

PWA Annual Report

2007–2008

toronto
PEOPLE WITH AIDS
foundation



making a positive difference



A Message From Our Board

Brian Scott

Reflecting on the work of PWA over the past year, I can't help but feel mixed emotion. The organization continues to be an integral part of the Toronto landscape, providing practical direct support services to anyone living with HIV/AIDS. We've gained an excellent reputation for the work that we do and have touched the lives of thousands of people. The regrettable part is, our services are still needed and we continue to gain new clients every year.

The work of PWA is vitally important and I am constantly impressed by the dedication of staff and volunteers as they work tirelessly to offer the best possible level of service. They demonstrate a commitment that has been a part of PWA since the early days. Over the years, our focus has shifted

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from needing to search out funding to meet the very basic needs of our clients to finding better, more comprehensive programs and services for a widening client demographic. The work is never done; there is always more to learn and always more to improve upon.

Part of the mandate of PWA's Board of Directors is to keep an eye to the future, anticipating change and making incremental steps to ensure an environment in which the organization can flourish. We accomplish this in many ways and often so gradual it can go unnoticed. These changes can be as simple as the review and updating of the organization's bylaws, to setting aside resources for a future project or signing a lease on a building that will soon become our new home.

Our decisions are guided by our legacy, through the stories of all those who built PWA, by the ideas from staff and volunteers for improvements to programs and services and by our clients who had a voice in shaping our recent strategic plan. The three tenants of the strategic plan are at the centre of the Board's decision making - that PWA holds true to its function of providing practical direct support services, ensuring the organization is a point of access for anyone needing our services and building an environment that is an affirming connection place.

The Board will continue to ensure that PWA is in a position to meet the challenges of the future. I am confident that as we settle into our new facility over the coming months, PWA will become an even stronger connection place and an accessible point of access for all our communities.



Executive Director's Message

Murray Jose

Living with HIV/AIDS often results in a connection to community that is critical. The support network that some find through community, impacts overall health and well-being in a profound manner. One of the highlights of 2007/2008 for the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA) was our efforts around making a positive difference in our community. The critical work of providing accessible, direct, practical support services with skilled and committed volunteers and staff involved increased interpretation services, enhanced training around harm reduction and cultural competency with trans communities and piloting a service access model to improve point of access care. In response to our efforts implementing the strategic plan, our organizational capacity, our values around community involvement and the timing of several opportunities, PWA was able to support critical new community programming. These initiatives included:

POZ Prevention Project

- PWA was identified to assist in the initiatives of the Ontario Gay Men's HIV Prevention Strategy by developing two POZ Prevention documents: a Sexual Health Pocket Guide for HIV+ Gay Men and a Sexual Health Manual for Service Providers working with HIV+ Gay Men.

Toronto Community Planning Initiative (TCPI)

- Acting as trustee agency and providing Steering Committee leadership for the implementation of this innovative initiative was an exciting opportunity for PWA.

Committee for Accessible AIDS Treatment (CAAT)

- Supporting the growth of CAAT by acting as trustee for permanent core funding was a contribution that PWA was proud to make. PWA is also providing staff time to participate in the CAAT membership as they grow and evolve at this important stage in their important work.

Ontario Working Group on Criminal Law & HIV Exposure (CLHE)

- PWA acted as trustee for funds related to the work of this new group and provided administrative support to the functioning of the group.

Latinos Positivos

- Supporting the formation, programming and establishment of committee structure/process of this motivated and effective group was a powerful example of effectively responding to community needs.

Community partnerships can often be the most effective way to provide services that are fully accessible to the largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS. We are proud of these program partnerships in our community of HIV/AIDS services and resources. When community, or lack of community, is so important to a PHA's well-being, these kinds of partnerships provide great opportunity to demonstrate making a positive difference in our community.

Our Programs

Food Bank –The food bank continued to be a critical source of supplemental food and nutrition. The number of clients accessing the program remained constant with, on average, approximately 645 clients accessing every six months; a number comparable to last year's usage at approximately 600.

The program continued to feel the effects of the dissolution of one of its food donation sources: Food for All Street Kids. Community food drives, including one led by PWA, did increase inventory, but for brief periods. For more long-term stability, PWA started augmenting inventory by purchasing items. The items purchased increased the number and nutritional value of distributed food offerings.

Food for Life – Food for Life is a partnership program co-led by PWA and Mid-Toronto Community Services and a steering committee of said agencies, ACT and Casey House, distributed frozen meals to an average of 110 clients each week. The Food for Life Coordinator organized 2 trips to Wonderland for 57 clients as part of the program's efforts to respond to social isolation. The Food for Life volunteer base, made up of 25 volunteers, continued to stabilize.

A growing number of clients, approximately 15%, disclosed active substance use that impacted their ability to access services. The Food for Life Coordinator made special arrangements that ensured clients received food and actively connected with the Coordinator about their living situation and needs.

INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMS – Benefits and Assistance program – Staff continued to support clients requiring assistance with accessing government support programs and other community services. The program served approximately 1000 clients every six months. Further reorganization of staff responsibilities moved the majority of the administrative duties of the Financial Assistance program to the Finance and Administrative department. The reorganization significantly increased the amount of time staff spent on direct client service.



HOLIDAY BAGS – PACKED FOR PICK UP!

Among the issues clients presented this past fiscal year, there were several that were either new, had a large/disproportionate impact on a smaller amount of clients, or impacted a larger amount of clients:

- Co-infection or exposure of TB among PHAs from countries where HIV is endemic;
- Disclosure of substance use, and needs related to living in unsafe housing;
- Increase of acute health crises among homeless clients who presented substance use and/or mental health issues;
- Domestic violence occurring against gay men and women from countries where HIV is endemic;

- Criminal charges or the threat of charges of nondisclosure of HIV status with sexual partners occurring to both gay men, and men and women from countries where HIV is endemic.

B&A staff participated in new community development initiatives to increase service accessibility. Participation included:

- Trans Access Committee and support of the forum “My Issues, Their Boundaries”;
- Latinos Positivos and support of the development of programming for the needs of Latino PHAs;
- Senior Pride Network and support of the needs of HIV positive seniors;
- PHA Support Worker Network, specifically, support of the network’s creation to provide consistent and effective service across AIDS service organizations;
- HIV/AIDS and PWA service training for all Toronto-based ODSP client service workers by B&A and Speakers Bureau staff.

PWA continued to host liaison workers from community agencies that regularly serve PWA clients, including: Fife House’s Homeless Outreach Worker, OW and ODSP client support workers. The hosting of liaison workers provided a very effective service access model and helped PWA fulfill one of its current strategic directions; to be a point of access for clients.

Financial Assistance program – In 2007-08, PWA distributed \$310,932 in financial assistance to 1,035 clients.

For the first time, PWA began offering a Positive Seniors financial assistance fund for clients 65 and older in response to the decrease in income support and medical benefits offered by the Federal assistance program for seniors. Of the approximate 40 PWA clients who are 65 or older 13 accessed the fund this year.

HEALTH PROMOTION: PWA continued to offer a full range of health promotion programs including complimentary therapies and social programs to provide affordable options to help clients manage HIV and medication side effects. Program highlights include:

- Community Naturopathic Clinic for PHAs – A partnership program with the AIDS Committee of Toronto, Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, Sherbourne Health Centre and PWA, this program provided 2,176 client appointments in 2007-08;
- Complimentary Therapies program - Over the past year, Massage, Reiki and Shiatsu volunteers provided approximately 335 complementary therapy sessions to our clients;
- Haircuts - During the past year, our volunteers provided clients with 539 haircuts;
- Holiday Dinner and Show - Approximately 250 clients attended this year’s Holiday Dinner and Show. The program continued to help decrease the sense of social isolation during the Holiday season particularly for our long-term survivors;
- Holiday Hampers Program - 950 holiday hampers were distributed this past year;
- Massage Therapy – In partnership with Kikkawa College, 5 student massage clinics provided 77 clients with a weekly massage for one month. Targeted outreach was conducted to increase the number of women participants, which resulted in 15 women accessing the service;
- Pet Program – In addition to clients accessing this program for veterinary services, many clients accessed pet supplies through the food bank and continue to attribute significant importance to this program;
- Summer Picnic – PWA organized its second annual ASO summer picnic again in partner-

Our Programs

ship with ACT, ACAS, ASAAP, Casey House and a new partner, McEwan House. Despite the inclement weather, approximately 80 clients attended. The summer picnic has developed into a successful community initiative that brings together ASOs and the clients they serve;

- Theatre Access – During this past year, this program distributed a total of 2,533 tickets to our clients. Canada's Wonderland continued its generous support of PWA by donating 1200 tickets. PWA developed a new partnership with Kids Up Front, a not-for-profit clearinghouse for donated tickets. This partnership has allowed PWA to offer services for our clients with children;
- Yoga – Volunteer instructors continued to offer 3 yoga classes for beginner, intermediate and advanced participants. On average, clients attended yoga classes approximately 60 times per month for a total of 764 times during 2007-08.

Speakers Bureau – During the past year, volunteers of the Speakers Bureau presented their personal stories and HIV prevention messages to 241 speaking engagements reaching 11,468 audience members, most of whom were high school students.

Demand to join the Speakers Bureau continued to exceed capacity. This fall a new volunteer training series was held for clients on the waiting list. Within months of conducting this training, the waiting list had an additional 16 new people added to it. Existing volunteers were further supported by the following initiatives:

- Mandatory attendance of the Ontario AIDS Network Leadership 1 training;
- Creation by volunteers of a standardized HIV 101 presentation.

The Speakers Coordinator helped to strengthen the relationship between the program and Toronto Public Health by:

- Involving volunteers in TPH's HIV/AIDS 101 training;
- Receiving an invitation for volunteers to attend a monthly staff meeting for TPH's sexual health educators.

Finally, this past year, the Speakers Bureau began exploring the need for bathhouse outreach conducted by openly HIV positive volunteers. Much interest was expressed by two local bathhouses, Toronto Public Health and the AIDS Bureau, which asked PWA to join planning on a bathhouse counselling initiative.

TREATMENT PROGRAMS

Treatment Access – In 2007-08, the Treatment Access Coordinator assisted approximately 260 clients every six months with their medication access needs. Clients received assistance with accessing short-term, provisional medication supplies while applying for long-term drug and medical coverage. The compassionate drug programs of some pharmaceutical companies continued to be the primary source of short-term medication supplies. The Trillium Drug program continued to be the primary source of long-term drug coverage.

The Treatment Access Coordinator began more formalized community development work that increased the accessibility of the program. The community development work included:

- Participation on the Trillium Drug Program's Community Advisory Committee, which helped simplify the Trillium Drug program application;
- Participation in the advisory committees of the pharmaceutical companies, Abbott and Tibotec, to advocate for medication access and quality of life needs;
- Expansion of the program catchment area to include all of Ontario due to the lack of treatment access programs in the province. This past year, the program assisted PHAs in Brampton, Guelph, Hamilton, Kitchener, London, Mississauga and Whitby;
- Coordination of a promotional mail-out to 80 Toronto based social services that serve immigrant, non-status and refugee PHAs to increase awareness of the program.

Treatment Resources – A permanent Treatment Resources Coordinator was hired who significantly grew and strengthened the program. Program highlights include:

- Development of a new program called the "Treatment Topic of the Month", a holistic treatment guide on medications/treatment, nutrition and complementary therapies. Topics covered included drug resistance, kidney health, HPV & cervical dysplasia, peripheral neuropathy and hyperlipidemia;
- 2 workshop series tailored to specific audiences: long-term survivors and women;
- Community development for clients who identify as women. The Coordinator worked with agencies that have existing relationships with women's communities and attended services offered by these agencies, including a session of ACT's
- Community Kitchen and two sessions of Voices newly diagnosed support group;
- Development of a treatment drop-in during food bank hours.

PWA's harm reduction program, formerly referred to as the needle exchange program, experienced significant growth during this past year as a result of the emerging trend of substance use disclosure among clients and the initiative of staff, particularly the new Treatment Resources Coordinator. Program highlights include:

- Staff training by the City of Toronto's The Works and Queen West Community Health Centre;
- Program consultations with Queen West Community Health Centre and Street Health on harm reduction best practices;
- Participation by both Treatment Coordinators in the harm reduction drop-in offered by Prisoners HIV/AIDS Support Action Network;
- Development, by a PWA volunteer, of a peer led monthly information session about addiction issues and recovery models for PHAs;
- Invitation by Voices of Positive Women to develop a partnership harm reduction drop-in pilot project.



TROY BROOKS AT THE COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVE



Our Events

Friends for Life Bike Rally

For six days, from July 29th – August 3rd, 227 riders and 90 crew members made the journey from Toronto to Montreal with the 9th annual Friends For Life Bike Rally. In the process, they raised \$825,000.

The Friends For Life Bike Rally is PWA's largest fundraiser, growing exponentially over nine years from its humble beginnings of two dozen riders and crew into the massive operation we see today and is more than simply a fundraiser. A nuanced observer would call it a community event — or at the very least a community on wheels. Remarkably, compared to events of similar size, it is primarily run by a large group of dedicated and passionate volunteers, this year's Rally being under the leadership of co-chairs Walter Dimini and Stefanie McQuaid, as well as a steering committee of 16 members.

The Bike Rally wouldn't be so successful without the generous support of its sponsors. In 2007, the event's sponsors include: Tibotec, BMS Virology / Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada, GlaxoSmith-Kline in partnership with Shire BioChem, Rubbermaid, VIA Rail Canada, Cycle Therapy. Media partners: Proud FM 103.9, NOW Magazine, fab magazine, GayGuideToronto.com. Team and community sponsors: Abbott Virology, Roche, VIA Rail Canada, Rubbermaid, Roadtrek Motorhomes, Chartered Accountants of Ontario, Timothy's on Church, MPP George Smitherman.

Wherever the rally's colourful group visited, it made an impact. CTV and City TV broadcast stories of the departure ceremony, Breakfast Television visited camp in Port Hope and regional media across Ontario and Quebec picked up the story and spread word of PWA's important services.

The Bike Rally evolves with each new season and 2007 was no different. This year, participants gathered for the first time in a candlelight ceremony to reflect on the greater purpose of the event and mentally prepare for the final day and arrival in Montreal. As well, the co-chairs forged stronger bonds with the PWA Board of Directors. President, Brian Scott rode this year giving the board even greater insight into the workings of the Bike Rally. A close relationship between the PWA Board and the Bike Rally is crucial to preserving awareness of the agency in participants, sponsors and donors. Likewise, it helps Board members, staff and clients alike understand the role the Bike Rally plays in supporting PWA's work.

These changes reflect the Bike Rally leadership's efforts to keep the event interesting, fresh and evolving for participants.

Our Events

Pie in the Sky

This fall fundraising event proved you can have your pie and eat it too.

Just by purchasing one delicious \$35 pie, people made it possible for PWA to provide a meal to ten homebound people or one family food hamper.

Pie in the Sky supports the vital food programs of PWA. Every 15 minutes of every day, PWA provides a healthy meal to a homebound man, woman or child whose long term survival depends on proper nutrition. We provide 30,000 meals a year and the number of children depending on our food bank has tripled since January, 2008.

This exciting event and the urgent cause attracted chefs from such celebrated restaurants as Mildred Pierce, Canoe and Scaramouche to bake pies. Clients and volunteers also rolled up their

sleeves to roll out dough and bake pies at Nella Cucina. Pies are the desserts par excellence for Thanksgiving, when people give thanks for their good fortune. With Pie in the Sky, people also give hope.



PIES FOR DISTRIBUTION AT PWA

An army of volunteer pie peddlers sold the pies in the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving. In the words of John Fraser from National Bank Financial: "With just one e-mail I sold over 50 pies to colleagues in my office tower. They just loved it – delicious dessert, an important cause, and a great story to share around the dinner table. It's a win-win situation."

Honourary Chair Donna Dooher of famed Mildred Pierce restaurant again led Pie in the Sky to success. Thanks are also due to committee members David Homer, Sandra Katsou, Merla McMenomy, Greg Mitchell, Charles Pavia, Pippa Shaddick and Norm Wong, and also to Boehringer Ingelheim Ltd., Gay Lea, Morgan Scott, First Canadian Place, Restoration Hardware and Zelda's.

20th Anniversary Finale



THE ACTORS IN "MEN LIKE TREES"

There's nothing like a party that brings old friends and new friends together in the spirit of celebration and generosity. That's what the 20th Anniversary Finale was. And much more.

The Finale took place on January 20th in the spectacular new National Ballet School — just a few blocks away from PWA's offices.

Going into the theatre, the exhilarating beat of the Samba Squad both reflected and heightened the celebratory mood of the capacity 292 person crowd.

Music gave way to the moving drama of six gay men coping with HIV/AIDS in "Men Like Trees," a play first performed at the 2006 World AIDS Conference. Their stories — brought to life by talented Toronto actors — challenged the myths and stereotypes often associated with AIDS.

Moving words ran through the entire evening. The joint message of the Board President and Executive Director summed it up: "It is bitter sweet to know that there is still such a critical need for our services after 20 years...we hope that tonight will be part honouring, part remembering and a coming together of our clients and supporters."

That message came to life in the poignant and humorous reflections by long-time PWA friend Denny Young. "Twenty years! In some ways, it seems like a life-time — or perhaps many life-times. I'm sure you, like me, are using this occasion to remember and wonder what life would have been like if only..."

Instead of bringing out handkerchiefs, Denny's words literally brought out the cheque books. "Everyone here owes a great debt of thanks to PWA. We're grateful because of what it has done for us, for those we love, for those we've lost...Right now I'm making a donation. Please join me."

Sites then shifted from the past and present to the future, as Director of Programs and Services Suzanne Paddock unveiled the Legacy Project. Guests then made their way to the after party, where the excitement about PWA's work and future underscored the conversations as old friends reconnected and new friends met.

It wasn't only a finale after all. It was a beginning.

Kyle's Story

PWA client & volunteer

What has the Food Bank meant in my life? Well, at this point, it has been a life saver in more ways than one. My name is Kyle Vose, and I am both a client and volunteer at the Food Bank. I started volunteering there because I know what it's like not to have enough money to buy the food and to survive on ODSP (Ontario Disability Support Plan). I know that the cupboards and fridge can get really bare near the end of the month and sometimes they remain empty all month when unexpected situation hap-



KYLE VOSE

pen. Not only have I received food from the Food Bank but also, as a volunteer, gained so many friends. And I don't mean acquaintances; I mean true, caring and understanding friends. I have learned a lot about HIV from all of them as we talk and exchange stories and life experiences.

I have also had many doors opened to me which have dramatically changed my life for the better, and now I live a more fulfilled life that I never could have imagined to be possible. I have had the unique privilege of attending the Leadership Level I and Leadership Level II sessions led by the Ontario AIDS Network. I learned more about myself and others and realized that I was not the only one who is suffering and coping with this disease (HIV). I also became, or rather was guided to the awareness that I am in fact a leader. I learned how to accept myself by reaching inside and letting my inner light shine through. I've also had the privilege of attending the Hungry City conference hosted by the Toronto Daily Food Bank. I learned that instead of being part of a band-aid solution to the hunger issues, that I also needed to fight to raise awareness, help initiate change and thus became an activist in this cause. Hungry City is calling on the provincial government to address the issues that cause nation-wide poverty. I have given interviews to newspapers to this effect.

The Food Bank is a very important element to the PWA and its clients. The amount of people who depend on its services would agree that without it, life would be that much harder to deal with. The Food Bank is not a solution; but it sure helps feed the hungry. It takes a lot of people and a lot of their time in order to make this service available to clients. It has opened doors for me in ways I'd never imagined; it has kept me from starving on many occasions, and the friends I have made from my volunteer experience have enriched my life to no end.

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Financials

Toronto PWA Foundation Statement of Operations Year ended March 31, 2008

	2008	2007
Revenue		
Grants	\$ 967,183	\$ 815,242
Fundraising and donations - bike rally	829,282	717,493
Fundraising and donations - general	394,268	315,203
Financial assistance contributions	72,490	139,161
Interest	24,835	20,958
Administrative fees, honoraria and other	11,106	12,779
	<u>2,299,164</u>	<u>2,020,836</u>
Expenses		
Client services		
Food for Life meal delivery program	247,163	238,958
Benefits and assistance income support	204,939	174,437
Long-term care health promotion	126,783	121,262
Volunteer services	90,833	84,947
Education - Speakers bureau	66,722	68,810
Treatment access	58,007	52,474
Food programs	53,084	51,509
Treatment resources	43,010	37,657
General	118,620	94,285
	<u>1,009,161</u>	<u>924,339</u>
Financial assistance		
Supplementary therapies	110,514	85,120
Medical assistance	79,082	59,097
Medical disability	63,457	98,988
Trillium co-payment	40,689	48,940
Family holiday gift certificates	8,240	7,115
Positive Children fund	6,400	6,400
Positive Seniors fund	2,600	-
Program materials and supplies	-	118
	<u>310,982</u>	<u>305,778</u>
General		
Fundraising - bike rally	378,503	337,191
Administration	183,262	216,457
Fundraising and development	163,562	134,766
Communications	102,392	86,346
Committee for Accessible AIDS Treatments	101,500	-
Strategic planning and program evaluation	50,000	-
POZ prevention resource material	15,000	-
OHTN workshop and symposium fund	4,519	-
	<u>998,738</u>	<u>774,760</u>
	<u>2,318,881</u>	<u>2,004,877</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$ (19,717)	\$ 15,959

Our 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.

Board of Directors

Brian Scott, President
Alan Stewart, Vice President
Annie Thomas, Treasurer
Aubrey Sherman, Secretary

Members at Large:
Michelle Borthwick, Mina Hunt,
Helen Daley
Andrew Baldwin, Scott Morrison

Thank you to everyone involved with PWA Community Events!

Home + Style, The Imperial Court of Toronto (TICOT), the Tightly Whitey Car Wash, Mr. Leatherman Toronto, Pride & Remembrance, FFN5, and all the inspiring individuals who held wonderful events and did so much to support people living with AIDS in our community.



THE LEATHER BALL



The Toronto People With AIDS Foundation

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Charitable Registration #: 13111 3151 RR0001