

# Open Lines

Ontario South Assembly Newsletter

<http://al-anon.alateen.on.ca/>

April 2018

Volume 40 Issue 1

## Statement of Purpose

Open Lines is published three times a year 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.

### Subscription Rates:

In Canada \$4.50 (1 year) \$8.00 (2 years)

Send request for NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS / RENEWALS to:

[openlinesosa@gmail.com](mailto:openlinesosa@gmail.com)

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## Quick Links for Ontario South

There are some common forms that groups and members are asked to fill out all the time. I have made the following links available for you. To access these forms hold your control key and click on the underlined words. A new window will open and your document will be there. Be sure to click ok to the warning you will get about unsafe documents.

[Group Records Change Form](#)

[Donation form](#) make cheques payable to Ontario South Assembly and send to P.O. box 1151, Guelph, ON, N1H 6N3

[Form C for SAMS](#)

[Literature Order Form printable](#)

[Literature Order Form fillable](#)

## 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.*

## Districts in Ontario South

District 1.....	Muskoka
District 2.....	Georgian Bay
District 3.....	Bruce County
District 4.....	Waterloo Region
District 5.....	Huron Perth
<a href="#">District 6</a> .....	London Region
District 7.....	Sarnia Region
<a href="#">District 8</a> .....	Windsor/Essex
District 9.....	Chatham Region
District 10.....	Elgin Region
District 11.....	Brantford
District 12.....	Niagara Region
District 13.....	St. Catharines
<a href="#">District 14</a> .....	Hamilton
District 16.....	Mississauga, Oakville
District 17.....	Upper Peel-Halton
District 18.....	Dufferin, York, Simcoe
District 19.....	Toronto North
District 20.....	Toronto West
District 21.....	Toronto Central
District 22.....	Scarborough
District 23.....	Lakeshore
District 24.....	Kawartha
District 25.....	Quinte
District 26.....	St Lawrence Region
District 27.....	Seaway Valley
<a href="#">District 28</a> .....	Ottawa
District 30.....	Upper Ottawa Valley
District 31.....	Loyalist
District 32.....	Kawartha South

[Ontario South Website](#)

## Ontario South Delegate Report

Thank you to all the members who serve Ontario South. Thank you for setting up the chairs, making the coffee, taking on the many service positions in your group and district and to those members who show up at a meeting, even when you really don't feel like going but know that you might be the only one there, when a newcomer arrives.

I understand that my responsibility as Delegate for Ontario South, is to complete one of the Links of Service. That link is to relay information from WSO to the AWSC members and also to pass on suggestions, concerns, or ideas from you, the members of Ontario South, to WSO.

If you are unsure of the Link of Service in Al-Anon, I encourage you to seek out your Group Representative, your District Representative, or review the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (which you can find on line).

During this term, serving as your Delegate, I hope to connect with as many of you as possible. Even though we may not be close in proximity, I am but an email or phone call away.

I may not have all the answers but I will do my best to search them out.

I will be representing you at the World Service Conference from April 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> 2018. At that time I would greatly appreciate any love gifts or cards from you, your group or your district.

As I mentioned earlier in an email regarding sending mail to me at WSC, "the hotel will be receiving mail beginning April 14. Packages will not be accepted before that date".

The address for the hotel is:

Sue Gaskell

Renaissance Westchester Hotel,

80 W. Red Oak Ln.,

West Harrison, NY, 10604

USA

include in the address: Hold for WSC 4/16-4/20, 2018

### *Blessings in Service*

Sue Gaskell

Ontario South Delegate

WSO Panel 58

*WSC "Al-Anon- There is no standing still!"*

**April 2018**

Dear Members,

I am continuing what was started last April with reports from district reps as well as submissions from the executive and co-ordinators.

This is new for me as I start my first year of the new term. I love the three Cs - confused, comfortable, capable. I am definitely feeling confused! But I know I am not alone as we all start in our new service positions. I am grateful to those who went before me and those who are on the path I walk now.

Thanks to everyone who made a submission to my first ever Open Lines. Enjoy!

Yours in service,  
Colleen

# ***LDC REPORT***

## ***Literature Coordinator Report to Open Lines***

Well, the first 3 months into the position has me in the learning phase.

Here is what I have been up to:

I am finding my way around the conversations on the AFG Connect site.  
Asking questions, talking to my service sponsor.  
Corresponding with others in Ontario South.  
Researching Writing workshop material.  
Talking to other coordinators through discussion threads on AFG connects.  
Reviewing the many pamphlets in our literature.  
Thinking, Imagining, Inquiring and Hoping.  
Staying open to opportunities in all things literature.

I will be displaying our Ontario South Literature at the AA Kawartha Conference being held June 22, 23 in Peterborough. Sat June 23rd will be a full Al-Anon program with our literature being displayed.

Looking forward to seeing you all at AWSC in May.

Kind Regards  
In Recovery

Mary Ellen B.

## Forum/Alternate Delegate Report

Hello Ontario South, Area 86 Members.

This is the first real opportunity that I've had to communicate with you. I am your Forum Coordinator and Alternate Delegate. The first thing I want to do is thank the many members who have reached out with encouraging messages of support. I appreciate it more than you can imagine.

So far, I have responded to a few invitations to come to AI-Anon days. That said, I am looking forward to a great trip to Ottawa's AI-Anon day in April. Lynda, our LDC manager is working on hosting writing workshop for the Forum and other AI-Anon Literature submissions. I think this is an exciting opportunity to write, learn, encourage and grow. Watch for more information to come. I am learning about the Forum, its history, and its future. The best part is that your support will determine the Forums future. That means that we need to submit writings and we need to support it by purchasing subscriptions. I will have more information to share at AWSC when we get together to meet with the district representatives, the area coordinators and the area executive. AFG Connect and World Service Office have already been very helpful. I have been reaching out for their guidance and wisdom.

As your alternate delegate I have attended the executive handover meeting in January, and an executive meeting in February. I have responded to many emails from executive members and coordinators. The communications are ongoing. To be honest it's a bit overwhelming. Then I remember this is year one. I am supposed to be a little confused and overwhelmed. I don't know what I don't know. I am learning a lot and there is a lot to learn. I am grateful to the executive team and the advisors for sharing their experience strength and hope.

I remain, Yours in Service,  
Forum Coordinator/Alternate Delegate, OSA  
Gwen Dinel, Grateful member of AI-Anon Works AFG, London ON

## Open Lines Report Area Secretary

I would like to thank everyone for supporting me when I stepped up off the floor to run for this position. I had totally intended to 'follow the rules' but personal circumstances did not allow me to do it. I figured if my higher power wanted me to have the position that it would be taken care of and it was.

The position has been a very steep learning curve for me even though I am a secretary in my personal life things are different in doing things the AI-Anon way. I am used to tight deadlines and specific formats and to have the opportunity to do things in a more relaxed way and even change the format of the lists is a new thing for me.

I now have two executive meetings under my belt and am working away on AWSC and things are going smoothly.

I am enjoying the service and if I can be of any assistance getting your word out please let me know.

Hugs in Service  
Sharon R  
Area 86 Secretary

Hello Ontario South members,

I am sure most of you are looking forward to spring which is supposed to be right around the corner. With the spring comes renewal and fresh starts. I hope that your journey brings you many changes and new growth.

The new Service manuals have been ordered and I have a file started for groups and individuals who want them. Most are sending their payment and request. My suggestion is due to the cost of shipping you do them in with your group literature order or with a few other groups or members who want them. If you send your order and payment they will be shipped out as soon as they are received. WSO estimates that I should have them sometime in April. With tax they come to \$10.50 each. The other option to save shipping is to order and pay for them and have your DR pick them up at AWSC at the end of May.

Here are a few literature blurbs. I have heard that a few of the groups have read one each week at their meeting and people are finding literature resources they didn't know were there for a meeting topic or personal growth. Feel free to use them as they work for you. I do hope they are helpful though. (Linda - Literature Distribution Centre)

#### P-1 Al-Anon is for Men

The title says it all. Although there are more women than men in Al-Anon we all have a common denominator - we have all been affected by someone's drinking. Many men worry that they are not living up to society's expectations as they struggle with the feelings and issues that go hand in hand with having a problem drinker in their lives. When they come to Al-Anon for help we offer support, encouragement and a sense of belonging. In staying and using the tools of the program they can find help.

#### P-33 Why Anonymity in Al-Anon?

This pamphlet offers us insight into how anonymity can keep us safe. We often come to Al-Anon feeling like everyone is judging us and we learn to isolate and keep to ourselves and therefore don't have a means to let things out. In Al-Anon we can feel protected in what we say and that we are in attendance. Anonymity also reminds us we are all equal - we all walked into that room because we have been affected by someone's drinking. It speaks of how we can choose to build relationships within the fellowship where we know last names etc. but it is up to us to decide when, with whom and how we want to use anonymity for ourselves...but not for someone else. It shares the principle component of anonymity and reminds us of the different ways we can put the principles into practice. There are also ideas for finding out more about anonymity in many of our other CAL publications.

#### P-9 How Can I Help my Children?

What do our children see? What do they hear? How do they feel? Is it possible they are not affected by the alcoholic's behaviour or my behaviour? Just as we were effected, so too are our children. So how do I attend to their well-being, not just physically but emotionally? This pamphlet offers suggestions on communicating with them and examining our own attitudes because children imitate what they experience. We can break the cycle through living our own program and by encouraging attendance of our children in Alateen. This also includes a checklist for parents, personal reflections and a Dear Mom and Dad letter. Let's look at giving the gift of the program to our future generations early in life.

#### P-69 Alateen Talks Back on Serenity

A small booklet, this piece of CAL is made up of art and sharings from Alateens all over that had their submissions printed in the quarterly publication of Alateen Talks. It shares their views on serenity. What can be done to untangle yourself from the chaos around you so you may find serenity? If I take each letter in the word serenity, what can each letter represent to help me feel serene? What has Alateen given me that helped me in the search for serenity? Included in this booklet is a Recipe for Serenity written and submitted by Alateens from Ontario South! At the end are questions about what Alateen means to them and suggested meeting topics connected to serenity.

#### P-21 Alateen Youth and the Alcoholic Parent

What is Alateen and how does it work? This pamphlet is full of frequently asked questions such as is there a cure for this illness and how can I help? After the questions there is a portion about how you can help yourself using a breakdown with our slogans. The summary offers hope by keeping in mind certain things such as attend meetings, we aren't responsible for the drinking and more. It is full of information which many wonder about before coming to the program or as they begin.

## P-14 So You Love an Alcoholic

### Take Courage; There is Hope

This reminds us that according to the American Medical Association and many others worldwide alcoholism is recognized as a disease. It suggests you put aside all past beliefs in what alcoholism is and look into current information to understand. You don't have to wait until the drinker(s) in your life seek help, you can care for your own well-being starting right now. This piece of literature includes some Do's and some Don'ts that may bring you some peace of mind. If the alcoholic comes to you for help what might be the best response? Lastly if they do seek help in a program what is my role in that recovery? You aren't alone in this journey and the answers are there if we know where to look for them.

## P-19 What do YOU do about the Alcoholic's drinking?

So many of us have tried to get the alcoholic to stop drinking. We have tried to do for them what they should be doing for themselves, we have tried to fill the gaps where they are falling short, we may have covered up their behaviour, tried to become their drinking buddy, told them to get out, resented them, poured the alcohol out and so on. Almost all of us worry about them and feel torn as to how our feelings go back and forth between love and disdain. All of this gets us nowhere in helping them and makes us feel hopeless. But Al-Anon can help. It can help us with our feelings, in understanding we are not doing this alone. It can offer us tools and suggestions to live a happy life with hope.

## P-47 Al-Anon Sharings from Adult Children

This pamphlet is quite big. It shares about living with an alcoholic and the things we think will help us such as leaving. Even when we leave the memories are there and so we still live with it inside. There are many things children of alcoholics do. We paint the picture of 'all is good' behind closed doors, we take over the adult responsibilities, we try to help the alcoholic and often the non-alcoholic to cope, we try to make everyone happy, we deny things are the way they are. There is hope. We can learn different ways to cope, to take care of ourselves and to grow. Al-Anon can offer tools and a new way of life.

## P-35 Why Conference Approved Literature?

CAL or Conference approved literature was voted unanimously at the World Service Conference in 1962 and 1965 to be recommended for its exclusive use at Al-Anon meetings. This was to encourage unity and that we are carrying the Al-Anon message in our meetings. We don't use outside literature including AA literature in our meetings as it can affect the message and our goals and it may be confusing to the new member who walks in the door. This literature also allows us continuity even if we travel around the world. It explains the procedures for material becoming CAL and lets us know how we can contribute to future CAL material. Remember this literature is written by members like you....maybe even you. We must also remember this is copy written material and we must request permission to use it and or to translate it. If you are curious, interested or need answers about the history or use of CAL this is the place to locate it.

# Treasurer's Report for Open Lines

My name is Marg Knights and am the Treasurer for Ontario South. I have been in this position since mid-March 2013 and thanks to the membership at Assembly in October 2017 I will be your Treasurer for the next three years.

Thank you very much for your donations during 2017 and also for all your donations in the past.

Please remember to use the donation form that can be found in the area manual, online, or linked below to ensure that donation is recorded to the correct group. Also, please carefully read and follow the instructions on the donation form. The cheque should be made out to "Ontario South Assembly" and mailed to Ontario South Treasurer. The cheque **must not** be made out to Ontario South Treasurer.

Marg Knights

## **Literature Office Committee Chairperson Report**

*"Al-Anon-There is no standing still!" 2018 WSC Theme*

Welcome everyone to this new term! I am reporting to you as our new Chairperson of our Ontario South Literature Office Committee (LOC). And, just like you I am new to this position so I am anticipating a learning curve.

In our Ontario South Policy and Guidelines Manual, Section 9: Literature Distribution Centre (LDC) in sub sections A: GENERAL, B: CHARTER, C: BY-LAWS you will find information regarding how the LDC and LOC are connected, their purpose and how they operate.

Currently our Literature Office Committee members are:

Chairperson (immediate Past Delegate)	Debbie P.
Preceding Past Delegate	Jane H.
Current Delegate	Sue G.
Area Treasurer	Marg K.
Area Literature Coordinator	Mary Ellen B.
An elected current District Representative (DR)	Yet to be determined?

At our upcoming Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meeting we will be looking for one of our current District Representatives to be elected to our LOC for a three year term. District Representatives please review Section 9 in our Ontario South Policy & Guidelines Manual and consider putting your name forward as a potential candidate!

The LOC is committed to following through with what our members asked at our 2016 Assembly. That we continue to operate a Literature Distribution Centre in Ontario South and ensure that it is self-supporting. Please continue to support our LDC knowing that we are working on providing the best service possible.

Thank you for your continued support and patience.

*Debbie P.*

Ontario South Literature Office Committee Chairperson

## **Ontario South Advisor Report**

Hello Again!

I would also quickly like to introduce myself as one of our Ontario South Advisors.

I graciously thank our Delegate for inviting me to serve in this role.

My understanding of the Ontario South Advisor role is "primarily to bring their experience, either from their participation within OSA, the WSO or both."

I will be serving as part of our Ontario South Executive and am available for support in any way that I can to our Area.

I look forward to continuing my service journey by being accessible in any way that I can be of assistance.

*Debbie P.*

Ontario South Advisor

*Celebrating One Day at a Time*  
Al-Anon's International Convention 2018

Hello Ontario South members,

I hope you're enjoying some of the milder temperatures we're starting to experience in Ottawa. As Al-Anon has taught me, I'm enjoying what is – One Day At A Time – while not building up expectations. I'm making the most of the fact that I can wear sneakers instead of winter boots, but my car still has its snow tires on.

The first couple months of this term have been busy, both for me and for your Executive. Your District Representatives have gotten to be a part of some of it, with the recent survey about a potential Trustee visit and letters asking for candidates for Regional Trustee and for groups, Districts or members to step forward and put together a bid for a Trillium in 2019.

Currently, my focus is on preparing for the upcoming AWSC meeting with your Executive, Co-ordinators and District Representatives. Please review the information package with background materials on the items being discussed, to help your District Representative carry your voice to the meeting.

Are you in the first year of your service position, and feeling a little bit confused? So am I. You're in good company. Other members who have held these positions before us talk about the confusion in the first year, but then say they felt comfortable in the second year, and capable in the third. I think there's hope for us, yet.

Yours in Service,  
Jason W.,  
Ontario South Assembly Chairperson

Hi Ontario South Members,

I've come a long way from the hand over meeting wherein my mantra was 'I'm so confused'.

Being honest for the first while I was, completely and I did a lot of 'faking it'; in this case while I was figuring out two new computer software programs, especially so when the notes I had lovingly been given were written in a foreign language. I swear!

How they magically became unreadable to me was mind-blowing. When the previous GRC was sitting next to me I understood every word on the page perfectly or thought I did anyway. On my own, not so much...

Confused, I had no idea where to start, so I hooked up the computer and said a prayer. From there it was touch and go, but I eventually learned to read a foreign language. Amazing!

I had an obstacle to overcome as well with my WSO site Username and Password. Apparently, it had been duplicated and the two ID's were bouncing around and crashing into each other or some other technical term I now forget. Once that was resolved though I was good to go, but it was still mid-February before I was able to enter any records on their site, although up to that point there really weren't that many to enter.

Well let me tell you, that was the vacation part of this position! All-of-a-sudden, I was receiving emails from the OSA site, emails from the WSO site, emails from WSO staff and emails from individual members like no tomorrow, all wanting a Group Record change.

So, I got cracking and I entered them on the OSA site and emailed them off to our Website Coordinator, Rachelle to work her magic. Then I turned around and did it all again on the WSO site. I'm kind of a Pro at it now, well, maybe a persistent novice would be a better description...but the point is, I figured it out.

And so far, the only real challenge is in getting the groups to use the 'Group Record Change Form' online and to communicate with other group members before making changes. In this way all our jobs are lessened by filling out/reading one 'Change Form' instead of three or four.

So, I am trying to keep sight of two important things, first, why I am doing service work to begin with; which is to spread the word of Al-non, and second when I ask my higher power for help I can do anything. Even learn a foreign language.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve once again. I am truly blessed.

Hugs in service,  
Tracey Smith  
Group Records Coordinator

Public Outreach  
Coordinators Report

Dear Members,

My name is Kristine B and I will be serving the fellowship as your P.O. Coordinator.

I apologise if you have sent an email which I have not answered. I have had some difficulty logging on to the email account. I may have to set up a new email address I shall keep you posted.

In the meantime if you need to connect with me please do so by calling me at 905 847 3550. If you need to leave a message please let me know how late I can return the call and if I can leave a message.

I am looking forward to being of service.

Trusting in God's plan  
Kristine B

## District 22

Hi my name is Louise McFarlane and I am the new D.R. for district 22.

We have 6 groups remaining in the district after the closure of two. Learning to Live closed December 2017 and Harmony closed March 2018. Venues necessary.

A public outreach evening was held and raised in excess of \$700.00 which went to GTA public outreach.

I have started visiting the groups to introduce myself in hopes of more representation at the district table.

So far one district meeting has taken place with four in attendance, all from one group.

Yours in Service

Louise McF.

## **District 6 Report**

In the greater London Area, we have 17 regular closed meetings, one open meeting that has at times attracted 35 persons, two institutional meetings that we are always looking for volunteers to go into correctional facilities, and one revived Alateen meeting. We had to close all our Alateen meetings because of lack of SAMs. Last fall, we started a new AI-Anon meeting at the same time, day and place where AA meet. We restarted one of Alateen meetings at the same place, day and time with slow results to start with Alateen attendance gradually increasing over the winter. We now have seven qualified SAMs and there are others waiting to be approved.

In May, we will hold our annual potluck AI-Anon Day on May 12<sup>th</sup> where we have four speakers. Over the years we have strong representation from nearby districts.

Our Public Outreach has been very active in promoting AI-Anon and has been raising funds to go beyond the normal budget. They recently held a bowling night where they rented all twenty lanes at one time on a Saturday to raise some extra money and create an AI-Anon fellowship atmosphere. One of Public Outreach members is working with an outside sign company to promote AI-Anon at no cost at one of their electronic signs in SW London.

Steven B, District 6 DR

## **District 11 Report**

Our district consists of a Brantford group which meets twice weekly at Grace Anglican Church on Wednesday evening at 8PM and Saturday Morning at 11 AM and a Simcoe group which meets at the Haldimand Resource Centre, Thursday at 8PM.

This year has had its challenges as we closed a second group in Simcoe.

The number of members has remained stable although there has been the typical transient membership in all meetings.

For me, the transition to district rep has been smooth so far thanks to the help of Aimee, our past rep. Aimee has stepped back down to group rep for Unity so we have each other for reference. Also Sandy is alternate rep for Unity. Simcoe is represented well by Ruth, a long time active member.

Brantford's Unity group has a business meeting once a month and the Simcoe group meets for business quarterly and is combining that with a speaker meeting. Simcoe is also trying to organize an AI-Anon retreat for women which hopefully will be in the fall.

We have participated in the local AA Roundup by providing a literature table and we have just begun to fill the position of Public Outreach again. As a District we have provided all high schools in our area with AI-Anon/Alateen literature.

Heather C, District 11 Rep

## District 5 Al-Anon Report

Hello from district 5. This is an update on our Huron/Perth area. We have meetings in Goderich, Exeter, Clinton, Listowell, St. Marys, Sebringville and Stratford.

Goderich group is doing well. They have a step study at 6 30 to 7 30 pm every Wednesday night before their regular meeting which starts at 8 00pm. It is very well attended. They have 2 open speakers meetings during the year.

Stratford group has 2 meetings. They meet on Monday night at 7 00pm and Thursday afternoon at 1 00pm. They are looking into becoming a SAM and want to start an Al-Ateen group. They are also interested in writing in the Forum. Their birthdays are every 3rd month and on every 4th Monday of the month.

The St. Mary's groups are doing well. There are 3 meetings in our town. Monday night meeting is at 7 30pm. Friday morning is at 9 30am and there is a Saturday night meeting at 7 00pm. Our Monday night meeting is growing. We are a steps, tradition and topic meeting. We also celebrate birthdays and we have an Intergroup meeting every November so that newcomers can speak to the group. The Saturday night meeting is great and gets a lot of out of town people.

Clinton group meets at 8 00pm. They are a small group.

Sebringville is a new group coming up on 4 years and they are an open discussion meeting. They meet on Wednesday night at 7 00pm.

Exeter group is an open discussion meeting. They meet on Sunday nights at 8 00pm.

Our district meetings are the second Thursday of every month.

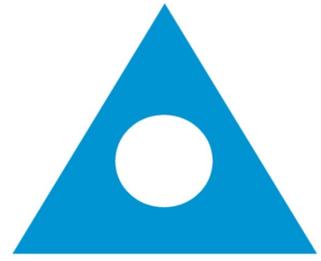
A grateful member,

Sonia DR

A Grateful member

Sonia DR

**DISTRICT 6  
AL-ANON DAY  
With AA Participation**



**\$7.00**

**love**  
**live**  **grow**

**SATURDAY, MAY 12TH, 2018  
BYRON UNITED CHURCH  
420 BOLER ROAD, LONDON, ON.**

**9:00am-3:30pm**  
**registration starts at 8:30am**

**Al-Anon, Alateen, AA Speakers  
COLD POTLUCK LUNCH**

# The Public Outreach Committee

invites you to join us at our

Annual Spaghetti Dinner

**Saturday April 21st, 2018**

**Doors Open at 6:00pm**

AA & Al-Anon Speakers

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church  
209 Cochrane St, Whitby, ON

***Tickets are Adults \$10  
Alateen & Children \$5***

For tickets please contact  
**Tracey at [tracey6663s@gmail.com](mailto:tracey6663s@gmail.com)**

(Tickets will be provided to groups via the GR meeting on March 7<sup>th</sup>)