

# Open Lines

Ontario South Assembly Newsletter

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

April 2020

Volume 42 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:

If you wish to receive a copy in the mail, subscription rates for copies mailed in Canada are \$4.50 (1 year) and \$8.00 (2 years). Please send a request for NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS / RE-NEWALS to: [openlinesosa@gmail.com](mailto:openlinesosa@gmail.com).

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## Quick Links for Ontario South

[Group Records Change Form](#)

The donation form is currently unavailable. If you wish to make a donation, make cheques payable to Ontario South Assembly and send to P.O. box 1151, Guelph, ON, N1H 6N3

[Form C for SAMS](#)

[Literature Order Forms](#) - To access the two versions of the Literature Order Form (Literature Order Form printable or Literature Order Form fillable) please go to <http://al-anon.alateen.on.ca/literature/> and use the side bar or go to the bottom of the page for the links.

## 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
<a href="#">District 4.....</a>	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's Report

I want to thank all of you for your determination to keeping Al-Anon alive in Ontario South during this unprecedented time.

Many of you have set up virtual meetings for your groups. Many are keeping in contact with those who find technology difficult.

You are all supporting one another in so many ways.

You may wish to access AFC Connects Announcement community which has information about temporary electronic meetings.

I am listing the activities that I was involved in prior to COVID19 and those that I have been involved with after the outbreak of COVID19

Below are the events and activities prior:

### WORLD SERVICE RELATED:

- Made travel arrangements for World Service Conference in Virginia Beach (April 18 – April 25, 2020)
- Read through the Conference Procedures
- Attended TEAM in Plymouth Meeting Pennsylvania
- Contributed ideas for Panel 58's entertainment plans for WSC
- Sent in my 3 minute delegate talk to WSO
- Chatted with my Trustee Mentor, Terri, regarding the Chairperson of the Board letter
- Kept WSO updated with Ontario South Assembly's AWSC new members
- Working on Chosen Agenda Items and Area Highlights to send into WSO
- Having read through various material that were sent regarding Opportunities to Serve, I then completed the survey
- I accepted the invitation to chair a finance breakout of second year delegates for discussion of information needed to prepare the finance portion of the Delegate's Report to their Areas
- Unfortunately, the Canadian Delegate's Conference Call malfunctioned, so we are hoping to reconnect in mid-February. Have received the agenda
- Connected by email with my Delegate Sponsee, Marcia, from Connecticut
- Forwarded information from WSO to AWSC members
- Reviewed My Communities on AFG Connects and dealt with items if necessary
- Have received the Charge for the Thought Force to which I have been assigned. The topic is "Dreaming Big – Envisioning Our Future"

### ONTARIO SOUTH ASSEMBLY RELATED:

- Spoke in St. Catharines in September
- Spoke in Etobicoke in December
- Requested 2020 speaking engagements:
  - May 2 Parry Sound
  - May 30 Leamington
  - June 14 St. Mary's
- Answered emails and phone calls from OSA members
- Requested suggestions from Exec. Members on certain issues brought forward by OSA members
- Sent communications to Alternate Delegate to keep her apprised of issues at hand
- Read and replied to District minutes
- Connected with my Service Sponsor on various issues
- Continued communication with Literature Office Committee
- Continued discussion with Area Chairperson regarding Assembly 2020
- Reviewed new website before it went "live"
- Began development of question to ask prospective coordinators
- Began PowerPoint for "Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect" to be presented at AWSC
- Helping Alternate Delegate with discovering what updates still need to be made to OSA Area Manual

Continued on page 3.

Since COVID 19 I have been involved with the following:

#### WORLD SERVICE RELATED

Waiting patiently to find out if in fact World Service Conference (WSC) would be held this year and consequently find out that it has been cancelled  
Receiving many emails and information on my AFG Connects Communities  
Communicating with WSO as to the best way to inform AI-Anon members about the cancelation of WSC (also Love gifts and cards)  
Learning how to use WebEx and VoxVote, both of which we will be using during our virtual WSC taking place April 20-24, 2020  
I will also be using WebEx for the Literature Committee meeting being held on April 11, 2020

#### ONTARIO SOUTH RELATED

Conference call with Ontario South Executive to discuss various topics, including virtual meetings and the issue of anonymity, AWSC  
Reaching out to members who contact me regarding various issues to do with COVID19 and AI-Anon  
Replying to members who had asked me to speak and who have now had to cancel their events

Sue G  
Ontario South Delegate

### **Assembly Chairperson Report**

My fellow members,

Recent events have reminded me of the expression, "may you live in interesting times." These past few months have certainly been interesting for me, personally, in my professional life and as someone who lives in Ottawa. Thankfully, I have a program that guides me to a higher plane and helps me find the courage to keep on keeping on, even when things are interesting.

Because of the rapidly-changing situation around the COVID-19 pandemic, your Executive has decided to make some changes to this year's Area World Service Committee meeting. District Representatives, Co-ordinators and Executive should continue to hold the weekend of May 22-24 open on their schedules, but we will hold an amended, electronic meeting. Some of the finer details are being worked on and will be communicated to AWSC members as soon as possible.

If your group is forced by your venue to cancel or relocate its meetings, or voluntarily decides to suspend its activities due to the pandemic, please be sure to inform your local information/telephone services and our Area Website Co-ordinator.

Thank you for everything you do for Ontario South, and for our worldwide fellowship of AI-Anon/Alateen.

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

## **REPORT FROM OUR LITERATURE OFFICE COMMITTEE**

Please see the attached notice and circulate this information widely within our membership - **In light of the current COVID-19 situation.**

Our face to face AI-Anon meetings have recently been significantly impacted by recent events and so has our Ontario South Literature Distribution Centre. We have had to be flexible, make changes and adapt. Now more than ever is an opportunity for each of us to apply the spiritual principles of our program. We have been called to practice compassion, kindness, patience, understanding, and tolerance among others. We have also shown great resilience and I am confident we will continue to.

Our Literature Office Committee while trying to follow the directions of our 2016 Assembly motions, to maintain a viable Literature Distribution Centre for Ontario South, has been applying our principles while making prudent and responsible decisions in our role of overseeing the LDC.

The Literature Office Committee, in its role to oversee the Ontario South Literature Distribution Centre decided that effective Thursday April 9th, 2020 to temporarily close the office and suspend all operations. This is meant as a temporary measure only and we fully intend to reopen at a later date when able.

We will continue to assess the current situation and will notify our members with updates through our links of service, notices on our Ontario South Website and through our Ontario South newsletter *Open Lines*.

We sincerely appreciate your understanding and patience.

Members can still order Conference Approved Literature through our World Service Office as a temporary measure.

We have appreciated your support up to this point and look forward to your continued support moving forward especially when we reopen.

Any questions or communications regarding our Literature Distribution Centre can now be directed to our current Literature Office Committee Chairperson, Debbie P. by email at [debbieturnitover@hotmail.com](mailto:debbieturnitover@hotmail.com).

With much **GRATITUDE & LOVE,**

Debbie P.  
Ontario South  
Literature Office Committee Chairperson

## **Secretary Report April 2020**

Hope everyone is safe and healthy.

Since the last Open Lines, I have been busy sending information all around. We have gotten the notifications for group suspensions streamlined and hopefully folks are staying in contact with other members and taking care of themselves.

As far as secretarial duties I have recreated the contact list to hopefully ease the printing issues and also maintain confidentiality of actual addresses and phone numbers. This information is still available by contacting myself or another member of the executive. Email addresses are sent out as well as District numbers and names.

The executive had a very informative meeting and are currently working on AWSC. In these times life is very unsettled and our new landscape is unsettled. Stay tuned for updates.

Hugs and warm thoughts to all,

Sharon R  
Area 86 Secretary

## ONTARIO SOUTH LITERATURE OFFICE TEMPORARY CLOSURE

### **In light of the current Covid-19 situation**

***Effective April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 @ 3:00pm our ONTARIO SOUTH LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION CENTRE WILL TEMPORARILY SUSPEND OPERATIONS AND WILL TEMPORARILY CLOSE.***

With much consideration, thought and reflection on our Al-Anon spiritual principles and the current situation with Covid19 our Ontario South Literature Office Committee, which oversees the operations of our LDC, has decided to temporarily close the office.

This means the office will be unavailable and inaccessible to the membership to order literature at this time. We will make every effort to keep the membership informed as we move forward with any additional information and plans to reopen.

We will communicate through our links of service with our AWSC contact list, our Ontario South website and our Ontario South newsletter Open Lines.

Please share this information widely with our Ontario South membership. Thank you so much for your understanding and support as we navigate through these unusual and constantly evolving times.

Any questions or communication can be directed to the current Ontario South Literature Office Committee Chairperson:

Debbie P.                      debbieturnitover@hotmail.com

The new website is live!



**As your new website coordinator for the Ontario South Area, I was proud to launch our new website design on 16 January 2020. I am so, so grateful for how well it has been received by our membership. And I want to express my huge thanks to all who have so willingly given their time, energy and inspiration to this important project. I am in awe of your love and encouragement...**

All of this took a good 3 months to prepare, but after 21 years we have finally said goodbye to our trusted old HTML website, entering the modern world of Wordpress. Our Area now has a website that is easier to maintain, without requiring in depth technical knowledge. Although it has undergone a major design overhaul, the content of this first new version of the Ontario South website did not really change. As is true for the general content of our Conference Approved Literature, the principles of our program can stand the test of time; many online articles have stayed as relevant to today's day as they were to yesterday's and they needed no further adjustments.

### **Website = Public outreach tool**

I have always believed that having an online presence is an important part of our Public Outreach toolkit. It is one of the front doors to our wonderful programs for many newcomers and those of us who want to visit a new meeting in an unfamiliar area. But professionals and others interested in what we do can also find a wealth of information.

The statistics of our first few months underline the importance of accurate meeting and event information. The overview of meetings and events attracts most of our visitors. The Newcomer page takes a proud third place. Other pages that are in the Top 10 are 'For Members', 'Our Programs' and 'Literature'. Which means that none of the sections of our main Navigation Menu are overlooked. The 'Contact' page might not be a front runner, but we can see in the statistics that it also gets a fair number of visitors.

### **How do the statistics translate into how you navigate the website?**

I have added some images of our most recent statistics. But how do you interpret the numbers?

Imagine you want to find a meeting on our website...

You load [al-anon.alateen.on.ca](http://al-anon.alateen.on.ca) in your internet browser (1) and click on the "Find a meeting near you" button on the Welcome page (2) and by default see the list of meetings for that day. You want to know more about one specific meeting, so you click on it to see the Details (3). Then you wonder if there are any events coming up. You click on 'About Events' in the main navigation menu (4) and then on the 'List of upcoming events' (5) button. You scroll through the list of events and then click on one that you wish to see the details for (6). You can even click to add it to your Google or iCalendar there, so that a calendar entry is created on your device by way of a reminder.

Your 1 single visit to the Ontario South Area website has thus translated into 1 unique session with 6 pageviews. If you come back the next day to do the same, website Analytics will remember you and not count you as a new unique visitor. But your sessions are added to the totals.

Now let's look at the real numbers for the first 3 months in the lifetime of our new website...

## Website Visitor Analytics

Between 15 January 2020-15 March 2020:

Approximately 3200 unique visitors landed on our website

We logged 4700 session, which means that we have quite a few returning visitors

All of these people visited our pages almost 18,500 times (page counts within unique session: 13,642).

These numbers are still on the rise and this means that the site is being read and re-read and that is great news. There is a normal up and down heart rhythm to websites, as you can see below.



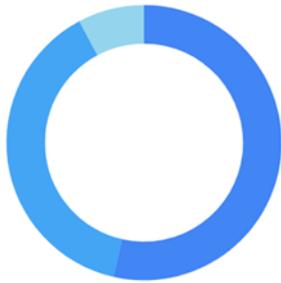
The bounce rate is a number that indicates the percentage of visitors who right after the frontpage is loaded. This rate is nice and low, which means most people land on our website intentionally (via a Google search, e.g.) They were looking for AI-Anon and found us. It is also encouraging that the average session lasts over 3 minutes. This means people are reading our content.

Lastly what might be interesting to see, is the list of pages that were visited most often. This is important information – and we have more detailed facts and figures as well. It can be a helpful tool to gauge which of our webpages are less popular or simply do not draw the attention we hoped. We may want to make changes in content and placement to draw more attention to them.

Page ?	Pageviews ? ↓	Unique Pageviews ?	Avg. Time on Page ?
	<b>18,446</b> % of Total: 100.00% (18,446)	<b>13,642</b> % of Total: 100.00% (13,642)	<b>00:01:10</b> Avg for View: 00:01:10 (0.00%)
1. /	<b>2,952</b> (16.00%)	<b>1,935</b> (14.18%)	00:00:39
2. /meetings/	<b>2,888</b> (15.66%)	<b>2,273</b> (16.66%)	00:01:43
3. /events/	<b>1,093</b> (5.93%)	<b>653</b> (4.79%)	00:01:05
4. /meeting-frontpage/	<b>741</b> (4.02%)	<b>529</b> (3.88%)	00:00:36
5. /membership/	<b>553</b> (3.00%)	<b>389</b> (2.85%)	00:00:53
6. /for-newcomers/	<b>550</b> (2.98%)	<b>392</b> (2.87%)	00:00:59
7. /al-anon-and-alateen-events/	<b>543</b> (2.94%)	<b>374</b> (2.74%)	00:00:55
8. /literature/	<b>455</b> (2.47%)	<b>340</b> (2.49%)	00:01:41
9. /about-our-programs/	<b>453</b> (2.46%)	<b>334</b> (2.45%)	00:00:55
10. /contact/	<b>310</b> (1.68%)	<b>254</b> (1.86%)	00:01:44

Just for the fun of it, here are some more statistics...

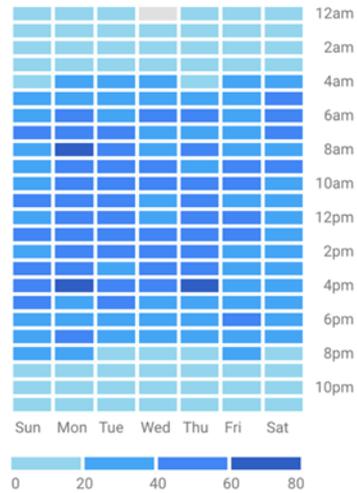
Sessions by device



Mobile 53.5%  
Desktop 38.7%  
Tablet 7.8%

More than 60% of our visitors use mobile devices....

Users by time of day

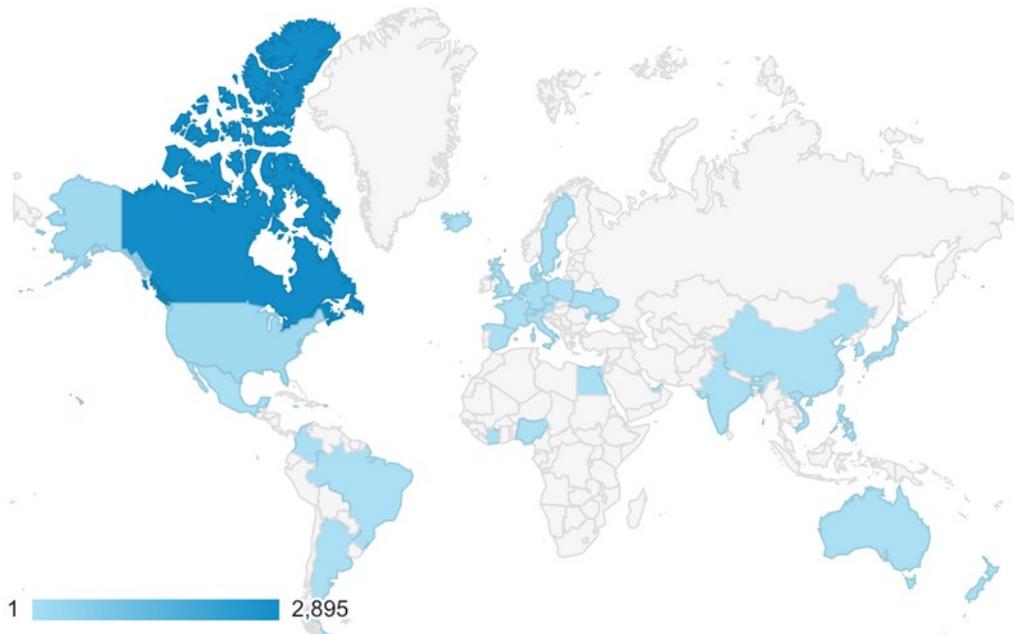


A minimum of our visitors visit us in the darkest hours of the night.

**Our visitors come from many countries...**

(It is probably fair to assume that a lot of software comes from the Asian Pacific Area and I think that is why we have visitors from that part of the world. Helpdesks for technical matters are often located there...)

Nicky D  
Website Coordinator



## **Report from Group Records Coordinator**

Dear Ontario South Members,

Besides thanking Nicky, our new Website Coordinator profusely for all her hard work in transferring the corrected group info, for our entire area, onto the new website, I don't really have much to say right now. Things are progressing per usual this time of year in group records. The WSO has sent out their yearly information change form to groups and changes are slowly coming in.

I am sending my heartfelt best wishes to every single one of you and yours, in these scary, crazy times.

Take care of yourselves, stay HOME and stay SAFE!!

I look forward to seeing all of you again soon!

Love and e-hugs in program,

Tracey S

OSA Group Records Coordinator

## **Report from Area Literature Coordinator**

Hello All

I am so grateful for our incredible fellowship, especially during this time of global concern and social isolation. What better time, to pull out all of our literature for encouragement, support and motivation.

Other news: Peterborough Al-Anon hosted a Writing Workshop with 16 members in attendance. It was very well received. Those present sat at tables of 2 each. The tables were set up in a V formation, giving members privacy and space. We had the room for 2 hours with writing, meditation, soft music in the background, and a break with snacks.

Everyone wrote submissions for the forum and or the new daily reader.

Those who chose to, handed them in for me to drop in the mail.

Others took an addressed and stamped envelope home, to mail when they were ready.

I was really happy with the outcome of the event.

I invite others to contact me when the Covid settles, for writing workshops.

Meanwhile, if anyone has any questions, or requires any direction on writing or anything Literature - please contact me.

Be well

E-Hugs from a Safe Distance

Mary Ellen B.

Hello AWSC Members.

I am going to continue to urge you to utilize The Forum as part of your Al-Anon tools of recovery. Now more than ever it is great to know that new stories sharing experience strength and hope will be delivered to your door.

I also encourage you to write your story, share your journey or send in a photo. You the Members are what make Al-Anon strong and The Forum affords us the opportunity to be together and a part of while never leaving home. Do you know someone new or someone that does not have very much Al-Anon literature? This might be an excellent opportunity to purchase The Forum as a gift of outreach.

Take care of yourself. Be safe. I look forward to seeing you at AWSC.

As always, Yours in Service,

Gwen D.

Alternate Delegate, Forum Coordinator

### LDC update

It is getting closer to the snow being gone and spring arriving. Unfortunately our lives have been put on hold due to the world pandemic of covid19. I do hope you all remain well and find alternative methods to connect and get your Al-Anon support. The literature office will be closed temporarily as this passes. The LOC chair will keep you updated on this through her reports and on the Ontario South website. In the meantime no orders will be processed. Please send them when we are re-opened. Know you are in my thoughts during all of this.

We have the version 2 service manual P-24/27 in stock. Because WSO made so many changes to our service manual they did not this time send an e-mail so we could update our current manual. The new manual looks the same but says VER.2 in the bottom corner and contains all updates. If you wish to order them with tax it is \$10.50. Of course if you are having it shipped that needs to be added.

Also in stock are the Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism. I will endeavour to keep the stock current and any back order should be short lived. As it has never been an item to stock in the past guessing how many I will need is almost like a game. They can be ordered in multiples of 25 for \$13 plus tax of 5%. Mark it boldly on your order for now until we update it.

Did you know that almost every month I send out a literature blurb through the area secretary? It is forwarded to your DRs for your GRs and then for your group. In it I have highlighted all of the pamphlets that we carry. I have just completed sending all of them as of this month and will cycle back to go over them again. I do know a few groups have kept them in a binder and have them as a resource in case anyone is looking for that bit of inspiration and weren't sure what CAL may include it. If you didn't see the ones of the past maybe this refresh will be of benefit to you or another member in the group? Maybe it will help the literature person order new items? Also remember Alateen is not a different program it is just Al-Anon for younger people who may not feel as comfortable in a room of adults. The Alateen literature is a great way to see the program through a simpler lens. Many Al-Anon members use the Alateen literature in their recovery journey. If you haven't seen the literature blurbs and would like to ask your GR or DR for them.

As always I am grateful to be able to serve Ontario South. I am blessed.

In service,

Linda LDC Office Manager

#### **P-64 Alateen Alateen's 4<sup>th</sup> Step Inventory**

Alateen has its own 4<sup>th</sup> Step Inventory book which breaks it down into attitudes, self-esteem, love, responsibility, feelings, relationships, concluding with a list of positive qualities and step 10, how did I do today? While it is geared to Alateen more so than the P-5 and P-91 Blueprint for Progress some Al-Anon members have found it useful in their working of step 4. It might be the item to pick up an event and have a gander through it and see what it has to offer.

#### **P-82 EF Living in a Shelter**

Many have had to run from their alcoholic home for safety but are not sure where to turn after that. Al-Anon has people who understand, people who have lived in similar circumstances. We are affected by the alcoholic and have learned survival skills which were needed in the moment but have made us sick. Before you leave the shelter come and try Al-Anon. You don't need to feel alone.

#### **S-69 Al-Anon Family Groups Welcome Adult Children of Alcoholics**

Alcoholism affects many people not just the alcoholic. For every alcoholic at least four others are affected, and they can be partners/spouses, friends, siblings, parents and children. This pamphlet shares that if you grew up in an alcoholic home there is a safe place to go to find help and hope so that you can live a happier life. It is a pamphlet filled with sharings from adult children as to how they were affected and how they felt. After each sharing there is a response as to what is offered in our Al-Anon program that may help. There is a list of CAL material that may be of specific interest to the adult child coming through our doors and the twelve steps.

#### **S-67 Al-Anon's Path to Recovery –Al-Anon Family Groups Welcome Native Americans/Aboriginals**

It is important that everyone knows they are welcome in Al-Anon if they have been affected by someone's drinking. The pamphlet includes a diagram which uses the steps to draw parallels to the native culture in how the program works. When we connect to familiar things in the culture of others it may offer an insight that in fact it is not opposed to their beliefs and customs but can work in a manner that fits into it. The pamphlet shares what Al-Anon is and is not so possible barriers can be cleared.

#### **K-10C Professional Kit**

This kit includes Fact Sheet for Professionals S-37EF, Information for the Newcomer S-4, Has Your Life Been Affected by Someone Else's Drinking S-20, Are you Troubled by Someone's Drinking S-17, Did You Grow up with a Problem Drinker? S-25, Facts about Alateen P-41 and Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism P-48. This is a great way to get the message to professionals. You may even want to include an Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism magazine.

From the WSO Literature Office

Here's some exciting news to pass on to members in your Area about the new daily reader in development. The Al-Anon member serving as a freelance writer/editor of this book has reviewed all sharings submitted so far and is currently selecting and editing ones to include in drafts for the Literature Committee to review. Based on those received, we still need sharings about the following topics:

**Abundance**  
**Abuse**  
**Concept Two**  
**Concept Six**  
**Concept Seven**  
**Concept Eight**  
**Concept Eleven**  
**Conference approved Literature**  
**Finances/ money**  
**General Warranties of the Conference**  
**Respect**  
**Responsibility**  
**Sex**  
**Shame**  
**Spirituality**  
**Tradition Six**  
**Tradition Eight**  
**Tradition Nine**  
**Trust**  
**Unity**

The Committee hopes that this book will include a variety of members' experiences and backgrounds that clearly demonstrate how Al-Anon can work for anyone affected by someone else's drinking. So far, we've received only a few sharings from members who identified themselves as African American; Alateen; Alateen Group Sponsor; of Asian descent; LGBTQ+; men; people of color; or those who live outside the US and Canada.

A writing guideline is available - [click here](#). Please ask members to send their sharings by June 1 to AFG. Inc., 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617, Attention: "Daily Reader"; at [wso@al-anon.org](mailto:wso@al-anon.org) with "Daily Reader" in the subject line; or [click here](#).

Thank you for all your help in making this new daily reader the best it can be!

Yours in service  
Tom C  
Associate Director--Literature

In addition, Tom C wrote

*For those members who do not have a copy of the March issue of The Forum (the notice is on page six), or wish a handy way to share the message with other members who currently have more time on their hands, here's a link to the same information, which also appeared in our online newsletter, In the Loop: <https://al-anon.org/blog/last-chance-to-share-for-the-new-daily-reader/> Any help you can give is greatly appreciated. Remember, Al-Anon literature comes from Al-Anon members--that's all of us.*

*Thank you for sharing.*

A message from Sue G

*I challenge all of you who may have more time on your hands at the moment to write and submit for the new daily reader.*

## Report from Area Alateen Process Person

Hello. I am your Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP). Yes, I process things to do with Alateen meetings! That includes certifying and recertifying Supportive Al-Anon Members (SAMs) who are involved with Alateen. I also process Alateen group changes, new groups, closures.

**It is Alateen season!** SAMS need to recertify in March of every year. Just complete the one form [Complete a SAM Screening Application and Certification form](#) and arrange to have your District Representative sign it and send it to me. Yes, I can accept electronic versions of this signed form.

*Did you know?*

- \*If you do not recertify every year in time, you are no longer a SAM after July 1.
- \*All certification work for SAMs and Alateen groups must be done every year in order for our Area to keep using the Alateen name.
- \*The first thing to do when starting an Alateen meeting is for a few experienced Al-Anon members to certify as SAMs. Build it, they will come!

To become a SAM for the first time all of the information you need is on the Ontario South Al-Anon website [www.al-anon.alateen.on.ca](http://www.al-anon.alateen.on.ca) Check out the AAPP Coordinator's Corner for a shortened version of the instructions. (If you live in Toronto the process is different, please check with me, your AAPP, and I will provide you with the specific steps to follow.)

Wishing every one of you health in this difficult time.

Sandy O  
Area Alateen Process Person, Area 86

## Report from Alateen Coordinator

Hello All,

Although we are going through a difficult time right now, the slogan "This Too Shall Pass" comes to mind. Teens will especially find this time very trying with no interaction with other teens and other Alateens. I am currently testing out Zoom meetings for the existing meetings which have been closed due to the current situation. Staying in touch through various venues is important. We have been given the gift of recovery which gives us a whole new approach to our daily lives.

I had scheduled a "How to become a SAM and How to open an Alateen Meeting at ORC which has since been cancelled but I may try to get it up on Zoom also.

On a different note I would like to share an experience I had recently which lifted me up and made me extremely grateful for the programs of Al-Anon and Alateen.

I attended the Salt City Mid-Winter Roundup in Syracuse, New York February 7-9. This was very last minute but those of you who know me understand if you say "Road Trip!" my bags are packed and I'm ready to go! Just previous to leaving I received a phone call from a member who asked me to drop off some literature and maybe speak to the councillor at a school because they had had a teen suicide. I of course said that I would. When I got off the phone I said a prayer because my knowledge and understanding of suicide is extremely limited. As we drove to Syracuse this situation was in my mind and heart. When we arrived I found there were several teens and they were having a meeting! I went – explained who I was and asked if I could attend their meeting – they agreed. We began the meeting in the usual way and when it came to the topic it was "Suicide and Self-Harming." As they shared openly about their experience with suicide and self-harm I was brought to tears their sharing and caring for each other. I also was brought to tears in realization that this was my Higher Power giving me a tool that I needed. I explained to them the situation and asked them if I could journal their experiences so I could take it back to Toronto and share them. Their response was "Yes, we love you Wendy." Relating this still brings tears to my eyes in gratitude for the programs and the teens.

**With hugs and hope,**

*Together we can make it!*

**Wendy C.**  
Ontario South Alateen Coordinator  
[os.alateen@gmail.com](mailto:os.alateen@gmail.com)

On behalf of the World Service Office (WSO) we want to thank you for the loving interchange taking place on this community with the practice of Al-Anon principles during this challenging time. We want to share with you that there are numerous websites and apps that are using the Al-Anon name without permission of the WSO and are not in adherence with our policy regarding use of the Al-Anon name online. We ask that when searching for electronic meeting information (i.e. meetings on the phone or online) that you go to the [Electronic Meetings](#) page on al-anon.org. We have close to **300 meetings** to choose from!

If Al-Anon members choose to temporarily set up electronic meetings please use this as a guideline:

- The electronic meeting is to be set up at the same time and day as the face-to-face meeting
- Once it has been determined to meet electronically, share the information with your Area Group Records Coordinator (AGRC), local Al-Anon Information Service or wherever your meeting information is displayed locally online. This way, newcomers will continue to be able to find meetings within their "community." Many local websites have created lists of meetings that have temporarily closed and are posting the electronic information to replace the meeting, if it has been set up.

If possible, try to place a sign at the physical meeting location directing newcomers how to access the meeting electronically.

Remember that this is a temporary status. Once groups are able to meet again, please remind members to close the various conference call lines and online platforms. We hope this information is helpful.

Please stay safe and stay connected!

Love in service,

Sue P

Associate Director - Group Services

### **Zoom Safety in Meetings**

Dear friends,

As we all adjust to this new pandemic reality, many of our groups have turned to Zoom as a low-cost and easy-to-use platform for meeting virtually. We're not the only ones; Zoom has recently exploded in popularity during this pandemic and even the UK government has held cabinet briefings on Zoom.

While virtual meetings appear to be working well in Ontario South so far, Zoom's popularity make it a target for hackers and trolls to disrupt meetings. There is the potential for anonymity to be broken if we're not careful and don't make ourselves familiar with how to safely use new tools like Zoom.

The following Zoom safety suggestions were shared on AFG Connects, and were originally compiled by an AA intergroup in California:

In the Zoom Settings section, under the Meeting subtab:

Scroll through the options in In Meeting (Basic) and In Meeting (Advanced) and change the following settings:

Require Encryption for Third Party Endpoints

Disable Auto saving chats

Disable File transfer

Disable Feedback to Zoom

Disable Screen sharing

Disable desktop/screen share for users

Disable Remote control

Disable Virtual background (While fun, some trolls have been showing up to online meetings with violent and pornographic images as their background.)

In the Zoom Settings section, under the Recording subtab:

Disable Local recording

Disable Cloud recording

Disable Automatic recording

This is not an authoritative list of safety precautions; groups meeting on Zoom can consider which of these settings they feel meet their needs, and can also explore other precautions they feel are necessary.

Staying connected with our fellow members may be more important now, in this time of physical distancing, than ever before in our fellowship's history. Let's connect safely while respecting each other's anonymity as much as possible.

Yours in Service,

Jason W.,

Ontario South Assembly Chairperson

Message from WSO

"In light of government and health authorities' directives regarding COVID-19, the Board of Trustees decided to conduct an abbreviated *virtual* Conference-pertaining only to critical Board matters-the week of April 20, 2020 prior to the Annual Board Meeting and conduct the majority of agenda items via AFG Connects or postpone them to the 2021 WSC.

Therefore, we ask all members who were planning to "Write to Your Delegate," to consider other ways to show your support. *Please do not send cards and love gifts to the hotel.* We know your Delegates and Conference members sincerely appreciate all the hard work that has gone into creating love gifts and encourage you to share them at the Area level since Delegates will be working hard this Conference as always.

Thank you for your help in sharing this message with others who may be planning to mail cards or packages.

Yadi McC

Bilingual Administrative Assistant

Cancelled Events

Saturday, April 25, 2020 - 64th Anniversary, Chatham ON  
Saturday, 2 May - District 1 AI-Anon Day and 68th Anniversary, Parry Sound ON  
Saturday, 2 May - District 25 AI-Anon Day, Trenton ON  
Sunday, June 14, 2020 - District 5 AI-Anon Day, St. Pauls ON

**Open Lines Report**

I will not be sending out a paper copy of Open Lines for April 2020.

Wishing you all good health during this unprecedented situation,

Colleen K,  
Open Lines Coordinator