

OLAP  
Understands  
lawyers



OLAP  
reaches out  
to lawyers

[www.olap.ca](http://www.olap.ca)

**LAWYERS HELPING LAWYERS SINCE 1978**

The **Ontario Lawyers' Assistance Program** is a registered charity and provides assistance at no cost to members of the legal profession in Ontario. **OLAP** assists lawyers, judges, law students and/or their immediate families with issues including addictions, mental health, career challenges, health and well being.

# Network

OLAP's Online Volunteer Newsletter  
September 2010, Twenty-fifth  
Edition

Inside...

## To All of Our Volunteers:

This newsletter provides a summary of the volunteer workshop 2010. Thank you to all who participated. The energy was positive and the information sharing helpful. It is truly a team effort and you, as volunteers, contribute a great deal. Participants included OLAP volunteers, board members, staff, presenters and guests from out of province. Susan Dumont who has recently joined the ASSIST program in Alberta and Bill Kane Director of the New Jersey LAP were special guests.

Your comments and suggestions are very helpful and we need lots of ideas for next year. For those who were unable to attend, we hope that you will join us next year.

We are happy that we now have a have an additional method to encourage volunteers to share experiences and get ideas. We have set up a Volunteer Message Board that will allow and encourage just that. Peer volunteers and staff are the only ones who have access to this. To insure confidentiality, it is password protected so you will need to set up your password by accessing the website at <http://www.olap.ca/forum/index.php>. Follow the instructions to join, and register your password. To have your password activated, email to Jill Keaney at [j.keaney@olap.ca](mailto:j.keaney@olap.ca) and tell her your password.

Our goal is to have every lawyer in Ontario know that OLAP exists. One way to achieve this is to publish articles as often as we can. You can see what the most recent articles are about in this newsletter and can access them with a click of the mouse. If you have an idea for an article or would like to contribute an article for publication please let us know.

We welcome your comments. Help keep OLAP vibrant by your involvement!

*John Starzynski*

Volunteer Executive Director

*Leota Embleton*

Program Manager

Upcoming Events ~

Past Events

Ongoing Events

Recent Articles  
/Publications



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## VOLUNTEER MESSAGE BOARD



Our Volunteers have expressed a wish to be able to communicate with each other through the web. In an effort to promote this sense of community amongst our Volunteers, OLAP has developed a Message Board for the use of interested Volunteers. <http://www.olap.ca/forum/index.php>

In order to ensure this site is only used by our OLAP Volunteers, it is password protected. We hope you will use this and encourage you to access the website and follow the instructions to join and register a password of your choosing. To have this password activated, notify Jill Keaney, including your password at [j.keaney@olap.ca](mailto:j.keaney@olap.ca).

## PAST EVENTS

**FOURTH ANNUAL WORKSHOP for VOLUNTEERS** ~ was held at Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre in Pickering on July 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. This event was well-attended with 28 participants.



Janet Minor

**Janet Minor** brought greetings from the Board to help open The Fourth Annual Workshop for Volunteers. Janet is a board member with OLAP and is the representative of LSUC. She is a benchner and has worked consistently to help the benchers understand OLAP functions. As a board member, Janet has been involved with strategic planning and has assisted with the budgeting. Janet also supports OLAP by participating in the annual Volunteer Workshop.

This support is greatly appreciated.



Susan Dumont

OLAP was pleased to have in attendance **Susan Dumont, B.A. Hons. (Socio/Psych), LL.B.** Susan is the ASSIST Peer Support Program Manager from the Alberta LAP. Susan attended to participate and learn from OLAP and our experiences with volunteers.

*"Thank you for your kindness, generosity of spirit, wisdom and experience. You have all inspired me and ASSIST's peer support initiative."*

Susan Dumont

## VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP CONTINUED...



Coulson Mills

**Coulson Mills** has been involved with OLAP as a peer volunteer and co-facilitator of The Lawyers' Support Group. He was recognized as Volunteer of the Year in 2008. Coulson led the group with his Opening Exercise, a fun and educational demonstration of the characteristics of right-brained and left-brained people. This helped people get involved and gave all something to think about when communicating with others

**Marcel Strigberger, LL.B.**, is a personal injury and family law lawyer in Thornhill. Marc is a professional speaker and humourist. His presentation, *Firefighters: diffusing & resolving troubles before they get started*, demonstrated how one can and should, through the use of humour, avoid trouble and diffuse problems. He had participants smiling with his approach.



Marcel Strigberger

**Patrick I. Cassidy, Q.C., B. Comm., LL.B, M.T.S., A.C.C.I., F.C.C.I** is a partner in the law firm of Cassidy, Nearing, Berryman. Pat is Chair of the Lawyers' Assistance Program in Nova Scotia and Vice-Chair of the Legal Profession Assistance Conference of the Canadian Bar Association. He is a trained Peer Counsellor and specializes in the area of financial difficulties and restructuring. Pat spoke on *What LAPs Mean to the Legal Profession* and the consensus indicated "*this was very useful*" to the volunteers in attendance. In addition, Pat and John Starzynski performed a skit which compared the perspectives and experiences of a fictional '*Jack and Jill*' as they progress along their career paths in law.



Bill Kane

Pat Cassidy

**William John Kane**, a member of the New Jersey Bar and graduate of Seton Hall Law School, is Director of the New Jersey Lawyers' Assistance Program. Bill was among the nation's first Certified Employee Assistance Professionals and is a Certified Social Worker. He implemented the first employee assistance programs for national corporations and has clinical experience within several chemical dependency treatment modalities. Bill spoke on *Intervention from the Inside Out* which was considered by participants as "*very lively, engaging and fun*" with "*great information*".

## VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP CONTINUED...

**Christine Delaney, B.S.W.**, is an associate of The Coaching Clinic. The Coaching Clinic helps individuals and organizations develop 'working intelligence' towards greater productivity, better leadership and peace of mind.



Christine Delaney

Judy Grout

Christine and **Judy Grout, B.A., M.S.W.** and Assistant Manager of Counselling Services at OLAP, enacted a demonstration of *Effective Listening* which many attendees rated as "most relevant" to their volunteer experience.

**Laurie Tamblin, B.A., Dip. Addictions, ASAT** and Special Programs Counsellor at Bellwood Health Services presented, *Coming Out of the Shadow: Understanding Sexual Addiction*. This presentation was considered to be "very useful and informative" and "most interesting" according to comments offered in the volunteer feedback materials.



John Starzynski

Laurie Tamblin



Will O'Hara

**Will O'Hara** delighted us all with his playing of the lute. He entertained both after dinner on Friday, and in the very tranquil early morning Saturday, at the labyrinth.

Throughout the two-day workshop, a number of volunteers shared their experiences and were very well-received by the group.

**In your own words, comments from Volunteer participants:** The "camaraderie, learning from each other" along with "the honesty and dedication of all the front-line workers and volunteers" was appreciated and voiced by many.

## VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP CONTINUED...

**Susan McCallum**, Women's Law Association representative on the OLAP Board of Directors, gave us "A Volunteer's Reflection" during which she outlined her history as a Volunteer with OLAP and explained how the Board of Directors operates to present and promote the program to members of the legal profession.



[A Volunteer's Reflections.pdf](#)

The **2009 Volunteer of the Year Award** went to long-time volunteer, **John Parkinson**.



Leota Embleton      John Parkinson      John Starzynski

### **A Few Words from John...**

*I received assistance through OBAP (a forerunner of OLAP) in 1987 and, four months later, I joined OBAP as a volunteer.*

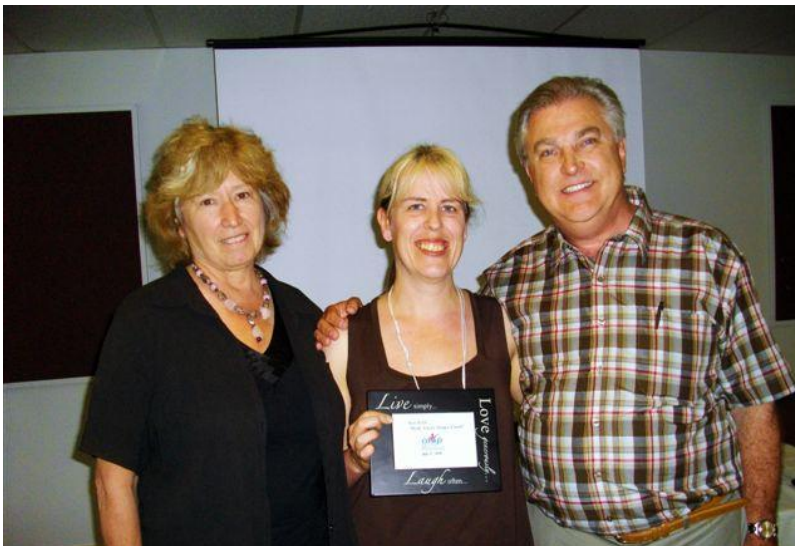
*In 1989, I became Chairman of the Board of OBAP, a position I held until 1991.*

*As a volunteer, I have done a number of 12 Step calls with members of the profession who have sought help for alcohol-drug related problems. Over the years, I have assisted some members in dealing with outstanding discipline issues.*

*I am a member of the OLAP Board and remain a strong supporter of OLAP.*

John Parkinson has been a volunteer with OLAP and its predecessor OBAP for many years. He has provided assistance in many ways. His steady presence has offered comfort and direction to lawyers struggling with addiction. He never hesitates to respond to a call for support. Currently, as well as being a Board member, John is helping with the OLAP 12 Step Group. We are grateful for his help and appreciate his commitment. It is people like John who make our byline work –"lawyers helping lawyers".

**"Thank You for Being a Friend"** recognition went to **Rose Keefe**, who volunteers to maintain OLAP's web site, and to **Bozena Balut**, who is our volunteer photographer.



Leota Embleton      Rose Keefe      JohnStarzynski



Bozena Balut

## PAST EVENTS cont'd...

### WOMEN'S WORK AND WELLNESS LUNCHEON ~ OTTAWA, September 16, 2010

OLAP and WLAO have been sponsoring and organizing Women's Work and Wellness Luncheon discussions in Toronto for some time. This was our first attempt, in response to requests, for a similar venue in **Ottawa**. **Karen Liberman**, was our speaker. Karen has presented many times at OLAP events and we were very pleased to be able to bring her to our Ottawa participants. Karen spoke on the topic of depression: "*Nobody's Dirty Laundry: Shining the Light on Mental Illness*". Fifteen people attended and it was a pleasure to have law students join in. This event was made possible by the assistance of Chuck and Dvora Rotenberg, of the law firm **Doris Law Office**, who provided space and organized the lunch. We are grateful to Chuck and Dvora, who are volunteers, for providing enthusiastic support for OLAP.

## ONGOING EVENTS

**The Lawyers' Support Group**, which was initiated on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008, continues to meet on the first and third Wednesday of every month from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Ontario Bar Association offices in a private boardroom. On average there are 12-15 lawyers in attendance at each session. An evaluation survey was distributed to the group on July 21<sup>st</sup> and July 28<sup>th</sup> of this year. Judy Grout attended as an observer and prepared the questionnaire. OLAP received 11 completed surveys that were collated and used to create this summary. Judy provided a report to the group.

### **Summary of Participant Evaluation Survey/August 2010:**

All of the participants were pleased with the location and time of the group, after regular business hours. Some even expressed an interest in extending the length of time spent in the sessions. The vast majority believed that the group provided a confidential environment that was respectful of all, and safe to open up and talk about one's concerns. The same vast majority identified that they felt not only supported in the group, but that they were able to offer support to other members most of the time. This opportunity of being able to support another, at a time when you are experiencing personal and work-related stress, is a gift that support groups, like this one, can offer its members. In keeping with the above, the majority of respondents felt they could celebrate member's individual accomplishments most of the time. The ability to acknowledge other group member's successes can provide a great source of hope for everyone. Once again, the majority of the members felt safe to address areas of conflict most of the time. They, also, felt that the group demonstrated honesty amongst each other the majority of the time. At the other end of the spectrum, the majority of the group believed that most of the time they could express the humorous side of concerns. The comfort of expressing, with honesty, both the painful and the lighter side of issues is a sign of strength in support groups and elsewhere for that matter. Support groups, like this one for lawyers, provide a safe haven for members to come and discover that they are not alone with their concerns. Often, the combination of hearing others' experiences and the opportunity to discuss your own situation in the presence of those who can appreciate the struggle, is a very reassuring thing.

**12 Step Group for Lawyers** meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m. at Bellwood Health Services, 1020 Mc Nicoll Avenue, Toronto. Lawyers, at any stage of recovery, are welcome. After a short summer break, the 12 Step Group at Bellwood is now available. This group is valuable for lawyers as a safe and confidential place to share experiences. Please, let your colleagues know and attend whenever you can. You will be glad that you did.

## *Newest Member of the OLAP Team*

We are pleased to welcome Judy Grout to our team. Judy's role will be providing direct counselling to those requiring long term assistance. Her skills with complex issues complement our program. Judy will provide support to Case Managers as they work out plans to assist callers. She will, also, be active with our peer volunteer program, selecting and training new volunteers.

### **JUDY GROUT, M.S.W.**

As the newest staff member at OLAP, I wanted to let you know a little bit about myself. I obtained a Masters in Social Work in 1983 at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University. I began my career working in a children's mental health clinic providing counselling to parents and consultation to the Children's Aid Society. Following this I moved into the area of Employee Assistance Programs (EAP). I spent time providing direct counselling to clients from a number of different companies and organizations. This included individual, marital and family counselling. I also designed and delivered wellness seminars and employee information sessions. I then moved into the role of Account Manager with one of the large EAP firms based in Toronto. I was responsible for establishing and maintaining the EAP through ongoing liaison with the Human Resource team and/or Medical Team at many varied organizations across the GTA and nation-wide. I am also a mother of three terrific young people. My daughter, Eryn, is 23 years and working in the advertising field. My son, Stephen, is 21 years and he starts his Masters in Political Science this fall. My youngest, Carey, is 13 going on 20 yrs! She is a year away from starting high school. After Carey was born I made a conscious decision to find a job that would allow me to be close to home and available to my budding teen-agers as well as my baby morphing into a toddler. My next position was as the Executive Director of Metro Mothers Network, (MumNet). For the next nine years I led this not-for-profit registered charity and saw first-hand the enormous strength, intelligence and resiliency of engaged volunteers. In fact, I could not have done my job without this valued team. I am very excited to begin my involvement with the Peer Volunteer Program here at OLAP this fall. I look forward to meeting many of you and reconnecting with those of you I was able to meet at the workshop this past July. Here's to positive matches and success stories to come!



Judy Grout, M.S.W.  
Assistant Manager Counselling Services.

# RECENT ARTICLES/RESOURCES

**A Soft Place to Fall**, by Jill Fenaughty, *published in the HLA Journal, Fall 2009*

OLAP reaches out to lawyers through its many initiatives which include the Lawyers' Group (meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month) and through the Women's Work and Wellness Luncheon series (holding lunches on topics of interest to women four times yearly), by its 12 Step Group for Lawyers and by having booths at legal conventions and by being a voice at many legal conferences. We also promote balance and wellness at the law school level introducing our association to law students. We are sensitive to all lawyers, students and judges from all cultures and all sexual orientations. We are devoted to helping lawyers lead a balanced life and to helping lawyers stay connected. A call to OLAP is a soft place to temporarily fall.



[A Soft Place to Fall.pdf](#)

**Feeling down? Start with a mission statement**, by John Starzynski, *Lawyers Weekly, August 6, 2010*

It didn't happen all at once. It sort of snuck up on me because of my belief and those of the legal profession that I could not have a problem because I solved them. Depression and recovery have become a way of life for me. So it might help you to hear what and how this illness started.



[Mission.pdf](#)

## WORDS TO THINK ON...

*Hold on to what is good,  
even if it's a handful of earth.*

*Hold on to what you believe,  
even if it's a tree that stands by itself.*



*Hold on to what you must do,  
even if it's a long way from here.*

*Hold on to your life,  
even if it's easier to let go.*

*Hold on to my hand,  
even if I've gone away from you.*

*Anonymous*