

# pwa newsletter



**Spring 2009** Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA)  
200 Gerrard Street East, 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario Canada M5A 2E6  
Phone: (416) 506-1400 Fax: (416) 506-1404 [www.pwatoronto.org](http://www.pwatoronto.org)  
**Making a positive difference.**

## Andy came to PWA because he heard that we were giving away money!

### **And to some degree Andy was correct.**

Andy had been off on disability for almost six months. His meds had been playing havoc with his liver function but things had pretty much returned to normal and he was anxious to get back to work. Besides, his resources had quickly depleted.

Then, last week, Andy lost his job.

He's just another casualty of the economic times but things are a little different for him. Andy's meds cost \$1500 per month!

You may know that we have a financial assistance program at PWA that helps people living with HIV/AIDS to cover some of their critical expenses. Our Financial Assistance program reimburses clients for uninsured medical and treatment costs. We supplement government income benefits for people applying for long-term disability programs and assist with the costs of care for HIV-positive children.

PWA recognizes that financial stresses, economic insecurity and the resulting devastating effect on an individual's health are critical factors for many people living with HIV/AIDS. From the beginning, PWA has offered practical support in the form of financial assistance.

Over the past months we have seen many more people like Andy who are in need of our help. Already, we have spent almost 40% of our financial assistance budget and we are still in the first quarter!

For the first time in many years, PWA has had to reduce the budget for this program. This significant reduction is especially concerning given that the need continues to increase.

Now that spring is here and it's easier for people to get to us, we're hearing the stories of financial hardship. Lately, we are seeing clients who haven't accessed our food bank in years, some have lost their housing and those who have been working like Andy and have lost their drug coverage.

At PWA, we are seeing what tough times looks like every day. While some of our traditional funding sources are no longer available for our Financial Assistance Program, the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation is looking to our generous supporters; people like you to help us so we can continue to help people like Andy to shoulder the burdens associated with HIV/AIDS.

Please help by making a generous donation today.



Jonathan Libby donates his birthday money to PWA



## Noun

**pie-in-the-sky** (uncountable)

1. An event that raises money for the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation's food programs. The numbers of people we help can be counted but the worth of food programs for those who need it, cannot
2. An opportunity for you to make a positive difference towards supporting people living with HIV/AIDS
3. A delicious apple or pumpkin pie for your Thanksgiving feast baked by one of Toronto's top chefs

Coming soon to a Thanksgiving dinner near you.  
Visit [torontopieinthesky.org](http://torontopieinthesky.org)

## Volunteer Appreciation

On a typical night in the city where can you find hula dancers, pirates, fairies and a menagerie of animals? On March 30th, you could find all of the above at the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation's volunteer appreciation night. Teams of expert and beginner bowlers dressed up in assorted costumes to redefine bowling style.

We proudly honoured all our volunteers who work in the many areas at PWA, including our food bank, reception and delivering Food For Life meals. Darryl our volunteer coordinator was pleased to acknowledge 3 more individuals who have volunteered for 10 years! Our thanks to John Houston, Marvin Jones and Brian J. Smith for 10 years of service.

On behalf of PWA's board and staff we would like to thank all our volunteers for their ongoing dedication to people living with HIV/AIDS. For those volunteers who were able to attend the event we hope they had a great time. If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer at PWA please contact Darryl Ramsey, Volunteer Coordinator at 416-506-1400 ext. 205 or at [dramsey@pwatoronto.org](mailto:dramsey@pwatoronto.org).

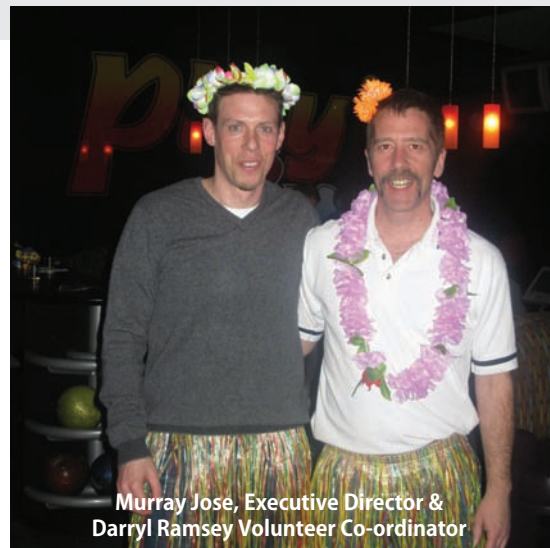
## PWA Annual General Meeting

The Toronto People With AIDS Foundation will mark another exceptional year - Please join us for PWA's Annual General Meeting:

**September 24th from 6:00pm-9:00pm**

Oakham House  
55 Gould Street (at Church Street)

Light refreshments will be served.



Murray Jose, Executive Director &  
Darryl Ramsey Volunteer Co-ordinator

# 127 Isabella Charitable Organization Closes the Books



Zoe Klein and Pamala Beavis

**When it comes to charitable giving, Canadians are among the world's leaders. As a whole, we donated an estimated \$8.9-billion in 2004, according to the latest figures compiled by Statistics Canada. The federal agency calculated that 22 million people, or 85% of the population aged 15 and up, donated an average of \$400 each, over a one-year period.**

Imagine our delight when Zoe Klein called PWA to say she wanted to make a donation of over \$10,000!

Zoe is one of the founders of 127 Isabella Charitable Organization and she was calling to say that the charity was closing up after being dormant for a few years.

It all began in 1993 at 127 Isabella St. as housing for people who had addiction issues and were HIV positive. It was run like a rooming house with approximately 22 small apartments. While the residents were not well, they weren't sick enough for Casey House or to go to a hospital.

The small group and the residents began to raise funds for programs and that was how the charity started. They wanted to raise money for things that other programs didn't cover for instance bringing a family member to someone who was sick and dying so they could say good bye.

Zoe relates the story of a woman whose husband had died of AIDS and both she and her child were HIV positive. The charity helped her get a vehicle so she could bring her child to Sick Kids for appointments. 127 Isabella covered the cost of such things as food and medical expenses, things that PWA continues to do to this day.

So when the charity decided to close its bank account and shut down, the question of where to send the residual funds was easy to answer. The Toronto People With AIDS Foundation's mission parallels 127 Isabella. Both have provided practical services aimed at improving the lives of all people living with HIV/AIDS.

# The 11th Annual Friends For Life Bike Rally is off with a start for 2009!

The 2009 Friends For Life Bike Rally launched in February at George's Play! 100 returning riders and crew as well as new participants showed up to celebrate the start of the 11th Annual Bike Rally, sharing old stories and looking forward to the challenge of this summer.

PWA is happy to announce that Scotiabank has joined us again as Presenting Sponsor and has agreed to come on for a 3 year commitment. Both parties are extremely excited about the partnership and looking forward to the next 3 years. The ride currently has 215 riders and counting who are all working hard to raise much needed funds for PWA. Riders who are brave enough to stand the cold have already begun weekend training rides!

New for this year the Bike Rally attended the Bike Show in March to recruit new riders and promote the ride. Over



200 people visited our booth to hear about what the Bike Rally has to offer and the positive difference it is making for our clients at PWA. Also new for 2009, we are pleased to announce that we will be offering a special PWA Top Fundraiser jersey for participants who raise \$6,000 and more. There will also be incentives for riders who recruit their friends to join us on the ride as first year riders.

The Bike Rally will depart from Queen's Park on **July 26th** and arrive in Montreal on **July 31st**. If you are interested in riding or being part of our amazing crew of volunteers, please contact Jenni at: [jwilles@pwatoronto.org](mailto:jwilles@pwatoronto.org)

## Thank you to our Corporate and Foundation donors

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M·A·C AIDS Fund

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\*Donations of \$100 +



## Community Events

### TICOT

The Imperial Court of Toronto, Reign XXII Emperor Hunter James and Empress Tiffany Louise-Charles chose PWA and the 519 Community Centre as its charities.

The Imperial Court of Toronto (TICOT) was founded by Carlos Misseri in 1987 under the founding name the Trillium Monarchist Society (TMS). The original mandate of the organization was to promote 'Friendship, Unity & Nonsense' (F.U.N.) through holding entertaining fundraising events.

Since inception, 1987, under the leadership of now 32 elected Monarchs, TICOT has entertained thousands, held many successful events and raised money for a number of local charities – Casey House, the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation, AIDS Committee of Toronto, AIDS Tijuana, The Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, the Toronto Metropolitan Police (1st Bikes), Sick Children's Hospital, and Gilda's Club – to name a few. It is estimated that during the 22 years in operation, they've donated over \$660,000 to local charities.

Please check out the website at [www.theimperialcourtoftoronto.com](http://www.theimperialcourtoftoronto.com) for upcoming events.

### Tighty Whitey Car Wash

On July 19th join Jon Henderson, Mr. Steamworks 2009 in the alley way between Café California and Zelda's for the Annual Tighty Whitey Car Wash!

Last year, those undie clad boys and girls washed 130 cars in one afternoon and raised a record \$6,889 to support the programs and services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

So mark your calendar! Bring your car to the car wash then plan to spend a sunny afternoon on the patio of Zelda's or Café California and watch the action!

**"I think many of the people we're seeing in food banks right now are saying, I never thought I'd be here, but I only had about three months [worth of savings],"** Gail Nyberg, Executive Director of Toronto's Daily Bread Food Bank, told CBC Radio.



Jim Empey from Whole Foods with Kristen Lawrie

## A Big THANK YOU

For helping to bring JOY to the Holidays.

This year's PROUD FM Joy Drive was a whopping success – thanks to you and the businesses that collected food, grocery store gift certificates and unwrapped gifts.

Owners Mike Dorman and Robert Knight at Pegasus Bar were frustrated by the lack of donations collected so they challenged their patrons. They raised \$600 and one of their customers who works at Campbells agreed to purchase canned goods at wholesale cost. Pegasus was able to donate 1,000 lbs. of food, filling the PWA van on Christmas Eve during a snowstorm!

Another innovator was Jim Empey at Whole Foods. He was able to package food bags valued at \$15 which his customers purchased for \$10 and donated to PWA. Pick ups at his store were brisk.

The drive coincided with PWA's office move and our new food bank was full to bursting! Foodstuffs had to be packed in boxes until the shelving was built. Two offices on the 1st floor were used to store foods until we could get to sorting them.

PWA's Food Bank is an important service provided to our clients. It's open every Wednesday from 2pm–7pm and every Thursday from 12pm–4pm and serves approximately 800 individuals annually. Again this year, your generosity was overwhelming.

# Why I volunteer at PWA...

I volunteer because I realized that lots of people needed help, not just financially but physically. I know I'm doing a good thing when I volunteer at PWA.

I love the fact that this place is about the people. When clients come in it doesn't seem like just another organization. It's people helping people. Everybody at PWA is motivated by more than just a job, they want to help others in grave circumstances.

As a client and a volunteer, I first came to PWA in need of help the week of Christmas. I felt ashamed that I needed the help and my unemployment assistance was done. I had no money and felt like I had no hope. My intake worker at the time, gave me direction on where I could seek financial assistance. The help I received got me through until ODSP came through.

I started volunteering because I needed something to do with my time. My career direction wasn't focused but I knew I didn't want to go to work at a burger joint. Volunteering doesn't pay but it rewards me in a way that money can't. Because of working with Kevin Borden PWA's Programs Coordinator, I've learned so much about what I was capable of doing and it gave me confidence to pursue a career again.

**Wayne Cook**, PWA Volunteer

**"I actually think that people, in times of need, know that others may be in even greater need. I think Canadians are very generous; we're an empathetic culture. I think we dig deep in times of need."**

David Prowten, the Arthritis Society



## Serving clients better

By responding to changing needs

This past year, PWA met with over 425 new clients, adding to the 3,500 active and over 7,000 total clients registered since our inception.

In response to new targeted funding for a staff position that allowed us to address a gap in services, PWA is pleased to announce the creation of the Service Access Manager position or SAM. The SAM strengthens the delivery of client programs and services by providing a combination of front-line client support and management leadership for all Programs & Services staff.

The Service Access Manager will offer support and service to clients by providing initial assessments, managing the volunteer Intake Program, ensuring clients are familiar with all PWA programs and services as well as community programming and referrals. In addition, the Service Access Manager will provide day to day management support to clients, volunteers and staff in responding to the complex needs of our clients.

Human resource management support for the Director of Programs & Services will further



strengthen PWA's overall ability to provide equitable and accountable programs and services that make a positive difference in the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Greg Downer had been acting in the role of SAM since January of this year and was the successful candidate of our recruitment process. He was permanently awarded the role on April 1st. Through his extensive experience in management, Greg has successfully helped to develop this new position and make it crucial to the daily operations of PWA's programs and services. Greg has resigned his position as the Speakers Bureau Coordinator where he brought tremendous leadership and support. PWA is very excited to continue working with Greg in the exciting new role. Greg can be reached at [gdowner@pwatoronto.org](mailto:gdowner@pwatoronto.org) or ext. 203.

## Community Open House

Please mark your calendar. PWA is happy to announce that our Community Open House will be held on **Tuesday May 26th from 4pm to 7pm.**

Come and tour the food bank, meet our staff and enjoy some light fare from Urban Source Caterers.

All are welcome.

For more information please contact Greg Downer, Service Access Manager at 416 506-8606 x203 or [gdowner@pwatoronto.org](mailto:gdowner@pwatoronto.org).

## Join our Monthly Supporters!

PWA couldn't do the good work that they do every day, every week without supporters like you. I am inviting you to make your gift work harder by joining PWA's group of monthly supporters, the Monthly Giving Circle. I have been a monthly giver since 2006.

Our support changes people's lives. A modest monthly gift can come automatically from your credit card or bank account. Knowing that you are with me every step of the way giving PWA's clients access to direct support services is a great feeling. Looking forward to welcoming you.

Sincerely,

*Mina Hunt*  
Board Member & Monthly Supporter



## Mission

The Toronto People With AIDS Foundation exists to promote the health and well-being of all people living with HIV/AIDS by providing accessible, direct, and practical support services.

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*PWA*

### Toronto People With AIDS Foundation

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## YES I want to become a PWA monthly donor!

### 1. Choose how you'd like your monthly gift processed

- Electronic Fund Transfer: I have included a cheque marked VOID written across the front so that my monthly gift will be withdrawn from this account.
- Credit Card: Please provide your credit card information below.  
Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
(month/year)

### 2. Mark your preferred monthly gift amount

- \$10    \$15    \$20    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Provide your details so we keep you in the loop and provide you with an annual tax receipt

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