

A-WAY EXPRESSIONS

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CUSTOMERS, MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF A-WAY EXPRESS

A-WAY EXPRESS COURIER • 2168 Danforth Ave. Toronto M4C 1K3 • Tel: 416-424-2266 • Fax: 416-424-4528 • www.awaycourier.ca • WINTER 2012
EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES SINCE 1987

STAMPING OUT STIGMA... ONE STEP AT A TIME.

No Place like Home by Michael Moniz

On the surface when you walk by 805A Wellington Street West the property appears to be just another Toronto warehouse. But that would be judging a book by its cover. On the inside is an award winning structure by Levitt Goodman Architects, one of Toronto's top firms and an innovative program from the Homes First Society, one of A-Way's most loyal customers.

To get to know Strachan House and Street City you must initially be introduced to Homes First. As the first to provide non-profit housing to the homeless in Toronto, Homes First was established in 1981. The program uses a housing first approach to provide someone who is homeless with a stable environment to live in which is a very important first step to a significant recovery. Today Homes First houses 550 men, women and families at 16 buildings in 9 Toronto neighbourhoods.

One of those 16 buildings is Strachan House. One of those 16 buildings is Strachan House. Modelled on the successful Street City model, debuted by Homes First in 1989, the warehouse was converted to a village complete with streets, a variety store, an internally run bank and most importantly housing units. Each floor of this marvel encloses four "houses" connected along corridors which are called "main streets". Each house contains 4 to 7 private bedrooms, a shared kitchen along with dining and wash facilities. Each unit has its own front door and window onto the 'street'... a unique alternative to traditional shelters which can be overcrowded and unsafe. Strachan House is home to seventy men and women who would otherwise be in the shelter system. Being the first of its kind, the original Street City became a model for projects all over Canada and the United States. In 1989 Strachan House received the Governor General's award but its biggest reward is in the hearts of those who appreciate having a real home.



Stellar chocolate cake at our 25th anniversary BBQ this summer!

A-Way's Strategic Plan

In 2012, as we celebrated 25 years of success as a courier business, A-Way has been hard at work developing a Strategic Plan to guide us into the next 25 years. With the generous support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation we were able to carry out a wide ranging stakeholder consultation and to engage all members of our A-Way community in determining our future priorities. The stakeholder consultation provided an opportunity for every one of the more than 60 consumer/survivors employed at A-Way to share what is important to them. As well, we consulted with current and former board members, consumer/survivor businesses and other experts, including our funder the Toronto Central LHIN.

Informed by the wide range of stakeholder perspectives, we engaged board members and staff from all levels of the organization in an in depth study of the key issues. The result is a renewed Mission and 7 Strategic Objectives, which will be implemented over the next 5 years. (see back page for Strategic Objectives)

A key outcome of the process is affirmation that our core work is to provide meaningful employment as central to poverty reduction, health and well-being for our staff. As we begin the process of implementation of the strategic plan, we are exploring ways to expand the reach of our work, to enhance the health and well-being of more consumer survivors, to

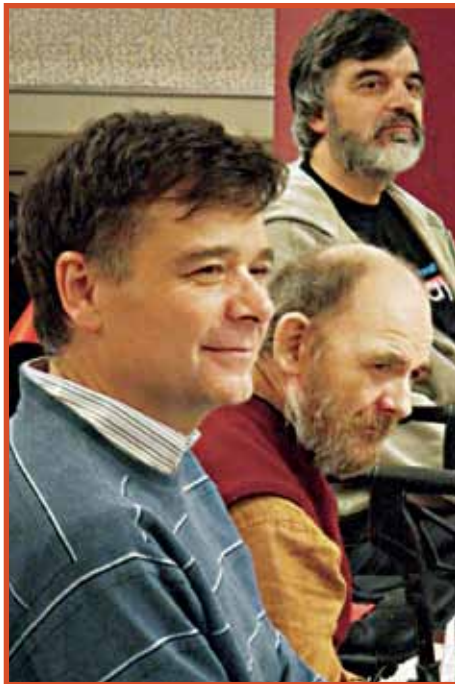
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WATCH FOR A-WAY'S NEW BROCHURE IN THE
NEW YEAR WITH INCREASED SERVICE TO
CUSTOMERS THROUGHOUT TORONTO!

AS THE YEAR COMES TO A CLOSE ON OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS WE INVITE YOU IN TO SHARE SOME OF WHAT WE DID TO CELEBRATE:



Edith Sinclair of our Board of Directors at the podium



Graeme Cushing, Richard Smith and George Karrandjas all received a 25 year plaque (imagine that!) and a special gift for their years of amazing dedication to A-Way.



Emma Ardal runs **Laughing Like Crazy**, a stand-up comedy troupe of survivors making fun out of mental illness. A-Way hired them for two Anniversary events, and we'll hire them again as soon as we can find an excuse. LLC performs at clubs around town ... and they sell out! Look for them at www.mooddisorders.ca



Jim Murton and Dave Souhrada, (back: Neil McQuaid, Tom and Steph Lafratta, Jim Priestman)



Myrna Schacherl is honoured for ten years at A-Way



Lee Jenkins enjoying the show



Hazel Gardner with her partner Conrad at the AGM in October



Raging Spoon Staff do such a great job!

AND THEN THERE WAS THE CRUISE.....



The 25th Anniversary Boat Cruise
by Doug Quinn

In September A-Way treated its employees and guests to a boat cruise around the Toronto harbour islands to celebrate our 25th year in business. We saw a massive rainbow on the horizon at dusk and an old fashioned sailing ship passed by. There was a great meal catered by Raging Spoon Catering, a stand-up comedy performance by Laughing Like Crazy, some live music by Mose Scarlett and Tony Quarrington, a number of speeches, then DJ and dancing on the upper deck. Guests included a number of customers who had been with A-Way from its earliest days. We had a great time!

(A-Way's Strategic Plan continued from page 1)

broaden the support that we provide and to increase employment options for consumer survivors.

We thank our customers for your support over the years and we look forward to continuing to serve your needs in the future.

Paul Dowling, Interim Executive Director

Strategic Objectives

1. Support Consumer/Survivors to achieve and sustain employment that assists in their recovery
2. Actively support improved health for A-Way employees and other Consumer/Survivors
3. Enhance options for Consumer/Survivors in the broader work force
4. Develop and maintain an ongoing organizational business plan for A-Way to increase business revenues annually
5. Develop and maintain fair, legal and transparent compensation structures and employment practices
6. Develop a clearly defined, sustainable, effective management structure that supports achievement of A-Way's strategic objectives
7. Foster a well-functioning, sustainable Board of Directors that reflects the diversity of A-Way and the broader Toronto community

untangle

tuesday feb 7 2012 12:45 am.

by Paul M.Rennie

untangle

unbend

untie these rigid knots

need to feel some slack

to feel a looseness to absorb the night

let the dreams seep up from my mind

let them seep up from my soul

let them ready me for the voyage

i want to drift into slumber

a quiet disconnection from the day

a gentle passageway into the interior

into the shadows of my thoughts

into the whispers of my feelings

into the primitive being beneath my skin

i want to go onward, forward from this moment

into a tomorrow, into a future unknown

i want to let go.

Keys to a Wonderful
Company

by Michael Moniz

AutoShare
RentCarsbytheHour.com

You are cutting through a parking lot when you can't help notice a Toyota Prius parked in front of you. Maybe it's a Fiat 500 convertible that has caught your eye. As you admire you notice the car door reads AutoShare. At the base of where the car is stationed you see what isn't just an ad, but a colourful work of art from one of Toronto's local artists. All part of AutoShare's "Keys to Wonderful" campaign. Once you explore what is AutoShare you will discover a car-sharing network born from the love for our great city of Toronto and the environment.

HISTORY

AutoShare was launched on October 8, 1998 with a group of 16 members sharing 3 cars in Riverdale, the Annex and the St. Lawrence neighbourhood. How the company has grown since then! AutoShare vehicles can be found just about everywhere throughout the city. It's almost rare to pass by a parking lot without encountering one of over 135 AutoShare vehicle locations which is shared by over 12,000 people.

HOW AUTOSHARE WORKS

Being a part of AutoShare is easy. To do so all you will need is to be 21 years old, have a full class "G" license, a clean driving record and to quote the website "a desire to save money". Once you are a member you will have access to an efficient fleet of rental cars and cargo vans at over 135 locations in Toronto. A car can be reserved for an hour, or for days at a time. You can reserve a car online, or call any time, day or night. You can even reserve with your Smart Phone using a mobile data plan. A Fiat 500 Convertible can be waiting for you to drive with the top down, cool breeze in your hair on a beautiful summer day. Hope that thought warms your winter. All you have to do is pick up the vehicle you reserved at the location where you reserved it. Your security access will get you into the car, van or truck and you are ready to go. Once you are done with the vehicle you can bring it back to the same place you picked it up from.

AUTOSHARE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

With the greenest rental fleet in the GTA and the best member-to-car ratio of any fleet, AutoShare is a champion among environmentally friendly companies. As part of their promise AutoShare features a family of hybrids and alternative fuel cars as part of its fleet.

AUTOSHARE KEYS TO WONDERFUL CAMPAIGN

AutoShare took use of the fact that they are one of the largest owners of downtown street-visible parking signs by giving 250 canvasses to five favourite Toronto street artists. The campaign has filled Toronto streets with beautiful artwork at over 400 signs in downtown parking lots. The artists used various media which included spray paint, silk screens, decoupage and acrylic paints. To find out more about the campaign you can visit the website at <http://autosshare.com/wonderful/>.

AUTOSHARE AND A-WAY

Since 1998 A-Way Express Courier has been proud to have AutoShare as a customer. Our couriers are always greeted with kindness and professionalism every time they drop in the AutoShare Head Office at 26 Soho. A-Way admires AutoShare so much that in 2011 A-Way presented AutoShare with its Messenger of the Year Award. This award recognizes a company who uses us frequently and provides the A-Way staff with the utmost courtesy. If you haven't discovered AutoShare yet you can find out more about this great company at autosshare.com or by calling 416 340-7888. Tell them A-Way sent you ;-)