

pwa newsletter



Holiday 2009 Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA)
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Making a positive difference.

A Time To Remember

The fall air urges all of us to sport warm winter coats, and dig out the cozy hats and gloves for the cold winter months to come in Toronto.

With the brisk fall weather and the first snow falls, the display windows at department stores decorated for the festivities, we are reminded of what the winter brings. The Holiday Season is a time for many to gather with loved ones and close friends, share special meals and cuddle around the hearth of warm fires while enjoying all there is to be thankful for. When you think ahead to this Holiday Season do warm memories of holidays past fill your heart with joy?

For some, the holidays are traditionally a joyous time. For many of our clients, the holidays are spent without an accepting family, without income to purchase gifts for their children and loved ones and are without homes. One must open their heart and imagine what holidays are like for these people.

The Holiday Season can be a cold depressing time of year for the people we serve.

Thankfully for many living with HIV/AIDS in need of support, PWA is a place where people living through the most difficult times in their lives can access a feeling of home over the holidays, a feeling of acceptance and the sense of comfort that comes from familiar and welcoming faces. Especially over the Holiday Season where homes and streets are decorated with bright colourful lights and thoughts turn to nostalgic holiday memories, our Holiday Programs give people

living with HIV/AIDS an opportunity to celebrate, enjoy a meal and receive a gift.

PWA needs your help to be here, year round, supporting clients whose health is improving or holding strong. Donors like you, who give today, provide the security to our clients that the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation is here when they need us.

Only with your generous support, is PWA a family, a place to feel welcomed and a provider of the practical direct support services that over two thousand individuals living with HIV/AIDS depended on last year. Your donation allows you to provide the kind of brotherly, sisterly, fatherly or motherly support to an individual in need of your care this Holiday Season. **Make a donation. Make a gift online, mail us your cheque or call us and be the comfort that so many people living with HIV/AIDS need.**

If you can make a charitable gift to the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation, you may receive the glad feelings knowing that you've made a difference for people living with HIV/AIDS. You will receive a tax receipt (for donations \$20 and over) and you will receive a thank you card from one of the clients touched by your generosity.

Thank you for your support, helping PWA make a positive difference for people living with HIV/AIDS. Wishing you a warm and bright Holiday Season from the Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers and especially those we serve at the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation.





Pie in the Sky 2009

Pie in the Sky took place this year on October 9th providing vital funds for PWA's food programs: the Food Bank and Food For Life meal delivery program. This year we had 21 bakers from around the city who donated their time and talent for PWA including: Canoe, Daniel et Daniel, Great Cooks, Tundra, A La Carte Kitchens, AGO and La Rocca Creative Cakes who donated the most pies this year!

Pies were sold online but some were made available the day of distribution at the Hudson Bay Centre, First Canadian Place and of course PWA. In the evening pies were distributed at LCBO Bayview and LCBO Summerville. Wine tastings were paired with our gourmet pies to help encourage sales at both LCBO locations.

Our volunteers drove all over the city to make sure our pies were delivered just in time for Thanksgiving!

Through our Pie Peddlers and online sales we sold over 700 gourmet apple and pumpkin pies. Pie in the Sky has raised over \$30,000 for PWA this year.

We would also like to thank our Major Sponsor Whole Foods Market and our Community Sponsors: The Village Pharmacy, Dufflet Pastries, Raymond Helkio Advertising | Design, Give and Go Prepared Foods.

PWA would like to thank Food Share who donates their space for the event, all of our generous bakers, pie peddlers, volunteers and pie purchasers for making a positive difference to PWA's food programs.

A New Vehicle For PWA

A Special Thank You!

As you know, PWA moved offices in December of 2008. Imagine our surprise when we discovered that the garage at our new premises does not have a high enough clearance for our van! Our van is on its last legs and we knew we had to schedule the purchase of a new one but now it became imperative. So we looked to the community for help for this capital campaign and we weren't disappointed.

Because the agency vehicle is heavily relied upon to reach the men, women and children we serve through our Food Programs, our first thought was to approach our partners at the Daily Food Bank through the Sue Cox Community Action Fund. They told us that they would match what we raised to a maximum of \$7,000.

The hunt was on!

We turned to the Rotary Club of Toronto which committed \$5,000 from their emergency fund. Then we approached Steve Callow from Corporate Specialty Services former Mr. Steamworks. Next, we went to our friends at the Imperial Court of Toronto (TICOT) who have chosen PWA's Food Programs as their charity. Now we had enough to ask the Sue Cox Community Action Fund for a match but still we hadn't quite enough to make the purchase. The J. P. Bickell Foundation responded to our plea and made a grant of \$3,000 and Alterna Savings generously contributed \$2,000. Together with all our friends, it happened! We were able to raise \$20,000!

We take delivery of our new vehicle in December!

Our critical food programs promote the health, dignity and independence of all people living with HIV/AIDS in Toronto by increasing access to affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate foods. To date, our Food For Life meal delivery program delivers to 100 people per week and more than 150 people access our food bank monthly.

A special thank you to the Sue Cox Community Action Fund, Rotary Club of Toronto, the J. P. Bickell Foundation, Alterna Savings, Corporate Specialty Services and TICOT.

A missive from Doug, a new client

Every once in awhile at PWA, we take a moment to reflect and consider are we really making a difference?

Doug thinks so:

"I have to say that through this entire process, of becoming HIV positive, starting meds and dealing with insurance forms, applications...financial hardship and all that comes with this...PWA has seriously helped me more than any other agency and more than I could have expected. It's made an otherwise difficult and confusing time a lot easier."

Every day, we see newly diagnosed people who don't know where to turn. Their minds are reeling with questions, fears – at a time when nothing makes sense. Each month we see 40 new clients.

Doug continues. "I've had to use the food bank at times and the people there seem to go out of their way to make it a comfortable experience. Really helps get a person through the rough patches."

Kevin, our Programs Coordinator tells us "with this economy, we're seeing clients we haven't seen in years coming back for help." Last month over 150 people used the food bank.

Doug appreciates the open communication. "The newsletter and emails are an incredible resource. Also attending some of the events listed has given me some really enriching and educational experiences as well as got me out amongst people instead of isolating."

Mikiki, our POZ Prevention Coordinator says that isolation is one of the biggest challenges to maintaining good health. "Being with your community, sharing your concerns is an empowering thing!"

Doug concluded with this: I've attended some conferences that have really inspired me. Again thanks and please share my appreciation.

Welcome new Board Members

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

At PWA's Annual General Meeting on September 24, 2009, 3 new Board Members were ushered in. We would like to welcome Stephen Zeidman as our new Treasurer and Susan Holita and Sachin Aggarwal members at large. They bring a wealth of talent and enthusiasm, a compliment to an already amazing group. A special thank you to outgoing members, Aubrey Sherman and Deborah Randall-Wood. Your contribution is truly appreciated.

At the AGM, awards were presented to Metropolitan Community Church and Helen Ann & Sandford Haskill for Outstanding Community Support. Michael Appt and Stefanie McQuaid received awards for Outstanding Volunteer Support while the awards for Outstanding Corporate Support went to Zahid Soman at The Village Pharmacy and George Pratt from George's Play.

Ian McGuire

It is with the heaviest of heart that we announce the passing of long time food bank volunteer Ian McGuire. Ian was involved in a traffic accident on Friday October 2nd and succumbed to his injuries. Ian was surrounded by his long time partner Barry and his family at the time of his passing.

Ian worked the food bank on the Wednesday morning shift and was a dedicated and valued volunteer for 5 years. A memorial gathering for his friends, co-workers, volunteers was held on November 7th.



Thank you to our Corporate and Foundation donors

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*Donations of \$100 +

People You'd Trust Your Life To

Rick Lees, Interim Director, Programs & Services

As the Interim Director, Programs & Services for the next year and a relative newcomer to the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA), I do not have the benefit of history to guide me in telling the story of PWA and its Programs and Services. For the past sixty days I have more or less been a sponge, soaking up the daily hum of the organization. A hum created by the men and women who drive the energy that gives the inanimate walls of 200 Gerrard Street life. And it's a pretty loud hum! Translation: A lot goes on in a day in the life of PWA Programs and Services. For those who love hard facts, here are a few great success stories from the first six months of our fiscal and program year (April – September);

- **Clients:** PWA opened its arms to over 200 new Clients, providing support programs for people when they are often in the most difficult period of their lives.
- **Financial Assistance:** Despite tough economic times, in September PWA released over \$20,000 through our Financial Assistance Funds and will offer another round of assistance beginning December 1st.
- **Food for Life:** For those clients in urgent need, the Food for Life Program continued to ensure over 200 active clients received prepared meals

to ensure access to critical nutrition. Clients received 37,492 meals over the past six months. This was only made possible through the efforts of 23 volunteers donating over 1,586 hrs.

- **Speakers Bureau:** Our speakers conducted 27 "speaks" with an audience reach of over 600 people. The program was also busy with a "Train the Trainer" program in development. This will allow "seasoned" speakers to be a part of the Speaker Bureau Training Team and obtain a Train the Trainer Certificate.
- **The Essentials Food Bank:** The food bank saw significant growth (approximately 15%-17%) and we are meeting that need with an all time high volunteer team of 30 and we will continue to grow that team as the food bank evolves. With the introduction of "Your Essentials Market" coming soon, we will be offering clients items other than food, such as health and beauty aids and household items.
- **Health Promotion:** The PWA "hum" was certainly heard in Health Promotion, where our Clients accessed therapeutic treatments through student clinics. New clinics were added and the number of weekly sessions increased from 15 to 53!

- **Treatment Resources:** PWA welcomed Jennifer Grochocinski, a Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine, as the Toronto People With AIDS Foundations new Treatment Resource Coordinator. With Jennifer's expert guidance, we have already begun to strengthen our Programs through one on one support counselling and development of Lounge and Learn sessions in collaboration with our Pharmaceutical partners.
- **Service Access:** The Service Access Team was often the first point of contact to PWA and point of access to services both within PWA and the broader community. In addition, the Team distributed 185 bottles of vitamins 3,651 units of Ensure and 83 emergency TTC tokens for medical appointments.

Through the Programs and Services work identified in this newsletter, we are providing people with hope. It may come in the form of Financial Assistance for treatment expenses, or Food and Nutrition; it might be advice and help in navigating the complexities of government support programs by assisting with ODSP or Trillium. Whatever form hope comes in, I have come to realize that for so many PWA clients, the "people" of PWA, (the staff and volunteers creating that hum of energy I have observed), are the people they'd trust their lives to. To me there is no greater recognition than when someone says "you're someone I'd trust my life to". At PWA our clients do that everyday and for that we should all be proud!

Bike Rally 2009!

The 11th Annual Friends For Life Bike Rally took place from July 26th-31st, 2009. The Bike Rally concluded successfully as 230 courageous riders made the challenging 628km journey from Toronto to Montreal! Each of our riders put in countless hours training on their bikes, fundraising and helping us to get out the PWA message. Accompanying our riders were 93 supportive crew members who helped prepare meals, cheer on the riders, provided massages, medical support and transported each participants gear from site to site. Without our invaluable volunteer crew the Bike Rally machine could not run!

Thanks to our riders and crew, we have raised more than \$946,000 for PWA! New for 2009 the Executive Committee introduced a PWA Top Fundraiser day and Gold Jersey to recognize participants who raised more than \$6,000. This year we had 25 riders who achieved this status. Our highest fundraiser raised over \$28,000 this year.

As well this year, a POZ Day was initiated where participants who were HIV positive on the ride were able to wear a red ribbon t-shirt on Day 5. This day was created to challenge the stigma and discrimination often associated with HIV/AIDS.

POZ Day helped to put a face to those living with HIV/AIDS for our riders and crew and served as a reminder about how important each dollar raised is for our clients at PWA.

The Toronto People With AIDS Foundation would like to thank all of our dedicated riders and crew who made this year possible! In particular, we would like to thank our volunteer Steering Committee, lead by Todd Ross and Michael Cress, for their hard work, leadership and endless energy this year.

PWA would also like to thank our generous 2009 sponsors:

Presenting Sponsor: Scotiabank Group **Major Sponsors:** BMS Virology, Tibotec, VIA Rail Canada, Shell and Rubbermaid Canada. **Team Sponsors:** Nestle, Penske, Hardys, Pfizer, Timothy's World Coffee on Church, Telus. **Community Sponsors:** Heinz, The Stonemill Bakehouse Ltd., M&M Meat Shops, KI Modern Japanese and Bar, Pita Break, Mars Canada, Diver/Cite, Arthur's Smoothies, Canada Pure. **Agency Partners:** Scotiabank Group, Tibotec, BMS Virology, Gilead, Merck Frosst, Timothy's World Coffee on Church. **Media Partners:** NOW, Fab, PROUDFM, Gay Guide Toronto.





Community Events

The Imperial Court of Toronto Coronation Ball XXIII

The Imperial Court of Toronto's Coronation XXII celebrated the reign of Tiffany Louise Charles and Hunter James at the Eaton Centre Marriott Hotel on October 10th. PWA and the 519 were their chosen charities. Amidst the glitz and glam, the Empress & Emperor presented a cheque for \$55,000!

Congratulations to Tiffany Louise Charles & Hunter James on their successful reign!

Spearhead Supports PWA

This year, the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation was fortunate to be Spearheads' charity of choice! Spearhead is a gay men's social club and is Canada's longest continuously running gay organization. Founded in 1970, it has raised thousands of dollars for charity over the years as well as "Spearheading" some of Toronto's favourite events.

Spearheads contributions to the surrounding community, both straight and gay, are noteworthy. Since its founding in 1970, Spearhead has collected thousands of dollars worth of toys and distributed them to underprivileged children with their Toys-For-Tots campaign. In addition, Spearheads' charity has raised thousands of dollars for local AIDS charities and this year presented a cheque for over \$5,000 for PWA's Food Programs!



Jeffrey and Pam taking a break at Home and Style

Home + Style 2009

It was bargains galore at the Home + Style Studio Tour and Sale!

Once again PWA was at the Better Living Center as part of the Fall Home Show from October 1st-4th.

Our booth featured furniture donors Vogel and Caramia Furniture. This year we also had an extensive Market Place with an array of donated designer items at great discounted prices.

Indigo was also part of Home + Style and a portion of all their sales benefited PWA. The show also included an Ask an Expert series in our booth where Janette Ewen, from City TV's City Line, and Sharon Grech, Spokesperson for Benjamin Moore Canada, answered patrons' design questions.

Home + Style raised over \$12,000! PWA would like to thank Jeffrey Stolberg and our AMAZING volunteers for helping to put on a great show once again this year!

The 3rd Annual 103.9 PROUDFM Joy Drive

And it's bigger and better than ever!

This years Joy Drive will be taking place from November 13th to Dec 21st. Once again, the community is coming together to support HIV+ people during the Holiday Season. Businesses from Danforth to Church St., Avenue Rd to Eglinton will be collecting non perishable food donations and food gift cards to help PWA fill the food bank shelves!

As we all know HIV is a disease that affects every community so this year we've tried to spread out the drop off outlets to other areas of Toronto. We hope that we've made it as easy as possible for people to give where it makes a difference this holiday season.

This year we have added 5 new Bikram Yoga locations and the 519 Community Centre. Our good friends at Whole Foods Market are back as well as Woody's, Pegasus and many more! So check out our locations and our wish list and give generously!

Please visit www.proudfm.com for more information.

Partipating Businesses	Location
Wine Rack	77 Wellesley St. E.
fab	511 Church St, Suite 200
Pegasus	578 Church St.
Xtra!	489 Church St.
Woody's	475 Church St.
Timothy's World Coffee on Church	555 Church St.
Whole Foods Market	87 Avenue Rd.
Carrot Common groceries	348 Danforth Ave.
Bikram Yoga Centers	1059 Eglinton Ave West 2281 Dundas St West 208 Bloor St W 1911 Queen St E 43 Colborne St. 2nd floor
The 519 Community Centre	519 Church Street



Why host a fundraiser for PWA over the holidays?

It's easy and rewarding to host a fundraiser for the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation over the holidays. You are limited only by the limits of your creativity. For example, instead of host or hostess gifts encourage your holiday guests to bring food gift certificates for our Joy Drive or cheques made out to PWA which you can mail in after your dinner party, afternoon luncheon or cocktail evening. Your guests will each be sent a thank you card from the agency for their generous contribution. What better way to celebrate this festive season?

If you have any questions or would like to tell us about your holiday fundraising idea, please call Kristen at 416-506-1400 ext. 239.

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

Wishing you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season from all of us here at PWA

PWA HOLIDAY GIVING CERTIFICATE

Enclosed is my gift in the amount of: \$25 \$50 \$100 Other: _____

Name _____

Address _____ Postal Code _____

email _____ Telephone _____

I have enclosed my cheque made payable to the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation.

I prefer to charge a donation to my credit card:

Credit Card (please circle one): VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS

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