

Open Lines

Ontario South Assembly Newsletter

December 2011 Vol. 34, No. 4

**Al-Anon Declaration
Let it Begin With Me**

**When anyone anywhere reaches out for help.
Let the hand of Al-anon and Alateen always be there
And let it begin with me.**

A few words from a member attending assembly for the very first time:

Hmm...To be a fly on the wall. Yes that is what I was this assembly, a fly on the wall. Watching all the goings on around me. What an interesting way to see your first Assembly. Think of 400 to 500 Al-Anon's in one room. Then feel the love, friendship and camaraderie. Watch as guidelines are passed, budgets are explained reports are given and people sit on the edge of their seat waiting for their chance to share their passion. This is what I always thought service was about. There is no fear here, only acceptance and learning, as I watched the passionate torch of service passed from one trusted servant to another with grace and gratitude. This is the place to be! If you have the opportunity to attend an assembly before you HAVE to attend an assembly, do it. Sit back relax and watch the fellowship at work!

Nikki S.

Statement of Purpose

Open Lines is published quarterly by Ontario South Assembly. This newsletter presents service related news and information to Al-Anon groups in Ontario South to help keep them informed. Personal sharings of recovery should be sent to the Forum.

Send submissions to: Open Lines Coordinator address found on page 7.

Deadline

Issue 4 November 15, 2011

Distribution

December 1, 2011 (or as soon as possible there after)

Issue 1 January 15, 2012

February 1, 2012 (or as soon as possible there after)

Late distribution occurs occasionally for unavoidable reasons.

All ADDRESS CHANGES please send to Group Records Coordinator address on the last page.

© Ontario South Assembly, 2011
Printed in Canada

Ontario South Assembly Website : al-anon.alateen.on.ca please check frequently for updates.

A Note From the Executive

It has been brought to the attention of your Area 86 Executive that the response, "It was an executive decision" appears dismissive. Please be assured this is not the intention of your Area Executive members.

"What is the difference between an executive decision and a decision that needs to be taken to a vote by members?"

The answer to this lies in Concept Three: The right of decision makes effective leadership possible.

"Within the framework of their general responsibilities, whether these be defined by charter, resolution or custom, it should be traditional for all world service boards, committees and executives to decide which matters they may properly dispose of and upon which they will report, consult, or ask specific directions."

Your Area 86 Executive uses Knowledge Based Decision Making (KBDM), to make those decisions.

How does your executive balance relations between ultimate authority and delegated responsibility?

(Again from Concept Two) "The Al-Anon solution to these (this) questions is found in Tradition Two, which refers to "trusted servants." This provides that our responsible leaders be trusted to decide, within the framework of their duties, how to interpret and apply their authority and responsibility to each problem or situation as it arises. This sort of leadership discretion is the essence of the Right of Decision. We need have no misgivings about granting this privilege at every level of world service."... "Our entire Al-Anon program rests squarely on the principle of mutual trust. We trust God, we trust Al-Anon, and we trust one another. Therefore we cannot do less than trust our leaders in service. The Right of Decision we offer them is the practical means by which they may act and lead effectively; it also is the symbol of our implicit confidence."

If the outcome of a decision will have significant impact on members in the Area, such the Alateen Charter or the Supportive Al-Anon Members re-certification process, after KBDM discussion at an Executive Meeting, your executive would bring the item to AWSC for KBDM discussion. A recommendation can be made, at that time, as to whether the item needs to go to Assembly for further discussion and vote. We need to remember that any item brought forward to AWSC is SUPPOSED to have been discussed within the districts, prior to AWSC. If the links of service are working properly, there are no surprises for members when a decision is made. However, if the consequence of a decision is purely operational, such as moving area money, which has been entrusted to our Treasurer, into a GIC or deciding who sits on a committee that the Assembly has asked them to form, then delegated responsibility kicks in and your executive makes the decision - an executive decision.

If you have any further questions or concerns regarding this issue please feel free to contact any of your executive for clarification.

Blessings in Service,
Sue Gaskell,
Ontario South Area Chairperson



The WSO's Canadian corporation has relocated to a virtual office with an address:

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc.
275 Slater Street, Suite 900,
Ottawa, ON K1P 5H9,
613-723-8484, afgwsocan@al-anon.ca.

The virtual office is still accessible to Canadian professionals and media.

ASK-IT BASKET Qs & As

Assembly 2011

Q – When is non-Conference Approved Literature (CAL) permitted for “topic” use at a meeting?

A – It is not. Our literature emphasizes CAL.

Q - Is *Open Lines* considered conference approved Literature or is its use during a “meeting topic” approved?

A - *Open Lines* is AI-Anon business information. It is not “conference approved”, it’s OSA approved.

Q - Why are new GRs voting on minutes of previous Assemblies? How would we know if they are accurate? Perhaps old members should vote.

A - This issue should have been discussed/reviewed by the outgoing DR/GR prior to attending Assembly to give the information to the new GR.

Q – Are the “family traditions” Conference Approved Literature? Can meetings use the “family traditions” as a topic?

A – “Family traditions” is not CAL and no, they should not be used as a topic in AI-Anon meetings. (reference the “preamble” on page 15 of the *Service Manual*.)

Q – What is the mileage fee (cents per kilometre) that we should be charging our groups when driving out of town?

A – It would be up to each group to decide. OSA Executive uses 30 cents per kilometre.

Q - If we as an area have supported AI-Anon in Iqaluit, why do we not support AI-Anon participation at the Ontario Regional Conference (ORC) by allowing distribution of registration forms at this Assembly in keeping with Tradition 6?

A – We asked our membership to help fund an AI-Anon representative to attend this conference in Iqaluit. We are not promoting an AA conference – we are promoting AI-Anon participation as Public Outreach.

Q – Why isn’t ORC allowed to be announced or at least hand out posters? This makes absolutely no sense because there is AI-Anon and Alateen participation. ORC is a bigger conference with more opportunity to find more friends to make and we are just ignoring friendship and more fellowship. This year I’m doing the 2012 Alateen program and I strongly believe this is WRONG! I might be young but I have regained a voice! This is where my Dad got sober when I was 9 and this is where many more AI-Anons, Alateens and AAs can find hope. This needs to stop! Maybe we’d have more Alateens if we would announce ORC at Assembly. If you want more Alateens and AI-Anons and AAs you must announce ORC.

A – ORC is AA. We are Assembly and it is our business meeting. ORC can be announced at your Group and your District because it has AI-Anon participation.

Q – Nicolette’s position at the WSO is called an “Information Analyst”. This struck me as a rather bureaucratic title/function that I would not have thought members would have chosen.

A – WSO determines their job titles.

Q – Our group would like to see an “organization chart” of the structure and jobs done at WSO.

A – It is found in our Conference Summary.

Delegates Report

The Christmas holiday season is just around the corner along with the end of my term. With this comes my last article in this newsletter. The experience I have gained, One Day At A Time, is incredible. It is by using the program that I receive the help I need to persevere. The most important tool, I believe, was the fact that I had a service sponsor to guide me. Without this indispensable tool, I would not have been able to serve as a link between you and the World Service Office.

I would like to sincerely thank all those who have served along side me in the past 9 years. My only goal was/ is to serve Al-Anon and to continue to learn and understand how our amazing fellowship works. The patience, understanding, listening, confidence and respect I have witnessed has enabled me to grow and become a better person.

I'm also very grateful to you, the GRs, DRs and other members who demonstrated confidence in my skills by writing and phoning for my input and suggestions on a wide array of subjects. I have tried to keep you informed to the best of my abilities and my apologies if sometimes it took a while for me to respond.

By giving me the opportunity to represent you at the World Service Conference, you have allowed me to grow, meet the staff and volunteers at WSO, meet a wonderful new or extended family from every province and state and others throughout the world that enjoy the benefits of our blessed program, to address you by way of reports, to express my opinion, just to name a few things. Without your help, I would not have been able to complete this task.

The warm welcome that I received from members has helped to build my self-esteem. If it weren't for the welcome I received when I was a newcomer, I would never have become your Delegate since it is thanks to your open arms that I am what I am today.

With service being part of my recovery, I'm convinced of one thing: It is by daring to be persistent that I have succeeded in completing my term. That was done by asking for help. The benefits I've gained are numerous: self-esteem, confidence, open-mindedness, learning new challenges, etc.

Al-Anon helped me survive a few times in my service journey and the Al-Anon Family Groups also need your help to survive; if I have learned anything from what you have all showed me is that anybody can do it. And I'm not talking about the service position of Delegate exclusively; I'm referring to any service position.

It has been a privilege to serve you in Ontario South

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in serenity and health, that which is most important to us.

Much Love & Hugs

Claire Duthie
Delegate Ontario South Panel 49

November 4 and 5 64th Annual AA Conference with Al-Anon participation Ramanda Inn Cornwall Ontario Contact: Kim PO Box 1984 Stn Main Cornwall, ON K6H 6N7

Alternate Delegate's Report

My name is Heather Paret and I am your Ontario South Alternate Delegate. I am a grateful member of this world – wide fellowship of Al-Anon/Alateen Family Groups, and my home group is the Love & Hope Angus AFG in District One.

As you may now be aware, WSO has addressed the issue of late arrival of The Forum magazine. I have already heard from members who have mentioned that the November issue did in fact arrive within the first week of the month. I wish to thank all the members who shared their concerns and therefore we were able to send a clear mandate to WSO enabling them to address our concerns. Please continue to support The Forum by purchasing your personal subscription and let us not allow this wonderful tool of the program to fade away.

Our Higher Power was present at Assembly and there will be many updates for the Area Policy and Guideline Manual. It sure has been a busy term in our Area for moving forward in keeping Alateen growing and strong in our Area.

To the coordinators, kudos for all of your efforts in each position. Your love of the program for keeping our history alive, our present relevant and our move into the future with the use of technology is an inspiration.

My time as Alternate Delegate has been an awesome experience and it is with gratitude and thanks to all who have supported me in my service journey. I would also like to take this time to thank all the outgoing Executive, Coordinators, District Representatives and Group Representatives for their hard work and dedication to Ontario South and the fellowship as a whole. Your dedication and love of the program has been evident every step of the way. To the incoming Executive, Coordinators, District Representative and Group Representatives, welcome to your journey in service and may you all experience the same kind of fellowship I have been privileged to enjoy.

Although this is my last report as your Alternate Delegate, it is not good-bye, but see you around. Have a joyous holiday season and a great beginning to the New Year and beyond.

Thank you all for allowing me to serve as your Alternate Delegate and I will continue to share the (Hugs) in Service

Blessings,
Heather Paret
Alternate Delegate

Interim Area Secretary's Report

Hi Friends,

My name is Jean McShane and I'm a grateful member of Al-Anon. My home group is the Forward Al-Anon Family Group. We meet at 8PM on Thursdays at the Hintonberg Community Centre in Ottawa.

I survived my first Assembly as the Secretary! Thanks to all of those who came by to say "hello" – meeting members and getting hugs is the best part of Assembly for me. We all worked very hard during Assembly and got a lot accomplished. The Minutes will be on the Ontario South web site (www.al-anon.alateen.on.ca) sometime in December. Look under *Al-Anon Members* on the right-hand side of the home page, then *Area Meeting Minutes*. November had an Executive Meeting in Geulph, so the Fall has been busy for me. Now I'm looking forward to a joyous Christmas with family and friends – that's a different kind of busy!

Wishing you and those you love all the blessings of the Holiday Season.

Love and hugs in Service,
Jean McShane

Chairperson's Report

Greetings

As I come to the end of this stage of my service recovery in Al-Anon, I realize how fortunate I am that I have a program where I can learn to be the best me I can be so I can be of service to God and man. As I learned about my service position as Area Chairperson, those around me were encouraging, helpful, and understanding. I thank you sincerely for that assistance.

Assembly 2011 will probably go down in Area 86 history as being the lengthiest ever. I commend all members, who attended the Assembly, for your stick-to-itiveness. There were even the truly committed who attended the workshops that were skillfully prepared and presented by Gwen D., Cathy G., and Carl F.

Mostly though, I thank you for your sincere desire to remain true to the Al-Anon principles.

January 13-14, 2012, is the Handover Meeting for the Outgoing and Incoming Executive and Coordinators. The reins of service will be handed over at that meeting.

As an Assembly, you have elected a capable executive (even if they may feel somewhat confused at this time) that will guide Area 86 for the next three years.

As a district and a group you have also elected members to guide you through the coming three years. I encourage you to support these members as they venture down their service road.

Also, be cognizant of the opportunities that may present themselves to you in the areas of service.

Thank you for allowing me to represent you as Chairperson for Area 86 for the last three years. It was truly an honour.

God does not call the qualified; He qualifies those that are called.

Blessings,
Sue Gaskell,
Ontario South Area Chairperson

Treasurer's Report

Well, my final addition to Open Lines in this term of OSA Treasurer. What a whirl-wind the past three years have been...one of growth through knowledge and experience, spiritually and mentally. Thank you!

We have made it through another successful Assembly and will see great changes to come because of it. Our 2012 Budget has been passed. On average, **each group donation to Ontario South Assembly amounts to \$95.92 for 2012** to balance our budget. With God's grace this will come to fruition.

We have been blessed with this program of recovery - I can't live without it. This is why God's grace is always with us in Al-Anon because we intuitively know this in our hearts and make it happen.

Did you know??? Did you know that now that we have a central mail box we will keep the same address today and in the future. This way all donations you send will **continue** to be sent to P.O. Box 1151, Guelph, ON N1H 6N3.

Have a wonderful winter season all you Canucks...(and even the snow birds)

With Sincere Gratitude and Thanks for letting me be of service to your Area,
God Bless!

Marianne Embro
Outgoing OSA Treasurer, Area 86

Website Coordinator

Hello,

It's still me Denyse, Your website coordinator. First of all I just wanted to say that it was nice to see everyone at the Ontario South Assembly. Being the website coordinator, you don't see who is on the other side of the computer so it's always nice to put a face to the emails that I receive. Also I would like to say thank you for making suggestions on the website and helping me out on my service journey.

Ok now for statistics. The website is doing good, in the month of October we had 7864 visitors. We've added a few new things on the delegates corner (report from OSA), and also a few new events and closures for the Holiday, so please make sure you let me know if there is a special AI-anon Holiday meeting or Gratitude meeting you would like me to announce, Fellowship is always a good event to announce!!!

You can send me your event by filling out the event form and it will automatically come to my email address. Again, if there's any suggestions about how to make our website running smoothly please let me know. I appreciate your comments. Have a Great Holiday Season.

Yours in Service

Denyse K.

Ontario South Website Coordinator

Public Outreach Coordinator

As I come to the end of my three years as Public Outreach Coordinator I'd like to thank the members of Area 86 for your support and participation. 1000 Acts of Public Outreach is a HUGE success and I've had a blast reading all of your Acts and getting to put faces to names. Thank you very much from the bottom of my heart. You're the best!!!!

((((BIG HUGS))))

Michele

Public Outreach Coordinator

Group Records Coordinator

My name is Jane Hurley and I am a very grateful member of AI-Anon. My home groups are Whitby Friendly AFG and YANA AFG.

This is my last report as your Group Records Co-ordinator and I would like to thank you for the opportunity of serving Ontario South in this capacity. It has been a wonderful growing opportunity for me. I learned about the interdependence between the World Service Office and Ontario South when compiling information about our groups. I learned about myself and how I can relate to other members. I learned about meeting challenges.

Many new Group Representatives have already sent in their changes. These have either already been processed or will soon be entered into our Ontario South database and the World Service database. As soon as your group has its new GR, and CMA (current mailing address) please send this information to me so that your communication with Ontario South and the World Service Office will be seamless. For those of you who are beginning your new service journey, I wish you blessings! For those who are completing their service term, thank you.

Yours, gratefully, in service,
Jane Hurley

Thursday, December 15th @ 7:15pm there will be a gratitude meeting at 4094 Tomken Road in Mississauga, On. This will be a candlelight meeting (please bring a candle with you) Pot Luck @ 8pm.

Saturday, December 17th @ 10am there will be a Gratitude Meeting at Hopedale Presbyterian Church. 156 Third Line in Oakville, ON. There will be a pot luck and fellowship @ 11am. As always there will be babysitting available. Contact Wendy 905-634-5984 or wendy.merritt14@gmail.com

Literature Coordinator

Hi Friends.

Well, here I am at the end of my three-year term as the Literature Coordinator. I've had a wonderful time becoming more familiar with all the Conference Approved Literature (CAL) out there. I just want to remind you that there's a lot of CAL on line too. Try the WSO site (www.al-anon.alateen.org/members). In the *Publications* section you'll find:

Sample Project – each quarter there's a topic posted from a piece of CAL. You'll also find a list of where to find this topic in other CAL. It includes an opportunity to share on the current topic, as well as quotations, meeting topics and discussion questions from the quarter's book that were submitted by groups and members.

Newsletters

The Forum – where you'll find an index of *Forum* articles, as well as some excerpts from the current issue

World Service Conference Summary

IAGSM (International Al-Anon General Service Meeting) Summary

Service Manual

Other downloads like *S-62 Group CAL Inventory*

Copyright/reprint information – with a guide to copyrights and trademarks

Then there's the Ontario South site (www.al-anon.alateen.on.ca). In the *Coordinators Corner* under *Literature*, you'll find workshops and skits using CAL.

How do you work the Steps, Traditions and Concepts? Please help make the new workbook on Al-Anon's three Legacies a reality. This workbook will rely on comments posted on the Steps, Traditions and Concepts blogs found on our Members' web site (www.al-anon.alateen.org/members). Click on "Blogs" from the list on the left side of the opening page. Then click on the blog you want to write in and scroll down past the initial sharing. Click on "Comments" and scroll to the bottom of the comments. Please follow the Guidelines under "Leave a Comment".

Wishing you and those you love all the blessings of the Holiday Season.

Love and Hugs in Service,
Jean McShane

Open Lines Coordinator

Hi everyone it was great to see you all at Assembly. My name is Sharon and I am a member of the Southend Discussion AFG in Niagara Falls and am lucky enough to also be your Open Lines Coordinator.

I bet everyone is full of questions as to how the new electronic distribution system will work and how you will receive your Open Lines. Please be reassured that everyone will still have access just in a different way for the majority and the old standby of paper will always be available. We are very cognisant of the issues of no computer or no access to high speed internet and how long it takes to download a large file. You will note in this issue that I have removed all the fancy fonts and graphics with the exception of the notice from the WSO about the Canadian address change. This will allow the users without high speed to be able to quickly download the file. This combined with the conversion of the file to something called PDF, will ensure you can quickly and easily get your Open Lines. As to when the new system will roll out we will have to wait for the new executive to make that decision and I am sure they will keep you apprised of the situation. Remember as you are completing your group records change forms to include an email address so that when we are ready you will be too!

Thank you for the opportunity you have given me to be of service to you and I look forward to working with everyone again in the future.

Hugs in service

Sharon

Ontario South Alateen Coordinator

This being my final report I would like to take the opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the members of OSAAC past /present and the Area Executive for all your supports; it has been a wonderful experience working with you all. Over the last three years I have been so impressed with the devotion to the program I have seen amongst the Alateens and SAMs; in Ontario South there is no doubt that we have Alateen in our hearts.

During my term I have had the pleasure of meeting members from all four corners of the Area and attended numerous events and workshops. At this time I would like to acknowledge Nick M., Area Alateen Processing Person, whom I have had a wonderful working relationship. Since our portfolios are so closely related we had countless conversations and I found his knowledge in valuable and his dedication to service to be inspiring.

Interest in Alateen is growing so keep up the Public Outreach initiatives and please continue to carry the message of Alateen recovery to professionals and educators you come into contact with and remember Anonymity does not mean Invisibility!

Request by Professionals for Alateen Information since August 2011:

- Kemptville Youth Centre
- York Regional District School Board – Educator in Richmond Hill
- Toronto District School Board – Educator in North Toronto
- Toronto District School Board – Educator in Scarborough
- District School Board Niagara – Educator in Beamsville
- Upper Canada District School Board – Educator in Lanark

On a personal note I would just like to say I feel a sense of closure at the adoption of the three Alateen items at this years Assembly. It is my belief that in order for Alateen to thrive it needs all three elements of Recovery, Service and Unity firmly in place. The Alateens have always had strong Recovery, anyone who has ever had any dealings with them knows this to be true. Now with the acceptance of their Charter and Finances under the guidance of OSAAC Alateen can expand the important element of Service and build leadership. It is my sincere hope that the final component Unity will be realized. One of my favourite quotes seems to speak to this process:

“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.” Henry David Thoreau

http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Henry_David_Thoreau/

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service in Alateen and best wishes to the new Area Executive and Coordinators.

Love always
Leslie P.

Ontario South Alateen Advisory Committee (OSAAC)

On behalf of OSAAC we would like to thank all the Alateens, Supportive AI-Anon Members (SAMs) and AI-Anon members who have supported our efforts in the past few years. With the acclamation of the Alateen Charter and Finances at Assembly we would like to recognize past OSAAC Alateen Chairs Sarah H., Tary P., Kaitlin and our editor Joan R. thank you so very much for all your perseverance, patience and passion in the service of Alateen.

OSAAC 2012:

Here are some of the things the OSAAC members will be focusing on for the up-coming year:

- Spring OSAAC Planning Meeting
- Appoint two people to act as joint Treasurers
- Deal with the issues surrounding the set up of a bank account and the transfer of funds from the Area Treasure to the OSAAC
- Complete Unity Conference Bid expectations and guidelines
- Collaborate with Alateen Chair of 2012 ORC and Trillium regarding Alateen service meeting
- Make use of the OSAAC section of the Ontario South webpage Coordinator's Corner as our Alateen (on-line) News-letter.

Congratulation to the in-coming OSAAC members and best wishes for 2012, we are confident that Alateen will grow stronger under your leadership.

OSAAC members for 2012

Alateen Chair : Elizabeth

Alateen Alternate Chair: Lily

Alateen News letter Editor: Emma

SAM Advisor: Brian D.

SAM Advisor: Leslie P.

Alateen Coordinator: TBA

ARCHIVES COORDINATOR

AREA 86 LEADS THE WAY

Congratulations. Ontario South--Area 86-- has surpassed our goal of 2011 celebrations in honor of the 60th Anniversary of Al-Anon. I had the privilege of being invited to many of these celebrations. The enthusiasm and dedication of the districts and groups in Ontario South is amazing.

It is also wonderful to hear that many districts now have Archivists. Groups have been great in completing as well as updating their histories. When you update just add it to what is already in the binder. It is important that the original information stays in the binder in its original form. Continue to reach out the long timers in your groups/districts to get their stories. The Long timer Questionnaire as well as Oral History guide is available on the website. The In Loving Memory Book continues to grow as we remember those Al-Anon members who have died.

My term as Archives Coordinator has been rich and rewarding. Thank you for the invitations to visit and talk about Archives in your groups and districts. I have many fond memories of each experience. Thank you Ontario South for embracing Archives as we continue preserving our past for the future.

January 1944 was the beginning of Al-Anon in Ontario South.

With gratitude in service,
Mary Jane M
Archives Coordinator

Trillium 2012 Coordinator

TRILLIUM 2012, the Ontario South Al-Anon convention, is moving along well, thanks to YOU, members of the area, and the enthusiasm displayed at the annual Assembly in October for the event is greatly appreciated. During that weekend, a record number of early registrations were made for the June 15-17th conference - over 150! That's a great start to the celebration of our 20th Trillium!

But now that the "Early-Bird" period for pre-registering has passed, what reason would you want to register before the conference? I've got one! Each month, when the committee meets, we will draw a name from those that have registered to win a free registration OR one night at the DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton, the site of the conference.

The Trillium convention has taken place at the DoubleTree Hotel for 15 of its 20 years, and we've secured a room rate of \$115.00 per night due to our longtime relationship. That price will be respected for registrations right up until the conference weekend. Just mention "Trillium" to get the special conference rate when booking your room.

Now that the Ontario South Assembly has past, we want to keep up that energy of celebrating our recovery, so if your group or district is planning your own event - a group anniversary, an Al-Anon Day, a speaker meeting or dinner, WE WANT TO BE THERE! Please let us know by sending an e-mail to afg.gregm@gmail.com and we will strive to attend.

Registration forms are posted on the Ontario South Al-Anon website (under the Trillium link), as well as being available through Group Rep's and District Rep's, and the Al-Anon 60th Anniversary calendars and pins can still be purchased (at \$5 and \$10, respectively) - the perfect gift for a sponsor, sponsee, or home-group.

**TRILLIUM 2012 - 20 YEARS OF 12-STEP RECOVERY
COME CELEBRATE!**

Greg Marshall