

District 11

During the past year we have continued to see the changes in our members which experience strength and hope produce when we gather together.

One obvious change has been a shift in our demographic toward more parents of alcoholics and their specific needs. It has been wonderful to see how these individuals keep coming back to enrich their lives with the steps, slogans, literature and support of other members. At the present time we have four couples who attend together in search of serenity and enjoy the benefit of the additional support of their spouse.

We have also tried to incorporate a speakers meeting once a month and this has had the added benefit of linking us with members of the Hamilton groups. I believe that we now have a better understanding of the fellowship that extends beyond our group. It is encouraging to hear a members story in depth. Having been asked to speak myself, from my experience, there are even more benefits for the speaker.

Heather
Acting DR

District 12

District 12 is located in the heart of the Niagara Region we have a total of 10 groups (2 Alateen). Unfortunately at this time we have 3 groups with no representation at District. This does not slow us down as we are a mighty group.

On an ongoing basis we continue to distribute information to several locations such as women's shelters, libraries and emergency services. Members are great about 'forgetting literature' all over the place. Groups are sending in their I Can statements and are supporting their groups as they are able.

Our district struggles with the Alateens as I think a lot of others are as well. We have a strong-minded group of SAMS though who are persevering and are there if the teens ever show up! We are working on outreach for the Alateens through Health Fairs, Mental Health Days at the schools and announcements at group meetings.

Each year our district hosts a Spring Thaw day and all day event to bring members closer together and give all a chance to learn something new about the program.

In 2012 we went with a literature theme. Members were divided into groups by coloured name tags (no one knew prior to the announcement what the colours were about so that we could encourage people to reach out and meet new friends) that was well received. Members were introduced to new to them literature and were encouraged to share amongst their smaller group and report to the group as a whole at the end of the morning. This was well received with a great potluck lunch and speakers in the afternoon.

This year Spring Thaw was held the 20th of April this year. We had 35 attending. Included in the day was a great workshop on service with each person present being given a slip of paper after the workshop with a "service job" to complete. What an amazing day! We had folks that would never have participated 1. Hosting the workshops, 2. Cleaning the kitchen after the pot luck lunch and 3. Putting stuff away at the end of the day. Everyone chipped in and a lot of newer members were introduced to service. The afternoon was filled with great speakers and everyone walked away with something new they learned or something to think about from the speakers.

Our large Public Outreach Project was done last November in conjunction with District 13 and both districts worked tirelessly to outreach to our legal community. We sent out numerous invitations, made up literature packages and hosted an afternoon event that unfortunately, was not attended well. We had consulted a legal professional for advise (she is an active Al-Anon member) and followed some suggestions but at the end of it we were a little disappointed although, those that did attend were given some great information and lots of one on one time to speak with the long time members and SAMS that were there. We split the leftover literature and distributed this to the legal offices as we could. There is an active group of professionals in our region that is seeking to set up a system for youth within the judicial system so we are still outreaching there.

This year's projects will include information booths being set up at the local libraries.

Several members of our district work with Public Outreach along with District 13 to continue to attend Health Fairs and community mental health events and we are getting a lot of requests for literature and further information so we continue to lend a hand in these events.

As you can tell we are busy as bees with meetings going well. Newcomers coming to meetings and staying. Public Outreach events. Groups continue to celebrate anniversaries with great speaker meetings and although some struggle financially and to get folks to step up for service we keep on working on ourselves One Day at a Time.

Thank you for your time.

Sharon R

District 14

Greetings from District 14! My name is Doreen B. and I am the ADR for the District. I am happy to present this report to you.

Amalgamation of District 14 and 15

Since January 2012, District 15 has been without a DR, which is problematic, as you can imagine. Since District 14 and 15 are two smaller districts, are geographic neighbours and share all coordinator positions, a decision was made at the District levels to investigate the merger of the two (2) districts. All groups in District 15 have signed indicating their wish to merge with District 14, and the DR for District 14 will now be approaching OS to determine the next steps. We believe this merger will result in one stronger district, the saving of some money and ultimately enable us to have a stronger program in Hamilton-Burlington.

Alateen

We continue to struggle with attendance and with the SAMs to hold Alateen meetings in our District. We have had several SAMs not renew their certification this year. On a positive note, we have a new Alateen Coordinator, and she is hopeful that she will be able to resurrect our Alateen program in the near future.

Al-anon Day

Our recent Al-anon Day was a huge success. The committee this year took a few chances with a new location and a new format, and by all accounts, it was very well received. Approximately 100 people attended, which is the largest in recent years. From several workshops held during

the day, information will be sent back to the district groups, providing some great ideas for meetings and in particular, some ideas on how to keep those newcomers coming back!

Co-operation with A.A.

We are very fortunate in our area to have a great relationship with A.A. We continue to be invited to participate at their local functions (conferences, Professional Day and AA picnic to name a few). These invitations are most often at no cost to Al-anon, and we whole heartedly appreciate the opportunity to get our message to the families of the alcoholic.

Website

We have recognized how very critical our website is to the future of Al-anon in our area, and we are taking steps to ensure that we can rotate the current leadership of that area. We are tracking the number of unique visitors (first time to the site) per month, and it very often is around 200 or more. We recognize that these days, most new visitors may have visited the internet before attending a meeting, and we want to ensure that we have a strong presence there!

Telephone Service

We are also very proud of the telephone service we have been able to set up. Previously, we paid an answering service to take calls, and then they were faxed daily to a volunteer who responded as appropriate. The cost for this service was around \$350 per month, which included the answering service and the phone number and line. Now, we have a “virtual” phone, meaning there is no actual phone anywhere, just a number and a recorded message. Messages are picked up daily by a rotating group of volunteers who respond as appropriate. Cost of this new program is about \$35 per month!

Thank you for the opportunity to attend this conference and present this report on just a few of the things happening in District 14 (and 15!)

In service and recovery,
Doreen B.
District 14 ADR

District 16

16 Groups are in Mississauga / Oakville
Meetings are available everyday of the week in our district
2 morning meetings Monday or Friday
with 14 Evening meetings.

Anniversaries from 2 years to 40 years

Most groups hold Gratitude meetings at least Annually
Many groups struggle to fill service positions

We offer 2 Alateen Meetings Monday or Wednesday evening
Have 7 Sams and 2 Sams from other districts involved in our district.

We also have 2 Adult Children AFG meetings available on Monday or Wednesday evenings.

1 Polish Speaking Al-Anon Meeting is available

Annual Day of Recovery

Has it's own organizing committee from our district
This year last Saturday in April
over 90 people attended
Unique format
All Day Event with Pot luck Lunch
Have draw prizes for Literature and Trillium Registration
Have a morning chairperson and an afternoon chairperson
All 12 steps covered
1 step al-anon next step AA
Last step speaker from both

½ Day SAM Workshop

attended by about 80 people including 12 alateens
Had our AAPP and Alateen Co-ordinator attend and participate

Had 3 speakers all with alateen backgrounds share
Also held an Alateen meeting that could be observed

January Alateen Event

All Day Event
50 people attended
Speakers, Dance
Food, water, Pop provided

District Meetings

10 district meetings a year can have 10-20 people attend
discuss groups, area events reports and communication from Ontario South and World Service.

Use district email blind copy list to communicate between meetings

Public Information attended Mississauga Health Fair Day in March and working on Transit
Poster package.

Asked to sit in on group inventory evaluation for one of my groups to offer input

Sunday Night Open Speaker Meeting

Rotate hosting through groups in the area including Burlington
Handled by Sunday night open committee
Committee tells me they enjoy co-operation with Toronto Saint Ansgar Saturday Open
committee.
Many weeks 30 or more in attendance

John P

District 17

2012/2013 has been busy and challenging time.

District 17 was pleased to be a part of the THOUGHT FORCE on TRILLIUM. Our Group Representatives at first were unclear as to exactly what to take back to their groups – but as we pressed on with the help from the task force, from our members, our sponsors and service sponsors we felt that we were able to provide a comprehensive answer to our question. We received much feedback from our members in order to reach the group conscience which we passed on to the committee. Thanks to the committee for inviting us to participate.

We have encountered trying times in regards to meeting places. Several of our meetings have had to move due to a variety of reasons....- Availability – Parking – Financial - Luckily we have solved several of these situations – but we are currently looking to relocate 2 more meetings.

District 17 covers Milton, Acton, Woodbridge, Brampton and Georgetown – and that in itself is challenging. We move our district meetings to the various venues as often as we can to include them in our meetings. The fellowship after the meetings with the local meeting members is invaluable.

We are currently holding a raffle for two nights stay at Trillium in support of that Al-Anon conference.

District 17 is also currently planning an Alateen information day – hopefully in conjunction with District 16 to encompass a panel and an Alateen meeting held by Alateens so the parents/prospective SAMs and Al-Anon members have a chance to see Alateen in action. (I wish I could take credit for this idea but I am just trying to pass on what I saw and heard in a similar meeting in District 16 last year – they did a great job!!) We are currently trying to find a venue jointly acceptable.

Our Public Outreach person Donna L. has done wonders with getting our meetings published in various papers in the area. Also she has distributed many How Al-Anon Works soft cover books to Libraries, outreach offices and round-ups. We are all working hard to get information out to the public. We have also made inexpensive boards – which I will bring to AWSC for use in schools, and other public information venues.

Yours in service,
Wendy L

District 18

My tenure as DR began on a sad note. In February, 2011 Nancy S. Passed away after multiple fights with cancer. She was a passionate long-time member of Al-Anon. During the last weeks of the life, several members held meetings at her home.

I was elected to the role of District Rep in March, 2011.

Public Outreach

Janice W was the Public Outreach coordinator and continues to be an inspiration to the people in her Aurora group as well as acting as a Service Sponsor with people working on Public Outreach throughout the district.

Public Outreach has been quite active. Packages of material are provided regularly to professionals such as doctors and lawyers as well as religious and social workers. Members from various groups have worked together tirelessly to represent Al-Anon at York Region Catholic Schools when Drug Awareness Health Fairs are held. They have worked with the Children's Aid Society at Seneca College.

District 18 hosted a Public Outreach workshop to discuss ways to get our message out and provide suggestions and training for interested members.

GTAIS / Area Participation

In 2011, the chair of the Trillium committee was Jo Ann M from our Keswick group in District 18.

We have held annual Al-Anon days with rotating sponsor groups. Rotation of service is encouraged at all levels. District 18 has worked closely with AA Bradford and participates regularly in the Bradford Round-up. Groups have begun to rotate this service activity, including hosting the literature table

Aurora Group has hosted the St Ansgar Saturday open meeting for several years now and has made this an annual social event..

On a less satisfying note, the only Alateen in the district has finally closed.

General

Newcomers are being welcomed in new and novel ways. We have discussed this topic a couple of times at District meetings to share ideas. Larger groups are able to have a separate "introductory meeting" while smaller groups have developed custom handout material from CAL pamphlets, and, of course, CAL newcomers packages.

We have tried to use our District meetings to discuss relevant topics. Some include the Area Thought force discussions topics -(non-CAL literature, dominant groups etc.). We have also shared ideas on Crosstalk, welcoming newcomers, encouraging service positions, beginning with chairing the weekly meeting. More recently we have discussed financial items - does each group have a bank account, signing officers.

We have discussed Tradition 7 - raising awareness of our responsibility to the larger organization - OSA & WSO. Some groups are developing budgets in order to set financial goals.

District 18 is a larger, mainly rural district with 12 member groups. Attendance ranges from a low of only a couple of members in two groups to over 20 in others.

A group in Alliston tried but failed to gain traction in the community.

I did have the pleasure of attending a 90th birthday celebration in Tottenham for one of the long-time members there.

In general attendance seems to have grown a bit.

DR - Dave Y

District 19

Our District has a total of 14 groups There are 13 AFG Groups and One Service meeting the Saturday Night Open which is geared to Newcomers and members who are struggling with their Recovery on Saturday Night. Alanon Groups have been very supportive of this Service Meeting Each one takes a turn to run the meeting every week. If by chance there is a Group cannot make

it the meeting then becomes an Open Meeting with a lot of Great sharing. There is a very dedicated volunteer Cheryl S who does a great job of co-ordinating each Saturday night.

The District runs from Central Toronto all the way up to Sutton Ontario. We are proud to say that we have the oldest Al-anon group in Canada. This year the North Toronto Group is celebrating their 69th anniversary.

Most Groups have seen membership increases. Attendance is quite strong in our District. The smallest Groups generally have 8 to 10 people. Some of our groups such as Choices which meets Saturday Morning in Richmond Hill gets 30 to 40 members every Saturday Morning on a consistent basis.

We also have a group that meets Monday night in the Salvation Army building in Toronto that runs a meeting that allows member feedback during the meeting. This meeting seems to work very well and gets 10 to 15 members every Monday.

The 12 Step Broadway Group is more of a drop in meeting. It starts at 10:30 am and runs for a couple of hours until everyone has finished sharing.

To stress the importance of service, Second Chance meets Sunday night and asks a member to share how they used a slogan. This has helped members to use slogans more and increase service levels.

Due to our large numbers attending the meetings, we ask each group to pay \$5 a month for 12 months a year. This gives us a lot of financial flexibility and when we have surplus funds, we donate it to the causes that the GR's decide by Group Conscience.

The Bayview Group seemed to be struggling. They decided to move the meeting to a Church where there is an AA meeting that takes place at the same time. Quite a few members from the AA groups have become Al-anon members. In fact, there have been a lot of newcomers who have joined our meetings and decided to become members. We have seen quite a few newcomers from the AA fellowship.

We have District meetings 7 times a year and the meetings are very well attended by the GR's. Most of the GR's are new to the position and are just beginning to become comfortable with the position. We have had several discussions on the role and responsibility of a GR. These discussions have been very helpful to the GR's. We also take time at each District meeting to bring up any issues the GR's are having.

We have one or two groups that do not have a GR and are unable or unwilling to attend meetings or provide the 7th tradition to the District. We decided that no group will be penalized for not sending a GR to the District Meeting or paying dues. This is in keeping with the Al-anon guidelines.

We did have an issue with one or two Al-anon members trying to solicit members for another fellowship. This was handled by the District and our Delegate also became involved.

We had a very strong Alateen Group in Aurora which was forced to close. This is because several members moved over to Al-anon and the Meeting fell apart. We currently do not have any Alateen Groups in District 19. However, I just signed the papers this week for a first SAM in the District for several years. We will be discussing doing some District Public Outreach in the near future. One of our long-time members was asked that it be added as an Agenda Item.

We are very fortunate to have the GTAIS Step Study every month in our District The Step Study has been averaging 50 members

The biggest issue we have in our District is filling Service positions and in the District Meetings we have had discussions on the importance of Service. There have been several groups are in the process of doing a Group Inventory We are asking all Groups in the District to consider doing a Group Inventory over the next year or two

Our Groups seem very supportive of the LDC most Groups maintain a Library and have books for sale This is very helpful in newcomers purchasing literature and helps them in their recovery

We also expect quite a few GR's to attend Assembly in Windsor

All in all I am very proud of our District

Paul W
DR District 19

District 20

My name is Frank.G and I am the DR for District 20 and it remains a vibrant one. We have 9 active groups . I have visited all of them recently and came away very impressed, for the most part, with the level of service commitment from the groups. The groups in District 20 are Parkdale (my home group for which I am also GR),Wednesday morning, TGIF, LAMP , Friday morning, Etobicoke group, Thursday Roncesvalles, and Markland Woods. Recently, due to prolonged lack of attendance, the Sunshine Italian group has been delisted by WSO and declared defunct. It had been in steady decline for years according to former DRs and they supported us in disbanding the group. Another group in trouble is the Markland Woods group who have no service positions filled and barely makes rent every month. I have reached out to them from the district to offer assistance and they said they would contact me if the need is great. Otherwise, the groups are doing well and I'm proud to be the DR for District 20. Another exciting happening is the start up on Sept.9 th of a new Alateen group in District 20! As well, a number of our groups are getting a pulse of their groups by doing a group inventory, including Parkdale, my home group.

Overall , our groups aren't just surviving they are thriving!!

Frank.G

District 21

Hi, my name is Patrick and I'm proud to be here with my Alternate DR Carrie. Our district meets monthly with the summertime off. We meet at the Bloor Street United Church which is on the Bloor (east west) subway line right near the University of Toronto. Our district covers downtown Toronto and extends to Bathurst and St. Clair in the northwest, Donlands and O'Connor in the northeast, Victoria Park and Lake Ontario in the southeast and Bathurst and Lake Ontario in the southwest. I believe we are home to more hospitals, universities, doctors, and lawyers than any other Al-anon

district in Ontario. On the flip side we also have more homeless, more half-way houses, more visitors and more traffic than any other part of Ontario (maybe Canada). To me, that just means that we have more opportunity to bring the spiritual message of HOPE thru Al-anon.

Our district has 12 groups which meet weekly (11 Al-anon and 1 Alateen). When we say that there are about 7 persons that are adversely affected by each alcoholic, I checked the AA website and there are almost 7 times as many AA weekly meetings in the same geographic area – which again says that we really should be able to grow a whole lot more. In the past year we have lost 1 group and added 1 group. The group we lost was a daytime meeting group (noon Tuesday) and the one we added was an early Saturday morning. 4 of our groups meet during the day, 7 in the evening and 1 (the Alateen group) meets at the 5:00pm happy hour. Many of our groups have very different focusses; literature at one to slogans at another, from mothers (with free babysitting) to LGTB at yet another.

Many of our 12 groups are facing some serious issues:

☒ Aging members burning out from over volunteering. 3 of our groups have no GRs, 2 have new GRs, and another GR is stepping down in June. Without GRs at the helm, other group service positions and business meetings tend to flounder resulting in lack of consistency and participation at ALL levels (group, district and area).

☒ Our core downtown groups often serve as anonymous meetings or as ‘not home group’ meetings so this also might contribute to not volunteering for service positions.

☒ Without experienced group members, keeping young newcomers is a big challenge to many of our groups.

District Focus

☒ Strengthen our groups by learning from the strengths of other groups – encouraging and speaking up what works, and visiting other groups to see what they do.

☒ Rallying behind a project that we can all agree on – in our case it is to increase our Alateen numbers and to do this we are focussing on a Public Outreach thrust to our universities and local schools.

☒ Asking everyone to step up their participation if Al-anon is working for them. As a retiree, I go to and participate (business meetings, chairing, anniversary, Saturday night open, and temporary sponsor) at all my group meetings by attending every other meeting (every group once every 2 weeks). What a gift to me!

Patrick K
DR

Ottawa AIS

Public outreach projects in 2012-13:

- Our “**Adopt-a-Library**” initiative increased the Ottawa Public Library’s collection of Al-Anon literature to 18 CAL titles, including some of the most recent publications.
- In 2012-13 we participated in **Service Fairs** held by employers and other agencies. These events also give us the opportunity to connect with other groups and agencies to spread the word. We invested in a more professional looking display board for service fairs.

- In 2012 we launched **Adopt-a-School** project, encouraging local groups to identify approach schools at all levels (elementary, secondary and post-secondary) to offer literature for the library or counselling office. Our District purchased and donated a copy of “How AI-anon works” for every English language high school in the Ottawa public and catholic boards. We are exploring hosting an Alateen meeting in a local school, or bringing “A Meeting on Wheels” to local schools (Guideline G22).
- We expanded our **Adopt-A-School** project to reach out to post-secondary institutions. We attended two service fairs at the University of Ottawa so far in 2013. We were contacted (through our website) by a local community college and met with managers from student services. We provided both post-secondary institutions with pamphlets, meeting lists and books.
- **Bus Ads:** Over the December/January holiday, we repeated the purchase of bus ads for a period of one month, using the same Crying House theme as last year. These ads often remain longer (if the space is not needed). As it turned out, our ads stayed up the whole year!

Finances

AIS income comes primarily from the 7th Tradition from the weekly open speaker meeting. We once again had a significant increase in donations from groups and district. We considered setting aside a "prudent reserve" for AIS, but concluded that as District was responsible for AIS, we did not need to maintain a separate reserve.

Main Ongoing Activities

- ⤴ AIS coordinates a weekly “public information” speaker meeting with the assistance of the groups in Ottawa. It is the only weekly speaker meeting in the city and is open to all. Averages of 20-30 people attend weekly, often newcomers, and many regular members as well. It takes place on Sunday mornings, in the same community centre and at the same time as an open AA meeting and an Alateen meeting. AIS developed an alternate format for discussion when no group has offered to host, or when there is no speaker. District coordinates which groups will host. This year groups were asked to commit to four meetings a year which has made it easier to fill the schedule in advance. We also began selling a limited selection of CAL at the meeting. Previously books were for display only.
- ⤴ AIS Ottawa membership has declined slightly, with average attendance of about eight members. We welcome new members throughout the year, some of whom have taken on service positions. It is suggested that the Alternate Group Rep attend AIS on behalf of their group.
- ⤴ We meet monthly for one hour, except in July & August.
- ⤴ AIS generally reports to District monthly, either verbally or with copies of minutes and other documents. AGRs report back to their home groups.;
- ⤴ Our AIS service positions are: Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Telephone Answering Service coordinator, Literature Coordinator, public information meeting McNabb

Coordinator, Website co-ordinator and an AA liaison. Our secretary recently stepped down, and individual members have been assisting in that service position.

- ⤴ In addition, one member responds to emails and enquiries sent via the website. These are automatically forwarded to the ottawaais@yahoo.ca account. We received about 100 of e-mail requests from individuals, professionals and organizations during the past year.
- ⤴ In order to help those members who will follow us in the various service positions, we have written descriptions for each of the service positions in AIS, which are available on our local website.
- ⤴ We have a healthy stock of literature and respond to requests that come from outside organizations, as well as provide literature for our weekly open speaker meeting and for local events (eg. Fall Conference, Alkathon, Service Fairs). We printed and distributed an 8 x 12 "Crying House" poster in the same design as our bus ads.
- ⤴ We have more than a dozen volunteers who answer the local phone line (Telephone Answering Service). Their main task is to give out information on meetings and to direct enquiries for literature, speakers or other topics to the proper person. There is ongoing recruitment for TAS volunteers, and back-up volunteers to cover for vacations and other absences of regular volunteers. We use a call redirecting service from Bell Canada which directs calls to the volunteer's home or cell number.
- ⤴ Once again, AIS was able to send a representative to AWSC to give its report at the Area level.
- ⤴ A small group continues work on redesigning the local website al-anon-ottawa.ca.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve and have taken to heart the mission of making *"...honest, humble, straightforward information about Al-Anon available to those who still suffer."* (Paths to Recovery, p. 230) We have also been guided by the AFG Board of Trustee's VISION STATEMENT: *"All people affected by someone else's drinking will find help and recovery in every community."*

Thank you!

Marthanne R., Chair, AIS- Ottawa