

OHIO AL-A-NOTES

Volume 40, Issue 1

Al-Anon Family Groups of Ohio, Inc.
PO Box 54, Springfield, OH 45501-0054

“What does HOPE in Al-Anon mean to you;
how do you share it?”

From your Delegate

In my early days of recovery, I focused on the progress or lack thereof, the alcoholic in my life. At one point, someone told me some profound words: “It may not be about saving him, it may be about saving you.” I realized that while it was hard to hope for him to get better, I did have hope that I would get better. My focus shifted. Not only did I get better but eventually he did too.

Hope is trust that my Higher Power will be there with me through thick or thin. Hope is that even when things go wrong, my Higher Power can help me to see the good that can come of it. My hope is reinforced every day if I pay attention to the little “coincidences” that occur on a regular basis, reminding me that my Higher Power is there.

The best I can do to encourage hope in others is to share my experience and strength. Whenever I tell my story, especially with Sponsees, I think I encourage hope.

My hope for my term as delegate is to increase communication within the AWSC and the hope that others can feel they can bring their concerns to me and feel they are heard. Included in that hope is that groups will use the links of service more, not just call WSO. I hope that groups will elect group representatives and participate in the Assembly. Furthermore, my hope is that greater conflict resolution will occur using the principles of the program.

Ginny C., Delegate

From your Alternate Delegate

Like many of us, I thought my particular situation coming into the rooms of recovery was “hopeless,” both for me and for my loved ones.

I found dictionary definitions for hope that fit with what was offered in AFG were:

*to look forward to with desire and reasonable confidence, and
to feel that something desired may happen*

Al-Anon’s Suggested Welcome and Suggested Closing emphasized possibilities that had become realities for people who keep coming back. The words “no situation is really hopeless,” “it is possible for us to find contentment, even happiness,” and “there is no situation too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness to be lessened” are as comforting to me now as they were when I first entered the rooms.

As I kept coming back, my trust in a Higher Power, myself and the Al-Anon program continues to keep hope alive in my heart and mind - and without the fantasies that I would create and would then devastate me when they never came to pass. It is through service work (whether attending a meeting, answering a phone call, helping with public outreach, contributing financially, or taking on a service position at any level) that I can pass on the hope to those still hurting from this family disease of alcoholism. And I continue to hope that my enthusiasm for service will be catching to those I meet in our fellowship!

Theresa M. Alternate Delegate

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2016 Dates to remember:

- **Spring AWSC**
March 12, 2016
- **WSC Banquet** April 11-15, 2016
April 16, 2016
7-10pm
Wyndham Virginia Beach
Resort Hotel
5700 Atlantic Ave
Virginia Beach, VA
- **WSO Tours** April 16, 2016 1-3pm
- **Spring Assembly**
May 21, 2016
- **Ohio Area Convention**
June 24-26, 2016
Holiday Inn Northeast
Mentor, Ohio
- **KOMIAC** Dayton, Ohio
July 29-31, 2016
- **Ohio AA Convention with Al-Anon Participation**
August 19-21 2016
Double Tree Inn
Westlake, Ohio

From Past Delegates

Hope is a level of consciousness I reach where my breathing is calm and deep. I smile and walk lightly, unburdened. My shoulders drop and my jaw relaxes. Recovery in Al-Anon drives me to crawl through the despair to reach the hope. I know it's there but it can be an elusive, seemingly unobtainable feeling. I have to let go of that all too comfortable feeling and false security of being a victim. Sometimes I have to recall the past and nothing assists me in that recall than listening to a newcomer or guiding a member through the Twelve Steps. Service, in any position, is my safety net. My very best thinking will tell me I don't need a meeting today. Service gets me up and out the door, breaking the isolation, a symptom of the disease that has affected me.

Barbara W. Archives Coordinator

An Attitude of Gratitude

From your Secretary

"No situation is really hopeless" is what I hear in the Suggested Welcome. At first I had absolutely NO hope. The alcoholic's drinking was out of control, and I didn't know where to turn. I heard, "Share YOUR experience, strength and hope," but all I wanted to do was talk about the alcoholic. Members smiled, nodded their heads and, after meetings, encouraged me to talk about "me" instead, when I was ready. In the meantime, they said "Keep Coming Back – there's hope here!" I kept coming back and listened to the people talk about themselves and what they had done to overcome the effects of this disease. They encouraged me – read literature, attend meetings and get a sponsor. It took a LOT of encouragement at every hurdle. And then, someone suggested "Service!" "Nope, not me. I'm still trying to cope with this disease." But I got a gentle shove into service and discovered more people sharing their experience, strength and hope. My "family" kept growing as I got more involved, and my "recovery" began to take hold. I could talk about MY experience, strength and hope now (even the bad parts of my experience) and share that hope with others just coming into the program. I discovered that my HP would guide me in the direction that I needed to be going, and I found myself sharing that hope more and more. Yes, I had to "give it to get it". Hope can still be elusive, though. I don't always understand why some things happen as they do. All I can do is trust that my HP has "the plan for me", and ask for the power to carry that plan out. As I continue in service, my Al-Anon family continues to grow, as does my hope to continue to find the priceless gift of serenity.

Phil H, Secretary

Hope! That is one of my favorite topics. Early in recovery my sponsor said to me "Hope is found here."

Al-Anon is where I found HOPE once again. I never was a negative type person, but before recovery I did not see how things were going to change at home because of... well you know you have been there.

As I attended more meetings, talked with my home group members more, read the literature, and had one on one's with my sponsor things began to get better and along with it that ray of sunshine called HOPE was once again in my life. HOPE is hard to define. For me a starting place each day is making today better than yesterday for it is one day at a time and Just for Today!

Just

For

Today

My service position HOPE is to ask members from around Ohio to serve on the Handbook Committee.

Sandy F. Handbook Chairman

From your Treasurer

Shortly after I received the e-mail to write something about Hope for the Al-A-Notes, someone brought a sign to my meeting that said: "Let your hopes not your hurts shape your future." HOPE. I wrote it down and put that in my Courage to Change book.

When I came to Al-Anon I was so full of hurt that I could not even label that feeling. My crying was labeled for me as grief. As I thought about that, I was grieving the loss of my father, my children were growing up and leaving home, my marriage was in trouble, and I had just learned from my brother that he was an alcoholic, although he and dad always drank together.

When I walked into the rooms of Al-Anon, it felt to me as if I had found a home. People there understood me as no others had. They allowed me my hurt and told me "no pain, no gain". I wanted what I found there and was told to go to meetings, read the literature and get a sponsor. I followed those suggestions. Today my life is full of faith, hope and love. Service gives me confidence and the ability to learn and grow. As I have practiced the principles of Al-Anon, my life has gotten a whole lot better. This program gives me hope and my Higher Power has given me the ability to pass that Hope on to others.

Judy A. Treasurer

AWSC March 12, 2016
2040 W. Henderson Road,
Columbus, OH 43220

Sharings from Districts

News from the Districts of Cleveland

2015 Gratitude Night Chair Merri G. reports the evening was a great success by all measures. Donations of funds, food, and raffle gifts were abundant, the speakers were great. The winner of the 50/50 raffle opted to donate the \$206 payout to Alateen! After expenses, The Cleveland Meeting of Districts voted to reimburse the costs of background checks for 4 new Alateen sponsors and divide the remaining proceeds among our 3 service arms with \$90 each to WSO, Ohio, and Cleveland AIS. Oh, what a night! Another **big thanks!** to all the individuals and groups who made that possible.

If you're from the metro Cleveland area, by now you know the answer to the question, "What's small, bright yellow, and has lots of information?" New Cleveland AIS Office Manager Karen P. is including our Al-Anon business cards and the informational flyer in literature orders to groups to encourage participation in Public Outreach. Using WSO's theme of the empty chair, the flyer reminds groups that when we participate in public outreach, we are helping to fill the empty chair at our home groups. The business cards are available free of charge, funded by The Cleveland Meeting of Districts.

Mark Saturday, April 2 on your calendar for the "Spring into Action" workshop sponsored by The Cleveland Meeting of Districts, to be held at the Parma-Snow library in Parma. More info to follow on the Cleveland website.

And we are hosting the 2016 Ohio Area Convention!

See the flier on pages 5 & 6.

Sharing from District 10 (Toledo)

The Alateen Together We Can Make It celebrated their 12 th. Anniversary on January 12th. Also the District Reps are getting together to go over the guidelines for the Districts of Toledo Website Committee. This then will be brought up at our District Meeting in February. We are all working together in unity.

I've been thinking a lot about the Spirit of Al-Anon. The members who come in to set-up for our meetings. Then we have the members who chair the meetings. Members who take on the position of treasurer and seeing that we have literature from WSO. It goes on. We have Group Representatives. Committee such as, Telephone ,Public Outreach, Alateen, and Entertainment, It takes many people to keep these functions going. Then we have our District of Toledo Representatives. It takes so many people working together to keep a district going. Don't let me forget the announcement person, schedule person, District Treasurer and District Secretary. Wow I hope I didn't leave anyone out because everyone is important.

Diane P. District 10 Rep.

2015 Gratitude Night Poem of Thanks

I want to thank all of you who had a part in gratitude night.
The contributions of food, raffle gifts, money, decorations, and time were out-of-sight.
I want to thank my co-chairperson who is not only my cherished sponsor but a wonderful friend.
And a big hug for all the wonderful spouses who pitched in to help all the way to the end.
I have never been part of a 50/50 raffle where the winner donated all the prize money away.
Because of this generous person's heart, \$206 was sent the Alateens way.
Our three cherished speakers provided a message of HOPE.
And shared the gratitude that they have for the program that helped them when they came to the end of their rope.
We had eight groups and 2 individuals who gave money in the amount of \$475 to be used for expenses.
These donations effected all my human senses!
The gorgeous blanket was one of the prized raffle gifts of the night that helped to raise 247 dollars.
And the 50/50 raffle that brought in \$412 dollars deserves a thousand hollers.
Some groups donated raffle baskets that were loaded with goodies.
The only thing missing seemed to be Al-A-Pal hoodies.
We had a packed room because many of you gave up a Friday night to come.
And many of you stayed late to help to make sure the floor was free of any big crumb.
I know that many others could not come because of prior obligations.
But they prayed that the night would be a success and free of any aggravations.
One thing that The Ohio Cleveland Meeting of Districts knows for sure.
Is that Gratitude Night Matters which is better than the most expensive fur.

Love Merri G DR 7

News from Districts of Miami Valley

Miami Valley AIS (Districts of Miami Valley) will participate in the annual Levine Family Health Fair on Saturday, April 18, at Sinclair Community College's Ponitz Center. The event runs from 9 AM - 3:30 PM and offers many free health screenings to the residents in the metropolitan Dayton area. In the past, attendance has been between 5,000 to 10,000 residents. MVAIS will have a public outreach display set up and volunteers from the various groups will be on hand to answer questions.

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.

WSO website — www.al-anon.alateen.org/members

Toll free number **1-888-4ALANON**

WSC April 11-15,2016

Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront
5700 Atlantic Avenue
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451

65th Anniversary Celebration!

Please join Al-Anon members and their guests as they celebrate the 65th Anniversary of Al-Anon Family Groups by attending an open house at the World Service Office followed by a banquet at the Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel on Saturday, April 16, 2016.

The open house, which is free of charge, includes tours between 1:00pm and 3:00pm; the office will close at 4pm. The ticketed dinner banquet, from 6:00pm to 10:00pm, includes speakers. Tickets for the banquet will go on sale in December 2015—please note that space at the banquet is limited.

Details to come via Group e-News, The Forum, and the Members' Web site al-anon.org/members (Enter your group name followed by afg)

Please send love gifts!

If you want to send a card or package to our Delegate at the World Service Conference address it:

Delegate's Name (Hold for WSC 4/11-4/15, 2016)
Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront
5700 Atlantic Ave.
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Please plan to have your cards arrive after April 7th. Remember to write our Delegate's address in the return address section of the envelope in the event that mail delivery is delayed.



AL-A-NOTES SURVEY

Please take this to your groups and send results to me at theresabm44@gmail.com

- Does your group receive its copy three times a year? Y N
Do you usually read the Notes? Y N
Does your group make additional copies for members? Y N
Does your group encourage members to subscribe as individuals? Y N
Do you ever use the topics that are shared on as a topic for the meeting? Y N
Would your groups/members be willing to download the editions from our website and only pay for mailed copies? Y N
If so, would groups/members want/need a postcard to remind them that a new edition was on the website. Y N
Do members understand that no last name, personal addresses or phone numbers will be in the website edition? Y N
Would members like a "heard in a meeting" or "ask a question" section? Y N
What changes would you like to see in the Al-A-Notes?

The "Notes" currently contain sharings on a topic from Officers/Coordinators, ongoing new information from Committee Chairpersons, and happenings occurring in our different Districts. What would make this publication by your Ohio Area Assembly more useful to your groups/members?

2016 Ohio Area Convention ~ TIME TO GROW!



TIME TO GROW!

The Ohio Area Convention in Cleveland

Holiday Inn Northeast - 7701 Reynolds Road, Mentor, Ohio

\$105/room/night + tax

1 king w/sofabed or 2 queen, 1-4 people

1 king handicap, 1-2 people



June 24-26, 2016

Please make hotel reservations directly with the Holiday Inn 440-951-7333.

Use group code "OAC2016"

Friday Speakers: Cynthia (Al-Anon) and Fritz (AA) O., Hermitage, PA

Saturday Speaker: Pat (Al-Anon) and Russ (AA) C., Meadville, PA

Sunday Speaker: Merri G.(Al-Anon), Brook Park, OH

To register, please fill out form below and mail to:

OAC Cleveland
P.O. Box 334
Mentor, OH 44061-0334

Hotel stay NOT required to attend
****Registrations do NOT include meals****
*****You must be registered to attend the Convention*****

Convention Weekend Pre-Registration is \$30 (Pre-Registration cut off is May 21, 2016), \$35 at the door
Al-Anon/AA Alateen (free registration)

Name _____

Checks & Money Orders Payable to:

Address _____

AFG of Ohio

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Registration (select Option 1 OR 2) and Banquet Fees:

Option 1: One day pre-registration fee \$25: _____ (Saturday Only – meals/hotel NOT included)
Option 2: Convention Registration fee \$30: _____ (Weekend Only – meals/hotel NOT included)
Banquet: Saturday Evening Banquet \$30: _____ Circle Meal Choice from p. 6
Total: _____ (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

For more information, please visit the Ohio Assembly website 2016 at: www.ohioal-anon.org (access the calendar tab on the left hand menu on the home page, then scroll down to the convention date)

Or Call Jan S. (Convention Chair) or Kathy B (Convention CoChair) via Cleveland AIS 216-621-1381 p. 5

"Time to Grow!" the 2016 Ohio Area Convention

June 24 - 26

(partial agenda)

Friday

3:00 PM registration opens
4:30 PM early bird discussion
7:30 PM formal opening
AA & Al-Anon leads from PA
Ala-trivia & Ala-bingo
Ala-boutique open
many hand crafted items!

Saturday

7:30 AM stretching with the slogans
8:15 AM early bird discussion
9:30 AM formal opening
Alateen panel with Q & A
art wkshop; writing wkshop
round robin
singing the Al-Anon way
dual member panel

Saturday evening

6:00 PM banquet
7:30 PM basket raffle
8:00 PM AA & Al-Anon leads from PA
Toni & the Tonettes

Sunday morning

9:30 AM Al-Anon lead Merri G.
11:00 AM conference ends

BANQUET \$30 - reserve by May 21 - options:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) London Broil (opt. mushroom sauce) | OPTIONS 1, 2, OR 3 INCLUDE: |
| 2) Salmon with mango salsa | salad, bread, au gratin potatoes, green beans with sweet red |
| 3) <i>vegetarian option: cauliflower steak with creamy mushroom/spinach sauce</i> | peppers, coffee, hot/iced tea, chef's choice dessert |
| 4) <i>gluten-free option: cauliflower steak with creamy mushroom/spinach sauce</i> | OPTION 4 INCLUDES: |
| 5) <i>vegan option: cauliflower steak with olive oil, spinach</i> | salad, garlic mashed potatoes, green beans with sweet red |
| | peppers, coffee, hot/iced tea, fresh fruit dessert |
| | OPTION 5 INCLUDES: |
| | salad, fried wedge potatoes, green beans with sweet red |
| | peppers, coffee, hot/iced tea, fresh fruit dessert |

yellow 2016 OAC T-Shirts - "Time to Grow!"

2016 OAC T-Shirts - see info on the Cleveland website www.clevelandal-anon.org, under "notices" tab check for \$15 payable to AFG of Ohio, send to PO BOX 334, Mentor OH 44060

Hotel Info - Holiday Inn Mentor (440) 951-7333 Rte. 306, just south of Rte. 2

- make reservations directly with the hotel by May 21, limited number of rooms available
- convention rate available Thurs. 6/23 - Sun. 6/26 GROUP CODE "OAC2016"**
- \$105/room/night + tax all rooms NON-SMOKING, equipped with microwave & mini-fridge
- 1 king bed with sofa bed (capacity 1-4 people)
- 2 queen beds (capacity 1-4 people)
- 1 king handicap (1-2 people) tell hotel if you need roll-in shower, not just tub grab bars*
- **NO meals included**
- exercise room, indoor pool
- many restaurants, Great Lakes Mall close by
- SEE Ohio Assembly website for map - www.ohioal-anon.org, click on "calendar" tab on left**

<p>Delegate:</p> <p>Ginny C delegate@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Alternate Delegate / Newsletter Editor:</p> <p>Theresa M alternatedelegate@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Area Chair:</p> <p>Buff N chairman@ohioal-anon.org</p>
<p>Secretary:</p> <p>Phillip H secretary@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Area Treasurer:</p> <p>Judith A treasurer@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Alateen Coordinator:</p> <p>Tina L alateen@ohioal-anon.org</p>
<p>Archives:</p> <p>Barbara W archives@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Forum:</p> <p>Christine T forum@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Group Records:</p> <p>Robin R grouprecords@ohioal-anon.org</p>
<p>Literature:</p> <p>Karen Mck literature@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Public Outreach:</p> <p>Jane E publicoutreach@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Review Committee Chair:</p> <p>OPEN review@ohioal-anon.org</p>
<p>Budget Committee Chair:</p> <p>Donna K budget@ohioal-anon</p>	<p>Bylaws & Handbook:</p> <p>Sandra F bylaws@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Compliance / AAPP:</p> <p>Karen P compliance@ohioal-anon.org</p>
<p>Registration Committee Chair:</p> <p>Karen S registration@ohioal-anon</p>	<p>Two Day Fall / OAC Committee Chair:</p> <p>Lee R twodayfall@ohioal-anon.org</p>	<p>Website Committee Chair:</p> <p>Michael K website@ohioal-anon.org</p>

IN KEEPING WITH THE TRADITIONS, PLEASE RESPECT THE ANONYMITY OF THESE INDIVIDUALS

The AI-A-Notes, voice of the Ohio Area Assembly, is published three times a year. All groups registered with Assembly receive a free subscription, mailed to the Current Mailing Address. The World Service Office, Ohio AIS offices, District Representatives, Assembly Officers and Coordinators also receive complimentary subscriptions. Please direct any comments or questions regarding AI-A-Notes to the Alternate Delegate. Please send group information changes to your local AIS, District Representative, the Ohio Group Records Coordinator, and the World Service Office.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Send all **GROUP DONATIONS** to:
 AFG OF OHIO
 PO Box 524
 Columbiana, OH 44408-0524

Every Registered group in Ohio will receive a free copy of the Al-A-Notes at their current mailing address. Paid subscriptions are for individuals or for extra group copies. If you are not receiving a copy three times a year, check with Group Records or the Alternate Delegate.

Please include your **Group's ID number**, including the **District number**, on the check and whether a "plea donation" or "group donation"



We are on the Web
www.ohioal-anon.org

OHIO AL-A-NOTES ORDER FORM

One Year \$3.50

Two Years \$6.75

(circle one)

CK # _____ DATE ___/___/_____

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(circle one)

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PHONE # _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____

Make all checks payable to: AFG of Ohio CK# _____ DATE ___/___/_____

Send to:

AFG OF OHIO
 PO BOX 54
 Springfield, OH 44501-0054

Look on the address label for your subscription's season/year of expiration
 Al-A-Notes subscription information is also available at: www.ohioal-anon.org