

Our Primary Purpose

Ottawa Area Newsletter of Alcoholics Anonymous

May/June 2009

Published by Ottawa Area Intergroup



Untreated Alcoholism – Who, Me?

Here are some questions

- * Do you have a Sponsor? * If no, why not?
- * If yes, what is the Exact Nature of the relationship?
 - * How many AA related phone calls did you receive yesterday?
 - * How many AA related phone calls did you make yesterday?
 - * Are you sponsoring any people?
 - * Have you done the Steps?
 - * Have you heard a Fifth Step?
 - * Are you a Member of a Group?
 - * Have you done your utmost to make *Amends vs. Apologies?*
 - * Having trouble with personal relationships?
 - * Are you prey to misery?
 - * Do you feel useless?
 - * Trouble controlling your emotional nature?
 - * Are you having trouble "making a living"?
- * Do you feel you can be of real help to other people?

It is possible to recover in one of two ways. Option one is the original, spiritual awakening way which follows from working all of the Steps. Option two is the way of partial practise of the Steps, and primary dependence on the social, Fellowship related aspects.

This second approach generally does not produce a spiritual awakening. It also violates the Tradition that AA's should always place Principles before Personalities. Originally, the Twelve's Step read: "Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to Alcoholics, and to practise these Principles in all our affairs". Two key phrases were "spiritual experience" and "as the result of these Steps". The assumption was: no spiritual experience - no recovery. It was also assumed that there were not a number of different results from working the Steps; there was one result - "the" result - and that was spiritual experience. To the first Members, spiritual experience meant that God had touched their lives - directly, tangibly - and turned them around.

There is another, more insidious danger. In many cases, the "recovery" produced by watered-down approaches to the Twelve Steps fails to hold up over the long haul. What looked in the beginning like an easier, softer way to maintain happy Sobriety yields progressively less and less contentment, finally ending in a complete reversal of momentum and a lapse into serious personal misery. The end result may be a return to active Alcoholism; or, short of that total disaster, it may be a sinking into a life of discontented abstinence, marred by some combination of tension, resentment, depression, compulsive sick sex, and an overall sense of meaninglessness. Either way, it is a final failure to reap the benefits of the AA program. It is, in the last analysis, a failure to recovery. If these hard cases do find their way into an environment where strong - nothing but strong AA - is being practised, many of them are able to achieve lasting Sobriety.

Excerpted from a 24 Magazine, July, 1976, author unknown

Seeing Is Believing

The Wright brothers' almost childish faith that they could build a machine which would fly was the mainspring of their accomplishment. Without that, nothing could have happened.

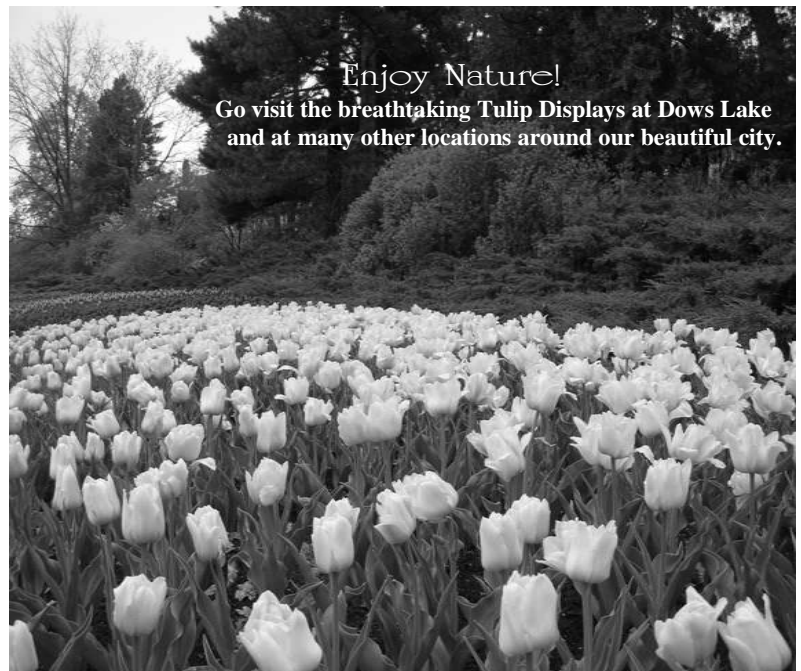
We agnostics and atheists were sticking to the idea that self-sufficiency would solve our problems. When others showed us that God-Sufficiency worked with them, we began to feel like those who had insisted the Wrights would never fly. We were seeing another kind of flight, a spiritual liberation from this world, people who rose above their problems.

from As Bill Sees It p. 47,

extracted from Alcoholics Anonymous pp. 52-53, 55

in this month's issue:

from Integr. Meetings * from C&S Districts * Anniversaries
Announcements * Spring Conference wrap-up * Editorial



Gresham's law - That bad currency drives out good. Operative in the life of Alcoholics Anonymous, weak AA tends to drive out strong AA.

from the March/April Intergroup Meetings

(Intergroup meets at 7pm every 2nd Wednesday of the month at the Bronson Centre)

Intergroup's Office hrs. are 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Treasurer's Report by Pat B. at the March 2009 Intergroup Meeting

Integr. is experiencing a cash crunch. At March 7th, the amounts we owe suppliers exceeds our bank balance by approx. \$11,000. This problem has arisen for three reasons:

- * We spent about \$9,000 refurbishing the Intergroup (IG) offices to accommodate Archives and to buy furniture for Intergroup.
- * We were audited by CRA who assessed us \$2,900 for amounts they claim we underpaid our GST in the past.
- * In an effort to better serve the groups' literature needs, we have greatly increased the inventory of the literature we stock.

At our March executive meeting, Intergroup approved a 4 point

program to restore our finances to a healthy level, hopefully by late summer.

- * We will raise literature prices to reflect changes in our costs brought about by the decline of the Canadian dollar from par to roughly \$0.77 US.
- * We will reduce the literature inventory over the next few month.
- * All expenditures of over \$100 must be approved by the vice-chair or treasurer.
- * We encourage Groups, which are able to, to contribute to IG. and contributing Groups to possibly increase their donations.

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condensed version of the April '09 Intergroup Meeting

It is a requirement of the Intergroup Bylaws to conduct a financial audit on an annual basis. The Vice-Chair is identified as the individual responsible for this audit. It was agreed that we would proceed with a financial review rather than an audit, that the Vice-Chair would lead this activity.

The Treasurer's report was tabled until next meeting when Treasurer Pat B. will be back from vacationing.

All pressing questions re- the predicament Intergroup presently finds itself in are also held in abeyance till next meet.

Literature Report by John G.

The Literature Coordinator advised he will be ordering Big Books and 12&12 and that they will be available to groups within a week.

The Coordinator apologized to Intergp. Reps. stating he had ordered

too many units of certain books and pamphlets, that this would not occur again.

TAS Report by Rich W.

In March there were 80 timeslots at TAS. Of these, five were open, forty-four were covered and thirty-five were missed.

This gives TAS only a 55% coverage for the month.

I have put new log sheets out for the volunteers in the hope that they will improve the accuracy of the TAS statistics.

Newsletter Report by Ozzie L.

The Editor recommended to the Intergroup Reps that "Our Primary Purpose" become a bi-monthly issue rather than a monthly issue.

Intergroup Reps supported the bi-monthly approach on the basis of enhanced quality of articles and information.

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Spring Conference (Springathon) Wrap-Up by Chair Janet A.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank you all for making the Springathon 2009 on April 4, such a wonderfully successful day. We love to get together and share our recovery and have a good time. And we have so much to celebrate! That was in evidence throughout the entire day; at the panels on each of the twelve steps, the banquet, for Donna H., our out of town speaker and at the dance.

It took an amazing committee of hard working members, three months to arrange for the day's events. These committed members include; Shirley B. for selecting and arranging the speakers and panel chairs, Brice B. & Peter M. for organizing the greeters and handling the security, Debbie W. with the support of Anne R. for planning and organizing registration, Maggie B. for taking charge of the technical part of the conference as well as helping in so many other capacities, Joanne M. for keeping track of what we were doing, John B. for arranging for and organizing the printing, Michael K. for streamlining our publicity, Ron M. for the art work, Marie-France G. for planning and



organizing the Al-Anon / Alateen events, Frank V. for assisting in the capacity as incoming Chair and Lorna M. for being our treasure of a treasurer. This very strong and supportive group of members individually gave their very best and collectively came together in the most positive and powerful way to make the Springathon happen.

An important part of the Springathon is the fellowship, and that happened in the Hospitality Room. Recognition & thanks on behalf of us all go to Jimmy T. It was Jimmy and his committed team that organized and made available sandwiches, cakes and cookies (I hope you tried those date squares), fruit, cheese, vegetables and water and drinks throughout the entire day. I am sure that most people spent some time there enjoying a snack and a conversation with another member.

(It is Jimmy himself who wants to thank all who provided and participated in making the Hospitality such a great success.)

The Springathon committee will be meeting shortly to evaluate the day's events & then will pass this information on to next year's chair, Frank V. Our financial report will be made to Intergroup as soon as the details are completed. To all of you, thank you once again for your contribution by attending and giving to this day and celebrating your recovery with us all.

Janet A., Chair, Springathon 2009.

Announcements

Take Notice

New Parking Restrictions are in effect at the Bronson Centre as of April 1st, 2009. Everyone visiting the Intergroup Office is limited to on-street parking.

>>> No exceptions <<<

No Parking on Bronson Centre property without a permit.

On-street parking as posted.

Ottawa AA – Telephone Answering Service

TAS Requires Your Help at the Phones

Groups and individual Members are needed at the phones. Interested volunteering some of your time in the office manning the phones? Check out the TAS schedule of the month at

www.ottawaaa.org / click on Telephone Answering

Your Help Will Make The Difference

The Ottawa Area AA Archives is looking for an Archivist. Are you interested? Than, please call 613-237-6003 or email Archives Committee Chair Nick C. at nikko9@gmail.com

New Meeting:

Russian-speaking AA meeting NADEZHDA (HOPE)
Wednesdays at 8pm at the Bronson Centre, Room 108
for Info contact: Sasha 613-614-5526; Pavel 613-862-5526

A Meeting change:

Tuesday night closed Rockland Action Study Group
is now a Thursday 8pm candlelight open meeting
at St. Andrews Church, 739 St. Jean

Gratitude Day

May 23rd 9am – 3pm

at the Bronson Centre

a day of General Service

Information sharing by all 3 Ottawa Districts committees
also the annual report by the Eastern Ontario Area 83
Delegate, Sandy S.

VANIER ROUNDUP

Fun in Sobriety / New Awakening

June 6th 2009 – Noon till Midnight

Vanier Richelieu Centre

300 Peres Blanc

Panels, Speakers, Banquet & Dance

\$ 10.00/person

Keynote speaker

Marie, from Montreal



come and join us:

7th annual Montreal Oldtimers Round-up & Banquet

Back to Basics – so that the Hand of AA will ALWAYS be there –

Guest speakers: Mildred F. – Toronto / Darren M. – Montreal
Valerie B. – Vancouver / Chris R. – Ingram, Tx.

Saturday, May 30th '09

Centre des loisirs St-Laurent, 1375 Grenet, St-Laurent, Montreal, Que.

Registration: 1:30 pm Tickets & Info: Simon T. 514-862-5296
Kathleen A. 514-697-7109

Ottawa Ticket enquiries: Patrick M. 613-324-5304

oldtimersroundup@rocketmail.com

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from the Editor's desk:

Hi all!

I'm the new guy on the block. I am privileged and honoured to do some service again, editing the Ottawa AA Newsletter Our Primary Purpose.

Many Thanks to Danny M.

for his dedicated editorial work of this newsletter.

I am an old guy in years and also in years of Sobriety. As your newly installed Editor, I shall repeatedly try to point towards the primary purpose in Our Primary Purpose. As I see it, that is to inform the Ottawa AA Fellowship of the work being done, at all levels of service and the constant need of help required. Included are Committee and Group information, individual contributions (experiences & opinions) and announcements of AA social events. All the many anniversaries announced at the

meetings, should be listed in the Newsletter. Think AA Works!
All pertinent AA Info mail to the Newsletter's e-mail address:

newsletter08@ottawaaa.org

You can also reach Our Primary Purpose via Canada Post:

Newsletter / 398 Sunnyside Ave. / Ottawa, ON / K1S 0S4

Please, submit to the Editor desk by the 20th of June. Late arriving mail will be considered for the next following issue. Contributions are printed at the Editor's discretion.

The Newsletter will from now on have a very simple black on white appearance, which translates into fewer production costs and, incidentally helps Intergroup to some extent in its present financial predicament.

Of course, the Newsletter will have a column, "from the Editor's desk"

My name is Ozzie L., and I am your Newsletter Editor.

Think AA Works! Think AA Works! Think AA Works!

From the Ottawa Districts of General Service Area 83

Ottawa West District 62 / DCM Mark C.

Ottawa West District meets 7:30 pm every second Monday of the month at the Bronson Centre

Hi everyone,

The GSR's (General Service Representative) who regularly attend committee meetings represent over 75% of the groups in the district. It makes a warm and welcoming environment for our new GSR's to the table. We have two open service positions, Registrar and Intergroup Liaison. We hope to fill these soon. Our newly elected Alt. DCM is Derek R.; I am looking forward to seeing his enthusiasm at the meeting.

There were some missed commitments in January due to a lack of continuity between the previous CFTF (Corrections facility Treatment facility) and the current committee; however, since then all of our commitments have been kept. CPC (Cooperation with the Professional committee) is preparing to send out more "Adopt a Doctor" packages. PIC (Public Information committee) has seen their committee grow and is now reaching out to schools, libraries and community centers, asking them if they would like information or literature

(Big Books, 12 & 12, Living Sober, In Their Own Words, or pamphlets). Letting them know that if you want to drink that is your problem, if you want to stop that is ours. The Grapevine rep is active, he was just out at a group's 35th year anniversary, and was very well received. Archive's continues to sort through all of their material, to what pertains to Ottawa and sending the remainder to where it belongs.

Gratitude day will be held on May 23rd at the Bronson center from 9am – 3 pm. There will be pizza for lunch, our delegate, Sandy S. will give her report on the annual General Service Conference (week long business meeting with 10 hour days discussing Alcoholics Anonymous, she is our voice to the fellowship).

To conclude, Alcoholics Anonymous is alive and well in District 62 and I am very honoured to serve the fellowship, to give back just a little from which I have received so much.

Yours in Service, Mark C, DCM Ottawa West, District 62

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Ottawa Rideau District 54 / DCM, Jim B.

Ottawa Rideau District meets 7:30 pm every first Thursday of the month at the Overbrook Community Centre

Concept Meeting in our District

A few years ago, the Monday Night Twelve and Twelve Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous started a Concepts meeting.

I had the chance to interview Paul P., one of the original participants in the Concepts meeting. The following is an excerpt from that interview.

Jim B. – Paul, how are the Steps, Traditions and Concepts connected and how did the Concepts meeting get started?

Paul P. - The three legacies of A.A. are Recovery, Unity and Service as outlined in our 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts. The fellowship balances on these like a three-legged stool; without any one leg the recovering alcoholic sitting on the stool may fall off... We are all well acquainted with the 12&12 that facilitate our personal recovery and maintain group unity but are we that well acquainted with the third leg of the stool; the 12 Concepts? As closed discussion groups quite often make their way through the 12&12 it was realized that very few groups actually addressed the 12 Concepts as detailed in "The A.A. Service Manual". About three years ago, the Monday Night 12&12 Group formed a four-member committee to outline such a meeting and to host it for a one year trial period. This meeting has survived to now thanks to the support and understanding of many other members and is run on the first Monday of every month.

Jim B. - What, in a nutshell, are the 12 Concepts?

Paul P. - Someone once summarized Steps 1, 2 & 3 as, "I can't, He can, let Him". Our three legacies can be summed up as,

"The Steps are for me, the Traditions are for us and the Concepts are for them". "Them" being the still suffering alcoholic; be he or she next door or across the world. Bill W. probably summed it up the best in his "Third Legacy Manual of World Service" (precursor to the current A.A. Service Manual) presented at the 1955 International Convention in St. Louis; "an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer...from the 12th Step itself to a cup of coffee and to A.A.'s General Service office for national and international action." Basically, the third legacy sets out the entire A.A. Service Structure and employs ideologies that ensure that the critical decisions affecting the fellowship as a whole reside with the individual members.

Jim B. - What is the format of the Concepts meeting?

Paul P. - Going back to basics, the committee decided to keep it simple by adopting the same format as the 12&12 discussion meetings. We start by reading the short form of the 12 Concepts and then read the Concept for that month (i.e. first Monday of the month – first concept, etc.). We also felt that one of the 6 Warranties which form part of the 12th Concept should also be read every month and this simple format has survived now going into its fourth year.

Jim B. - How have the Concepts contributed to your recovery?

Paul P. - Put bluntly, they have tested my patience, persistence and "stick-to-itiveness" related to trying to get a basic understanding of what the Concepts were all about. They are written in a very formal way and ramble on and on but ultimately have enhanced my program through

continued on page 5

. . . . cont. from page 4

sheer determination to see this important program through. What they have done for me is to put the third bar on the A.A. triangle and closed the circle around it.

Having come through this exercise (and still hanging in there...) I feel that I am no longer a bleeding deacon but have some hope to becoming an elder statesman. The entire Service Manual is best summarized by its final statement; "To a man, we of A.A. believe that our freedom to serve is truly the freedom by which we live – the freedom in which we have our being".

Jim B. – If a recovering alcoholic wants to attend a Concepts meeting, when and where do they go?

Paul P. – They can attend the Concepts meeting held on the first Monday of every month at the Monday Night Twelve and Twelve closed discussion meeting. This meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. and is held at St. Gabriel’s Church, 55 Appleford Street, Gloucester.

Jim B. – Paul, thank you very much for your insight into this essential part of our Fellowship.

Submitted by Jim B. DCM District 54 – Ottawa Rideau

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Final Report of the Alkathon '08 /'09 by Kevin A. – as given at the March Intergroup Meeting

First Things First: As Chair of this year’s Alkathon, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks & appreciation to the 16 AA members who volunteered their time and energy to form the Alkathon committee.

My task as Alkathon Chair became a rich and rewarding experience because of all the hard work and efficiency of all my Committee Coordinators. Many thanks also to the many volunteers that kept the Alkathon running, the groups and individuals who supplied us with money and food donations without which there would be no Alkathon.

Although the bus strike hindered some members from attending the Alkathon and inconvenienced many others we alcoholics persevered and came through in style. The meetings were as powerful as usual, the food was delicious & plentiful, the fellowship was fantastic & by all reports a good time was had by all.

With a starting balance of \$3040.00 from last year’s Alkathon and

thanks to the generosity of groups and individual members who donated money, the 2008-2009 Alkathon realized a surplus in the amount of \$7281.76. After keeping \$2500.00 to cover next year’s rent and start up costs the 2008-2009 Committee voted to split the balance between Intergroup (50%), Districts 54, 58 and 62 (12.5%) and Alanon (12.5%) and cheques were distributed in the amount of \$2390.88 for Intergroup and \$597.72 for each district and Alanon.

It is my pleasure to announce Sue B. as 2009-2010 Alkathon Chair and I have great confidence in her ability to carry on the tradition of bringing a successful Alkathon for all our members to enjoy.

It is with gratitude that I thank everyone involved for allowing me this opportunity to serve and enjoy my experience as Alkathon Chair.

Yours in Service, Kevin A. Alkathon 2008-2009 Chair

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Ottawa Bytown District 58 / DCM, Jean F.

Ottawa Bytown District meets 7:00pm every second Monday of the month at the Bronson Centre

A Declaration of Unity

This we owe to A.A.’s future:
To place our common welfare first;
To keep our fellowship united.
For on A.A. unity depend our lives;
And the lives of those to come.

This declaration of unity was adopted at the 1970 International Convention of A.A. in Miami Beach by eleven thousand A.A. members. Each of us is responsible for the future of A.A. Just as each of us has the experience to keep someone sober today, each of us also has the ability to safeguard this fellowship from internal strife and external conflict.

Placing our common welfare first means placing it before our personal feelings. There are members who do not appear to believe that God’s will is expressed through group consensus. Fear, ego and resentment may cause members to browbeat other members during business meetings, to repeatedly express an opinion, and to refuse to accept the outcome of a fully democratic vote. They may believe that only they know what is best for their meetings.

If you are dreading the next business meeting of your A.A. group or

your service meeting, in addition to your sponsor, please consider contacting your DCM before leaving. If you do not know who that is, your GSR and your Intergroup office will.

If your DCM can not help through their experience, she/he can put you in touch with someone who can. Our A.A. literature can also help as it was authored through the group consensus of millions of Alcoholics active in service and dedicated to A.A. unity. Fearless group inventories are another tool that can guide us to a unified home group. There is a solution.

A.A. principles are stronger than any personality and our very lives depend upon the principle of unity in A.A. We are all on the same side – the side of sobriety and recovery for ourselves and for the still suffering alcoholic.

“So long as the ties which bind us together prove far stronger than those forces which would divide us if they could, all will be well... We shall be secure as a movement; our essential unity will remain a certainty.” Bill Wilson

Please note that this is my opinion only. Thanks for reading.

Yours in Fellowship, Jean F., DCM Ott. Bytown, GS District 58

Enjoy Nature.

While you are proudly celebrating your anniversary or (one day at a time) edging up to an AA anniversary,

Spring has sprung in all its glory.

The lilac trees bloom in abundant splendour in the Botanical Garden of the Experimental Farm.

Treat yourself, venture out into Nature's Creation. Make it a Habit.



Members celebrating Anniversaries

Barrhaven Tuesday Night

Dave Mac	March 27 th	20 years
Richard C.	March 26 th	15 years
Peter G.	April	1 year
Neville B.	April	1 year
Dennis B.	April	17 years
Gary S.	April	19 years
Mike A.	April	14 years

Orleans Hub Group

Patrick G.	Feb. 05 th	1 year
Kelly M.	Feb. 19 th	1 year
Mark B.	March 18 th	1 year
Mo M.	April 1 st	14 years
Jim T.	April 1 st	4 years
Tim D.	April 5 th	3 years
Don S.	April 12 th	18 years
John M.	April 25 th	5 years
Rolly R.	April 28 th	7 years
Ginnette B.	April 29 th	4 years

Tuesday-Friday Group

Samara D.	February 8 th	1 year
Jeremy C.	February	1 year
Denis G.	March 15 th	1 year

Uptown Group

Lynne K.	March 10 th	35 years
John G.	March 17 th	35 years
Pauline K-S	March 23 rd	35 years
Jim S.	April 14 th	12 years

Awakening Group

Paul D.	May 10 th	19 years
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Choices Group

Andre H.	April 18 th	30 years
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Westboro Big Book Group

Dave B.	April 18 th	9 years
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Keep sending them there anniversaries.
It's more better, to show it works.

Beacon Hill Group

Steven B.	March 9 th	4 years
Brenda V.	March 11 th	10 years
Jon H.	March 21 st	37 years
Huguette B.	March 26 th	16 years
Mike M.	March 27 th	42 years

Rainbow Group

Joe Mac D.	Feb. 10 th	36 years
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New Beginnings Group (Smith Falls)

Doug C.	March 29 th	29 years
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By the Book Group

Grant H.	May 17 th	31 years
Sandy K.	May 30 th	15 years
Blane F.	May 17 th	5 years
Gary L.	May 3 st	4 years
Barry L.	May 28 th	1 year
Michelle H.	June 1 st	3 years

Triangle Group

George K.	April 1 st	4 years
Steve T.	April 2 nd	1 year
Gary L.	Feb. 29 th	5 years
Earl S.	March 2 nd	32 years
Mario B.	May 23 rd	4 years
Tia G.	May 27 th	2 years

New Life New Hope Group

Larry W.	March 11 th	24 years
Mike P.	April 1 st	26 years
Mike S.	April 2 nd	5 years
Dan M.	April 27 th	12 years

Publisher:

Ottawa Area Intergroup Inc.
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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three ways to reach AA

613-237-6000

Members please:
613-237-6003

Ottawa AA Website:
www.ottawaaa.org

Alive & Well Group

Joan G.	Jan. 3 rd	26 years
Myrna K.	Jan. 12 th	6 years
Amy K.	Feb. 4 th	2 years
Diane L.	Feb. 4 th	27 years

Hand in Hand Group

Denis G.	March 31 st	11 years
Paul P.	March 31 st	20 years
Pierre B.	April 12 th	19 years

Friday Night 12 + 3 Group

Val B.	March 22 nd	16 years
Carrie W.	March 18 th	4 years
Caroline W.	April 2 nd	4 years
Gustav N.	10 th June	24 years
Darren G.	13 th June	2 years
Rob D.	30 th June	4 years

Wednesday Noon Group

Phil A.	March 7 th	2 years
Giselle V.	March 17 th	12 years
Jayne H.	March 22 nd	5 years
Jim B.	May 18 th	1 year
Ellen O.	May 23 rd	10 years
Jody	May 26 th	13 years

Happy Nooners Group

Jim Rob R.	April 23 rd	7 years
Kim K.	May 8 th	2 years
James B.	May 11 th	6 years
Martin	May 21 st	2 years
Mike F.	May 26 th	23 years

Early-Birds Group

Jill T.	April 5 th	1 year
Jack L.	April 2 nd	28 years
Bud B.	Good Friday	49 years

Beginners Group

Eileen G.	Jan 19 th	40 yrs.
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Disclaimer:

The Experiences & Opinions expressed in this newsletter reflect the Experiences and Opinions of the authors, they do not in any way echo Ottawa Area Intergroup, or AA as a whole.