 p.m. at 234.

Winter Season Open House: Florence read the following report for WSOH Chair, Vlad G. – I would like to thank you for allowing me to be the committee chair of the 2009 WSOH. All past subcommittee chairs are welcome, as well as those interested in taking on a subcommittee position. Treasurer has been filled by Marvyn W. (Mississauga Group). Emmanuel-Howard Park Church has been secured.

NEW BUSINESS

Operating Committee has been working hard on implementing the changes to policies & procedures voted on by fellowship. Elections for changing the Operating Committee is supposed to be in October. OC asked floor for more time, think they can have it done to have elections in January instead. After discussion on floor, Dee T. (Streetsville) made a MOTION that the current OC completes combining the 2 P&G documents and that Elections for the Operating Committee be held in January, with the understanding that this is a 'one time only' circumstance. Motion seconded by Mary (Restoration & Recovery). MOTION PASSES with a majority (One vote against Motion and one abstention noted).

NEXT GENERAL MEETING: Tues. Oct. 27 at 8 pm at Lansing United Church (49 Bogert Ave, near Yonge and Sheppard subway).

