

BETTER TIMES

April 2009
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Welcome to the
2009
Ontario
Regional
Conference
 Joy of Living

4th Annual East Toronto Archives Breakfast Will You Join Us?

Oh! It's gonna be great!

Fellowship of the Spirit! Fantastic Breakfast! & Two Long-time Speakers!

On Sunday May 24th, 2009 the 4th Annual East Toronto Archives Breakfast will be held at Embers, the Prince George Room, 781 Warden Avenue (south of Eglinton Avenue East) in Scarborough. It is wheelchair accessible and parking is free. Tickets are \$15.00 and will be available only until May 15th. No tickets will be sold at the door. Groups who want to sit together may consider purchasing a table (8/table).

9am - 10a m: Coffee, tea and fellowship

10am - 11am: Breakfast buffet consisting of scrambled eggs, bacon, sausages, French toast, home fries, toast, fresh fruit, assorted muffins, juices, coffee and tea.

11am - 12pm: Open AA speaker meeting with two members who are rich in East Toronto history. The male speaker has 35 years and the female speaker has 29 years. After the meeting there will be a sobriety countdown and door and raffle prizes will be given out.

This event's purpose is to celebrate the rich history of the fellowship in the East Toronto Area, to acknowledge the dedication of those who have gone before us, to "pass it on" and to bring awareness about the Archives.

Matti H., who passed away on Feb. 25th, 2009, was a member of this East Toronto Archives Breakfast Committee and was responsible for the idea of holding this event. He had 21 years of sobriety and he would always introduce himself as a member of the world famous Wanstead Group. Matti touched many members with his dedication to AA, his commitment to Service and his passion for Archives.

Tickets are available from District 18 and District 22 General Service Reps or Committee Members: John M. 416-277-4285, Ed H. 416-750- 0173, Eddy G. 416-536-7536.

**District 18 & District 22
 East Toronto Archives Breakfast Committee**

The Road to Recovery

The 44th Annual Blossom Time Convention is held May 1, 2009 in Niagara Falls, Ontario. This is a great out-of-town experience that only added to my sobriety. If you enjoy the Ontario Regional Conference then a road trip to a conference may be the next stop on your journey of recovery.

Last year, Steve C, from my home group, and I went on three different A.A. road trips — with Blossom Time being the first. There, we heard two speakers, who we had only heard on speaker tapes, share their experience, strength and hope about living in sobriety during the trying times. The weekend was everything we had hoped for and more. AA is alive and well in Niagara Falls.

The next journey was to Akron for Founders Day. Wow, talk about a spiritual experience! We went to Doctor Bob's house, The Mayflower Hotel, The Seiberling estate and ended the trip with thousands of motorcyclists and others going to Doctor Bob's grave at 7:30am on the Sunday morning of Founders day. It was moving, being in the city where Alcoholics Anonymous was founded, and I would suggest this visit to all members of the fellowship, regardless of how new to the program they may be.

Lastly, we went to Fellowship of the Spirit, New York. Scott & Linda L. from Nashville, TN., and Bob D. from Las Vegas were the facilitators for the weekend. It was the first time this weekend was held at a monastery in the Catskill Mountains, having been moved from New York City where it was held in previous years. Even the location was spiritual. The weekend was full of so much useful information on sober living that I must attend this year for more. One hundred and five people attended, including six other Canadians.

I plan on taking many more trips this year because different areas have different things to add to my sobriety and traveling out of town is such fun. I was listening to a speaker tape of one of our founders, Bill W. and he said that he and Dr. Bob had a dream, that alcoholics would have a place to go, change as human beings and then go on to live happy lives while helping others to achieve sobriety. I am living their dream and I hope you are too.

**Mark H.
 Principal before Personalities Group**

Interpretation of Tradition Two

Soon after I first came in to A.A., I began attending the business meetings at my home group. As the members deliberated on various tasks and issues I would hear them from time to time comment that such and such a suggestion was contrary to "group conscience". What did that mean? That was my first introduction to the Second Tradition; "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

Where Tradition One speaks to the importance of unity, how working together will ensure the recovery of each one of us, Tradition Two provides the beginning of a framework of consistency in how A.A. groups operate, and identifies the role of group leaders in helping fulfill the collective will of a higher power, usually articulated through the group conscience.

From the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated", the message about Tradition Two is pretty clear. "A.A. is both a democracy and, in Bill W.'s words, "a benign anarchy." A group elects its own officers — who have no power to order anybody to do anything. In most groups, most of the slate rotates out of office at the end of six months, and new officers are elected.

If a group wants to be part of a whole A.A. service structure, it elects a G.S.R. (general service representative, with a two year term). G.S.R.'s elect area committee members and then join them in electing a delegate from their area to the annual General Service Conference. The Conference is about the closest approximation to a government that A.A. has; it produces opinions on important matters of policy; it approves the choice of some trustee nominees for the General Service Board and directly elects others. But neither the Conference nor the board can give orders to any A.A. group or member.

Then who's in charge around here? A.A. is a spiritual movement, and so the "ultimate authority" is the spiritual concept of the "group conscience." Its voice is heard when a well-informed group gathers to arrive at a decision. The result rests on more than arithmetic, a "yes" and "no" count. Minority ideas get thoughtful attention. What about that annoying character who's always sure she's right? Better listen — maybe, just this once, she is right. If she's wrong, then she will — if she remembers the First Tradition as well as the Second — go along with the decision of the group conscience. Does this motion seem too cloudy?

Let's think back to our first meetings. The presence we newcomers felt in those rooms was the same as the group conscience. And it was real — welcoming us in setting up no barriers of rules.

A.A. leadership is an expression of humility. Instead of leaders who give orders and directions and who wish to control, we find people who facilitate, and provide service and support. We soon come to realize that this is a part of the wisdom that will lead us both individually and collectively to recovery.

Peter N., Alternate GSR, Credit Valley Group

archivesalley

The Little Denmark Restaurant



The AA Fellowship worldwide knows about both the meeting in Bill and Lois W.'s kitchen in New York where Ebby T. carried the message of hope and recovery of the Oxford Group to Bill, and about the gatehouse of the Seibeling estate meeting in

Akron where Bill carried a similar message to Dr. Bob

These are the founding moments of Alcoholics Anonymous. In Brooklyn, New York you can go and see the home from which Lois and Bill would be evicted. What became their home in Bedford Hills, NY is a historic site preserved by a foundation. Dr. Bob & Ann S. home on Ardmore Street in Akron, Ohio is a similar site. Many alcoholics tell of having spiritual experiences when visiting these key locations that are part of AA history. But do you know how AA started in Canada?

Alcoholics Anonymous quietly arrived in Canada, Toronto, Ontario to be exact, on Wednesday, January 13th, 1943. The first meeting was held without fanfare at the Little Denmark Restaurant, on the west side of Bay Street between Gerrard and College. Present were Rev. George Little and Rev. Percy Price, accompanied by six alcoholics. Enough interest was shown in the initial meeting that



a second meeting was scheduled and held one week later.

And so, Alcoholics Anonymous in Ontario was born. This is one of the lamps from Little Denmark Restaurant, where the first continuing meeting of A.A. in Canada was held. Keep coming back to the Archives Alley and more will be revealed.

Máire O'B, GTA Intergroup Archivist

The Newcomer

"Go chat with that newcomer!" and the old-timer dismissed me once again from my chat with him at the end of our open meeting. Apprehensive and trembling I trotted off dutifully to face the newcomer, wondering again what to say. "Hi, my name's Chris" gained me another response "I'm mumble-mumble".

Next week the same deal, "Go chat with that newcomer!" and another moment of acute embarrassment. I don't have a problem standing up and reading or even speaking. But walking up to a total stranger, and a possibly drunk one at that, leaves me quivering.

Thus it was that I finally confronted the old-timer. "Don't you realise that for every ten newcomers I go say hello to, I only see one of them next week?" "Yes", he smiled, "And now you know why every member of your home group is so precious, you included!"

Christopher G.

haveyouheard

Recent Medallions:

Debbie X.	1	Rouge Valley Group	February 19
Maggie L.	1	East York Group	February 25
Burke K.	15	Streetsville Action Group	March 4
Margaret M.	1	Principles Before Pers.	March 8
Domenic L.	1	Unionville Group	March 11
Carol J.	35	Crossroads Big Book Grp	March 15
Tim R.	1	Unionville Group	March 18
Donna Z.	15	Rouge Valley Group	March 19
Neil	1	New Anchor Group	March 19
Larry L.	15	Principles Before Pers.	March 22
Joyce P.	30	Unionville Group	March 25
Doug M.	1	Rouge Valley Group	March 26

Upcoming Medallions:

Paul McN.	30	Unionville Group	April 1
Rick P.	5	Principles Before Pers.	April 4
David B.	1	Lakeshore Group	April 5
Paul C.	5	East York Group	April 7
JoAnne L.	5	Unionville Group	April 8
Ted B.	1	Golden Mile Group	April 15
Steve E.	1	Unionville Group	April 15
Johanne D.	5	Aurora Group	April 26
Lynn H.	5	Aurora Group	April 26
Sally W.	1	New Anchor Group	May 7
Rick McC.	20	Six Point's Group	May 25

Meeting Changes:

Restoration and Recovery Group (O) Fridays (SUBURBAN WEST): As of May 1st, meeting time will be 8:00 pm.

Noon Meeting (C) Thursday 12pm (CENTRAL) Paulist Centre, 830 Bathurst St, N of Bloor (Front Ent.) is back ON

Back to Basics Group (C) Saturdays (CENTRAL): Meeting now at 3pm, at the Alano Club at 740 Broadview Ave.

Jean Tween Women's Meeting (O) Mondays (WEST): Meeting will now start at 1pm.

Royal York Discussion Group (C) Thurs 8 pm (WEST): Please note this meeting is a step discussion only.

Sunnyside Group Tuesday (C) Thursday (O) (WEST): Both meetings now start at 8pm.

Midtown Group (O) Sunday 8pm: Meeting now at 8:30pm.

Vision of Hope (C) Monday 2 pm (SUBURBAN WEST): Please note this is a Topic Discussion meeting.

Deer Park Group (C) Mondays 8pm (CENTRAL): Now a Big Book discussion, last Monday of the the month an Open Speaker meeting.

Rouge Valley Centenary Group Monday (NORTHEAST): Meeting is now an Open Discussion meeting.

Tuesday Night Women's Group (C) Tuesday 7:30 pm (SUBURBAN NORTHWEST): now the Tuesday Night Women's Serenity Group and is now at Emanuel Church, 2626 Mayfield Rd, Caledon (Hwy 10 and Mayfield Rd, west side).

Principles Before Personalities (O) Sundays 8:00pm (EAST): As of May 3rd, will be moving to Corpus Christi Catholic Church, 16 Lockwood Rd (corner of Lockwood & Queen St E). Enter via 2nd set of doors on east side, at bottom of stairs.

New Meetings:

Neighborly Drop-In Meeting (O) Friday 1pm (CENTRAL): New meeting located at 170 Jarvis St, just north of Shuter.

Cornerstone Discussion Meeting (C) Fridays 8pm (SUBURBAN NORTH): 12 Step Discussion mtg at Cornerstone Community Church, 180 Nashville Rd, Kleinburg (NW corner of Hwy 27 and Nashville Rd).

Eagle Manor Open Meeting (O) Mondays 1pm (NORTHWEST): Located at Seniors Centre, 1901 Weston Rd (corner of Weston Rd. and Lawrence Ave). Meeting located in the Sun Room.

Discontinued Meetings:

Woodbine Group (O) Sat. 8pm (EAST): This meeting has been discontinued.

Augusta Disc. Group (C) Fri 12:30pm: Mtg discontinued.

Announcements:

Alateen Meeting Sundays 5 pm (CENTRAL): O.I.S.E. Bldg., 252 Bloor St. W., east of St. George (subway) on the 8th floor. Alateen meetings are for teenagers (11 to 21 approx.) who have been affected by alcoholism (from family members).

East York AA Round-up: Sat. April 25, 2009, 11 a.m. St. Columba & All Hallows at St. Clair & O'Connor, 7th at Door

51st International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous will be held in Atlanta, Georgia May 21st - 24th. For more information visit www.aatoronto.org

44th Annual Blossom Time Convention will be held in Niagara Falls, Ontario on May 1st - 3rd at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. For more info, visit www.blossomtimeconvention.com

Chatham-Kent's 23rd AA One-Day Round-Up will be held at the Country View Golf Course in Oungah, ON on May 2nd. Doors open at 1:00 pm. For more info see the event flyer online at www.aatoronto.org

First Annual Spring Fling Convention will be held May 22 - 24 in St. Louis, Missouri. For more information review the event flyer online at www.aatoronto.org

Circle of Hope Roundup will be held May 29 - 31 in Reading, PA. For more info see event flyer at www.aatoronto.org

4th Annual Area 83 Archives Workshop: will be held on Saturday April 4th at Glebe Road United Church, 20 Glebe Road East.

North Shore Roundup will be held in Vancouver, BC April 10 - 12. For more info visit: www.northshoroundup.com

4th East Toronto Archives Breakfast: Sunday May 24th at Embers, 781 Warden Ave. (south of Eglinton) Tickets are \$15, available until May 15th from District 18 & 22 GSR's.

Info AA Day: will be Sat. May 30 at Lansing United Church, 49 Bogert Ave, Willowdale, from 8:30 - 4:30. Registration is \$5.

Things We Cannot Change:

Matti H., of the Wanstead Group, passed away Feb. 25. Matti had 21 years of sobriety and was active as the District 22 Archives Chairperson and past Chairperson of the GTA Intergroup Operating Committee.

Tim S., of the Willowdale Group, passed away on Feb. 12th 2009.

Father Joseph C. Martin passed away on March 9th 2009. For more information on Father marting and his contributions to AA visit www.fathermartin.com

Kari S., of the Thursday East End Group, passed away on March 4th, 2009

GREATER TORONTO AREA INTERGROUP MONTHLY BOARDROOM BOOKINGS FOR SUB-COMMITTEES

Correctional Facilities:

1st Mon. of the month at 7:30 pm

Self-Support:

1st Wed. of the month at 7 pm

Archives:

2nd Fri. of the month at 7 pm

Website &

Better Times Newsletter:

2nd Sat. of the month at 1 pm

Cooperation with the

Professional Community (CPC):

2nd Mon. of the month at 7 pm

Access Ability:

3rd Sun. of the month at 11 am

Phone Training Session:

3rd Sun. of the month at 1:30 pm

Public Information:

3rd Mon. of the month at 7:30 pm

Treatment Facilities:

3rd Thurs. of the month at 7:30 pm

Information AA Day:

Last Mon. at 7:30 pm

Twelfth Step:

Last Fri. of the month at 6:30 pm

Finance Subcommittee*:

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

Operating Committee*:

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

Monthly General Meeting of GTA

Intergroup is held on the last Tues. of the month at 8pm at the Glebe Road United Church - 20 Glebe Rd E, off Yonge St.

To ensure that the meeting you want isn't cancelled, please phone the office at 234.

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

All Subcommittees meet at the Intergroup Office: 234 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 202

East York Group Round-up

It's that time of year again already. The East York Group is holding its annual Round-up Saturday April 25th, 2009. What started as an idea to help provide newer members with an opportunity to be of service at the group level has grown into an East York tradition and part of the AA neighbourhood's life. Based on the format of the one day events traditionally held in the more rural AA communities throughout Canada and the US, the round-up is in essence a mini-conference. Held at the East York Group's regular meeting hall, St. Columba and All Hallows at St. Clair and O'Conner, the event is easily reachable by TTC, has ample parking and is fully handicap accessible. The round-up offers a day fellowship and the AA message of all Three Legacies of AA; Recovery from Alcoholism through the 12 Steps. Unity through the 12 Traditions, and Service through the 12 Concepts.

The day is one large open meeting and will offer topic-based panels, an AA-Alanon-Alateen panel, ask-it-basket, pot luck supper, sobriety countdown and a full evening meeting with a speaker. The doors open and coffee, tea and snacks are ready at 11 am for the "meeting before the meeting". The first panel starts at 12 am and the evening speaker meeting comes down around 9. It is a full day and folks are free to drop in and leave at anytime throughout. Also present will be the Grapevine representative for District 18 and the Grapevine table, literature and much more.

While the Committee is still selecting panel topics, in the past we have had lively and informative panels on such topics as being a newcomer, relationships in sobriety, sponsorship, service, the best and worst things for sobriety and many others. This year's pool of possible topics for committee selection is again exciting. As always, the Committee's objective is to look for panellists and speakers who are not necessarily from the east end AA community in order to bring fresh voices and perspectives to the members in our area. In addition, we have found that old friendships are rekindled and new ones are made as we are exposed to the broader AA fellowship and members.

The pot luck is fantastic and always has the feel of a big family picnic. Favourites such as home made meatballs, chilli, macaroni and cheese as well as salads have blessed our tables year after year.

As it is an open meeting, all are welcome; including friends, family, and children (we suggest no pets please, out of respect for other members and our host Church). We will take a 7th at the door, from those who can give and will be giving a handshake and smile to all who come. The East York Group looks forward to seeing you all there!

The EYG Roundup Committee

February '09: Intergroup Report

Chairperson's Opening Remarks: Bill M. (Westmoreland) – Volunteers for the GTAI Literature Table at the ORC are needed (please contact 234). Deadline for pre-registration for the ORC is March 6.

Collection of the 7th Tradition: \$136.71.

Finance Report: Bruce L. (Back to Basics), Finance Chair – Income was up by approx. \$3,200. Group Donations above budget by approximately \$8,000. Literature Sales down by about \$5,000. Expenses are below budget by about \$6,000, due to payroll less than anticipated. Net Income is over budget. Prudent Reserve figure is at around \$85,000. Reps to announce at their groups that anyone donating by electronic fund transfer that has not received their 2008 tax statement should please contact Judy at 234 with their correct mailing address.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Access Ability: Committee is securing an interpreter for their booth at Mayfest (cultural festival for the Deaf). This committee would welcome able-bodied members to their table. Next mtg: Sun. Mar. 15 at 11 am at 234

Archives: No report. Next mtg: Fri. Mar. 13 at 7:30 pm at 234.

Corrections: Phil G. (Mississauga), Chair – First meeting of new term was held on February 4. Briefly present was the outgoing IG Chair, Niels. Future meetings on the 1st Monday of the month at 7:30pm at 234 Eglinton. Next mtg: Mon., Mar. 2.

CPC: Peter B. (Beaches), Chair – 10 members from 7 districts were present at the last meeting. Table prepared for booth at the upcoming ORC. CPC Alternate Chair is Steve C. (Principles Before Personalities). Next mtg: Mon. Mar. 9 at 7 pm at 234.

Information AA Day: Jim A. (Leslie), Committee member – On Sat., May 30 at the Lansing United Church. Theme is 'Service with Gratitude' and is celebrating its 30th year. GSO Speaker will be Mary D. (she is in charge of CPC), also features an address from our Area 83 Delegate. Tickets: \$5 and includes potluck lunch. Next mtg: Mon. Mar. 30 at 7:30 pm at 234.

Ontario Regional Conference: Kathleen McD. (Rox Glen Traditional), 2009 Chair – Registration cost is

\$30. Deadline for pre-registration: March 6. Theme is 'The Joy of Living' and will be at the Fairmont-Royal York Hotel on March 20 - 22. Banquet Speaker is Clancy I. from California. 717 people have pre-registered, and 450 banquet tickets have been sold. Thanks Better Times for publishing the schedule of events for the ORC. Volunteers for greeters at the event still welcome! There are no 'free tickets' per se available at the event itself, however Kathleen reported that in the past some tickets have been donated by groups.

Public Information: No report. Next mtg: Mon. Mar. 16 at 7:30 pm at 234.

Treatment Facilities: No report. Next mtg: Thurs. Mar. 19 at 7:30 pm at 234.

Twelfth Step: Jim O. (Markland Wood), Chairperson – Phones are being well taken care of, thanks to new volunteers and committee members who are scheduling and training. Monthly phone training for new greeters takes place on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 1:30 pm at 234; next training session Mar. 15. Phone system transition will be smooth with one option being (Allstream) which would cost \$425/month (plus internet). Updated 12-Step contact data from members is needed. Next mtg: Fri. Mar. 27 at 7 pm at 234.

Website/Better Times: Elaine G. (Port Credit), Co-Editor – March issue includes the ORC Program of Events, plus article on Sunnyside Group's 60th Anniv. Need volunteers to submit articles to the newsletter; email is bettertimes@aatoronto.org Webmaster and Alternate are in the process of creating a mapping system on the site which would allow people to find meetings closest to where they live/work. Next mtg: Sat. Mar. 14 at 1 pm at 234.

Transition Committee: Dee T. (Streetsville), Chair – First meeting held Feb.14; 14 members were in attendance. Information session to focus on getting familiar with the Procedures and Guidelines and other related documentation. Dee informed the Floor that this process will probably take longer than anticipated. Volunteers needed; no formal sobriety requirement. Next mtg: Sat. Mar. 14 at 3 pm

Next General Meeting: Tuesday March 31 at 8 pm at Glebe Rd United Church (20 Glebe Road East, off Yonge Street.)

