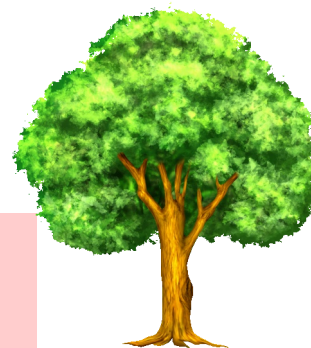





growing oaks



OAKLAND COUNTY
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS
NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2018




There are always lots of fun, exciting events going on in Al-Anon. Some upcoming events can be found starting on page 8, but be sure to check out the website for Oakland County Al-Anon/Alateen for even more information:



OAKLANDAFG.ORG



Need to find a meeting?



You can find an up to date list of Oakland County Al-Anon Meetings at our website (link above) You can email us at the newsletter or contact the office through the website for information on locations and times for Alateen meetings.



Growing Oaks is a quarterly publication of
Oakland County Al-Anon/Alateen
Family Groups
Phoenix Square Office Building
3720 Elizabeth Lake Road
Waterford, MI 48328
248-706-1020

oaklandafg.org

Edited by Greg B.
This is **YOUR** newsletter: Your articles and
announcements are welcome!
Please email to:
digadigadig@yahoo.com

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Trusted Servants



For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern.

Al-Anon/Alateen Second Tradition

2018 BOARD MEMBERS

Chairperson:	Ruth O.	248 547-8893
Co chair:	D.Z.	248 514-0079
Secretary:	Karen B.	810 241-2650
Treasurer:	Mitch S.	248 324-1448
Members at Large:		
	Heather D.	248 787-6070
	Jackie F.	248 321-0749
	Haley K.	248 461-7053



VITAL TRUSTED SERVANTS

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District 14 Rep	Michelle B.	248 941-1644
District 14 Alt Rep	Lynda E.	248 543-7756
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	Alisa B.	248 404-7206
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Newsletter Editor	Greg B.	202 345-3681
Meeting List Editor	Renee F.	248 821-3359

A story about SPONSORSHIP

I met my sponsor (K.) at a treatment center support group, which I attended for 6 weeks in the early months of 2013, while my child participated in the Outpatient program there. She and her husband operated sort of like "plants" in the group; they were there as veterans to provide insights to families who, generally, had no experience dealing with an addicted family member. They talked about how they reached the point at which they both sought recovery, and they shared their experience, strength and hope.



At the support group, we were encouraged to attend Al-Anon meetings, and I followed the rules and did so. I recall attending one meeting when I once again saw K. and decided to ask her to be my sponsor. It made me nervous - my lack of self-esteem made me question why anyone would want to spend that much time and effort to be with me. Why in the world would K. (the person I admired most in the program) want to sponsor me? But she said yes, with the caveat that she required that her sponsees really work the steps. I agreed not really knowing what that meant.

For the first couple of years, we'd meet for an hour or more every weekend - sometimes for coffee; sometimes for breakfast or lunch at our favorite place. We worked at her house on her screened in porch in the Spring or when it rained, or in her backyard in the summer. We'd work the steps, learn about the transitions and concepts and finish book after book.

And she helped me through the tough times. When my son left his rehab facility and showed up on my front porch and I turned him away, my sponsor was there to support my decision and listen to my sobs of uncertainty. When he walked away from rehab (twice) and I told him that he couldn't come home, my sponsor was there to listen to my fears. She gave me the support that I could not receive at meetings and let me share the mess with her - while I went to meetings to share and receive the message.

My sponsor encouraged me to do the 4th step, which introduced me to a person who has now become a lifelong friend. She introduced me to the County Board of Al-Anon and now 3 years later, I'm the Board Chair. She took me with her to the State Assembly to see how the fellowship works. She invited me to events to meet other people in recovery. My sponsor encouraged me to do Open Talks and to speak at conferences. I attend when she's speaking, and she does the same for me. She encouraged me to accept sponsees of my own, and I currently have two - one whom I meet nearly every Saturday evening before our meeting and the second one who calls me – usually during a crisis.

My sponsor has enriched my life and furthered my recovery. She has worked the steps with me and taught me about the traditions and the concepts. K. has watched me grow in the program and has given me insights that I could not have had without her. She has introduced me to other people in recovery and furthered my involvement in the fellowship. I am blessed to have K. as my sponsor. She has been there for me during a challenging time in my life and has made a difficult situation manageable - even pleasant. For the program and for my sponsor, I am so grateful.

- Ruth O.

Next month's challenge to you: Some people are reluctant to find a sponsor or to become one. If sponsorship is just another tool to aid in recovery, what are you waiting for? Sponsors, what have you learned from being one? Sponsees, what have you gained from getting one? Write it up! Share it with your group! Or email the newsletter and we will print some of the submissions in the Fall 2018 issue. Email to digadigadig@yahoo.com with the subject line "Fall 2018 Share."



*Hope and Help for Young People who are the relatives
and Friends of a Problem Drinker*

KOMIAC

KOMIAC (Kentucky Ohio Michigan Indiana Alateen Convention) took place July 27-29th at the University of Louisville in Kentucky. The theme of KOMIAC XLIV was "Light Tomorrow with Today." Friday morning, Oakland County teens & sponsors got on a bus with teens and sponsors from across Michigan and made the trip south. Over 200 people attended this year's KOMIAC. The weekend was filled with meetings and workshops, and the teens elected our new state rep and alternate: Summer & Muni. There were lots of fun activities - a talent show, a dance, and the traditional state games - Michigan's volleyball team tied for first place! It was a great weekend, but let's hear it from the people who were actually there:



We asked the teens and their sponsors this question: How would you describe your 2018 KOMIAC experience?

Here's what the Alateens had to say...



"KOMIAC was very fun and exciting. At first, I was very nervous, but when I got there, I already realized how much people love you there. It's like I have known them forever! It's a great experience every year to see other people similar to me. I definitely enjoyed it and will be coming again next year."

"My KOMIAC experience was unreal. I've gone to five KOMIACs but every time is a totally different experience. It feels so amazing going there and meeting so many people who know exactly what I am going through. I'm so grateful that I have the opportunity to meet so many people and experience so much healing all in one weekend."

"KOMIAC was awesome! I met a lot of people and felt so much love! It was such a healing weekend! I think the dance and Unconditional Love was my favorite part!"



"KOMIAC is where it's okay to hear, talk, and feel. KOMIAC makes you feel like you've been lost your whole life and you finally found home. KOMIAC gives you of feeling of being around friends who are more like family. KOMIAC is a place where it's okay to cry."

"KOMIAC has changed my life. KOMIAC was in fact better than Christmas, as many said it would be. I'll never not feel like I'm worth it again. I'll never feel alone again. I met so many people, and all of them were kind and non-judgmental. It was such an insane experience in the aspect that nobody nowadays is respectful and nice anymore. KOMIAC was surreal, and I'll never experience anything like it again."



Here's what the Sponsors had to say...

"Each year, KOMIAC gets better and better. This year, I roomed with a sponsor I didn't know well, but by the end of weekend, I had a new Alateen BFF! As a sponsor, I got to sit on the sidelines and watch miracles happen right before my eyes. It's hard to describe what it's like be with a 200 teens who are recovering from the effects of alcoholism. The kids who get off the bus on Sunday are a transformed version of the ones who rode down to KOMIAC on Friday morning."

"This was my first experience as an aspiring new sponsor. The Kentucky accommodations were better than I imagined! Bradley, the Kentucky Chair, was personable and quite entertaining throughout the weekend. The teens blew me away as I watched how guarded many of the newbies were as well as myself. I liken this experience to watching a bud bloom into an exquisite flower and ultimately into a beautiful bouquet."



"This was my twelfth KOMIAC. I started as a teen and then became a sponsor. It's amazing to see the first-time kids on the bus shy and unsure of what they are about to endure. By the end of the weekend they have opened up and made new friends. They are home. Every year I am reminded of how KOMIAC gave me that very same gift as a teen."

"My KOMIAC experience was amazing. Very hard to describe it to someone who's never been. As an adult, simply being there, connects to that still healing inner child. To be a part of such powerful healing and love shared among all of the teens and sponsors alike, is like nothing else I've experienced, anywhere. I agree when hearing that KOMIAC can be a life changing experience and a wonderful enhancement to my recovery program."



"It has been a great experience attending KOMIAC as one of the Alateen Sponsors. Personally, I think this conference was very well organized and very successful. I fully enjoyed spending the weekend and connecting with so many interesting, loving, caring and supporting Alateens and Sponsors from the other states. Hearing the Alateen open talk at the formal dinner was truly amazing and spoken from the heart and made my weekend special. One final remark, love is kind; that was evident at the conference, we cannot get out of it. We are to love and be patient and kind in the same way our higher power is with us. That was evident."



What, Me Worry?

When I was in college, I had a poster on the wall of my dorm room. It said simply – “Don’t worry; it might never happen.” One of my favorite sayings then and now is – “things have a way of working out.”

Much of my former life had been spent worrying. And then several things happened to change that. First, I was in a serious automobile accident which made me realize that life is too short to spend a good part of it worrying. Then, I adopted my son. And as a single working parent, I had too many details in my head to allow worry to take over.

And when I became a part of the fellowship and started working the steps with my sponsor, I realized just how much time I spent worrying about things over which I had absolutely no control. At the same time, I matured and realized that things do have a way of working out. Some things work out on their own. For example, when I practiced law, I worried about the question that I didn’t ask at a deposition or my lack of a response when asked a question by a judge at oral argument. But, in time, most cases settle anyway, and it didn’t really matter in the end.

On the other hand, most things work out, because we make them work out and, as we get older and practice the principles of the program, we gain a wiser, more mature perspective on life. When things go wrong or don’t work out as we had hoped, we try not to look back and dwell on the past; instead, we learn from our mistakes and look ahead – viewing our mishaps as learning experiences and opportunities for growth. Significantly, we learn that just because we didn’t succeed in this one thing, we haven’t failed at life.

I have a note of inspiration taped to the cabinet above my desk at work. It says simply - "Life is 10% about what happens to us and 90% how we react to it." Indeed, I read something similar in the preface to the book “Man’s Search for Meaning” by Viktor Frankl - a book about one person's experience in the Auschwitz concentration camp during World War II - not conference-approved literature, but still good. It says there: “Forces beyond your control can take away everything that you possess in life, except one thing and that is your freedom to choose how you will react to a particular situation. You cannot control what happens to you, but you can always control how you feel and what you will do about what happens to you.”

Being a member of the fellowship has helped me to re-gain that sense of control - control over how I react and respond to my situation and for that, I am forever grateful.

- Ruth O.

You REALLY Want To Be the new Oakland AFG Literature Coordinator



We Need You!

What does it take to be Oakland AFG's literature coordinator? It's simple! The main thing is a desire to serve the fellowship, and to enjoy being in recovery. You may ask yourself, "Self? What is required for me to volunteer for such a ***GREAT POSITION?***"

Here it is:

- Some computer skills
- The ability to read an order form
- Donation of time (approximately 8hrs per month)
- A desire to meet people
- Basic arithmetic skills

You're probably asking yourself how these things are applied and/or how the current coordinator does their job. Good question!

1. We check what's in stock and get our shopping list together.
2. Next we logon to the WSO website literature section
3. Now we shop!
4. When the order arrives in the mail, we unbox, stamp and price everything. Then we update the inventory in the computer (easy), and stock the shelves.
5. During the monthly Group Rep meeting, we sell the literature.

It's easy, it's fun, and you learn about Al-Anon/Alateen literature. So, unleash your inner librarian and jump at the chance to become the new Literature Coordinator. Your efforts will help many people gain serenity. How can you say no to this offer?

If I've convinced you to volunteer, great! Please call **Mike A. at 248 376-2394** or email the newsletter editor at digadigadig@yahoo.com to express your interest!

OAKLAND AFG DISTRICTS 12 & 14 CALENDAR OF EVENTS*

August 2018

August 4: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am
August 4: Alateen Panel 11:00 am @ Our Lady of Refuge Catholic Church, 3750 Commerce Rd, Orchard Lake
August 6: Anniversary Celebration, Potluck Brunch and Speakers @ 9:00 am, Peace at the End of the Road AFG, Trinity Episcopal Church, 26880 La Muera Dr., Farmington Hills, MI
August 11: AWSC, St. Louis, MI
August 17: Alateen U of M Stadium Tour & Alateen Meeting, RSVP Mitch 248-722-5751 or Haley 248-461-7053
August 27: Public Outreach Meeting 7pm, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Room 220

September 2018

September 8: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am
September 24: 4th Step Kickoff Meeting, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Room 220, 7:30 pm
September 28-30: Tri-County Conference, AA with Al-Anon participation, Wyndham Garden Hotel, Sterling Heights

October 2018

October 1: Public Outreach Meeting 7pm, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Room 220
October 6: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:
October 13: Fall Assembly, St Louis, MI
October 15: Tentative Open Talk, Peace at the End of the Road, 9:30am, Trinity Episcopal, 20880 LaMuera St. Farmington Hills
October 29: Public Outreach Meeting 7pm, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Room 220

November 2018

November 3: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:
November 10: AWSC, - St. Louis, MI
November 12: Surviving the Holidays, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, 8:30 pm
November 17: Oakland County AFG Fall Fundraiser Workshop, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham
November 26: Public Outreach Meeting 7pm, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Room 220

December 2018

December 1: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am
December 17: Public Outreach Meeting 7pm, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Room 220

2019 and Beyond

March 8-10: March Round Up
March 9: AWSC St. Louis, MI
May 3-5: Al-Anon State Conference, Shanty Creek Resort
June 8: Spring Assembly, St. Louis, MI
August 10: AWSC St. Louis, MI
October 12: Fall Assembly, St. Louis, MI
Nov 19: AWSC St. Louis, MI
July 2020: International AA Convention with full Al-Anon/Alateen Program – Detroit, MI

**Calendar includes Al-Anon events and AA events with Al-Anon participation. Dates/Events subject to change or cancellation. See Oaklandafg.org>Events /Flyers for latest information and updates on Al-Anon/Alateen events.*

Information as of 8/2/2018

DON'T BE LATE!

SAVE THE DATE!

"Adventures in Recoveryland"

Oakland County AFG
Annual Fall
Fundraiser/Workshop

November 17, 2018

First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham

- ☐ Recovery Workshop
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Fun
- ☐ Fellowship
- ☐ Silent Auction

Oakland County AFG's Fall Fundraiser is our biggest source of funding to keep our office running, including rent, insurance, telephone service, website expenses, office supplies, and more! Mark your calendar now for this important event and remember to bring a friend!

Volunteers needed. To join the fun, contact Michelle at obrillhart@aol.com or 248-941-1644.

More will be revealed!



"Spiritual Principles in Action"



31st Annual Tri-County Conference

September 28th, 29th and 30th, 2018

The Wyndham Garden Sterling Heights
34911 Van Dyke, Sterling Heights, MI



Registration Fees:

AA & Al-Anon before 9/15/18: \$15

AA & Al-Anon after 9/15/18: \$20

*Sunday - At Will A.K.A. Free!!

Alateen registration is a \$5
flat rate all weekend

ALL PROCEEDS CONTRIBUTED TO AA INTERGROUP
OFFICES OF THE TRI-COUNTY AREA

Saturday Night Banquet

Must purchase tickets by 9/15/18

*Reserved seating at Saturday night
Open Meeting for Banquet attendees*

DECLICIOUS BUFFET!

HOTEL ROOMS AT REDUCED RATES!

\$99.00 U.S. (PLUS TAX) - NO WATER PARK

\$10.00 U.S. (PLUS TAX) - PER WATER PARK PASS

REDUCED RATE ROOMS MUST BE RESERVED BY AUGUST 30, 2018

THE WYNDHAM GARDEN STERLING HEIGHTS HOTEL
586-979-1400

Register Online at:
www.Tri-CountyConference.org

FRIDAY

EVENING AA SPEAKER

MATT C.
NASHVILLE, TN

SATURDAY

AFTERNOON AA SPEAKER:

KIM O.
DETROIT, MI

SUNDAY

AFTERNOON AA SPEAKER:

JULI M.
KENNESAW, GA.

AFTERNOON AL-ANON SPEAKER:

PAMALAR B.
DETROIT, MI

EVENING AA SPEAKER:

JOSHUA H.
TORONTO, ON

ENTERTAINMENT:
Friday Evening: Dance
Saturday Evening: Comedy

ASL INTERPRETER PROVIDED FOR DEAF & HEARING IMPAIRED GUESTS DURING FRI AND SAT MAIN SPEAKERS ONLY

PLEASE MAIL REGISTRATION FORM TO: TRI-COUNTY CONFERENCE, P.O. BOX 4324, TROY, MI 48099

You can help support Royal Oak Alateen!

How?

By attending Royal Oak Al-Anon on Thursday nights at 8 pm, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 814 N. Campbell Rd. (south of 12 Mile).

Attendance at this Al-Anon meeting has been very low lately, making it difficult to meet expenses. Royal Oak has the only Alateen meeting in southern Oakland County. The only other one, Ferndale, had to close a few months ago because there wasn't sufficient Al-Anon attendance to continue to pay for the building. Please help our teens save their meeting! If you are able, please commit to attending this meeting, if only once a month. Every little bit helps! Thank you!



To Myself, as a Newcomer

Dear Bill,

Today is your 28th birthday. You are going to your very first Al-Anon meeting. You don't realize it now, but this is the greatest birthday present you will ever receive. You won't understand a lot of what is said today. But you will remember how incredibly friendly and welcoming everyone was, and how they all encouraged you to "Keep coming back!" You will have walked a good distance to get to this meeting, but someone you will meet for the first time will be kind enough to drive you home afterward. This is the kind of people you will meet in Al-Anon.

Here you will find the tools you have long needed to fix what is wrong in your life, problems whose cause you hadn't been able to pinpoint, and problems you hadn't even realized existed. This truly is the first day of a brand new life... and what better day to begin it, than on your birthday! Happy Birthday, and keep coming back!

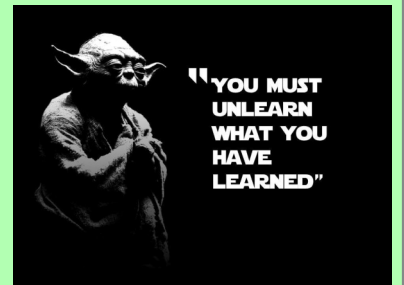
Bill C, Ferndale

Dear Self,

You've been going through a rough patch the past few years and finally decided enough is enough. You're stepping foot into your first Al-Anon meeting, and you are desperate to get the advice you need to get your wife to finally stop drinking. I know you've been reluctant to go, that 12 step programs aren't for you, that you think since she's the one with the problem so why should you be the one trying to get help? Keep coming back, my friend. You'll quickly learn, or re-learn, that you can only control your own behavior, and that this one nugget of wisdom is enough to help you get through this. The strangers in this room know what you've been going through, and they won't be strangers for long. The fact that they are laughing doesn't mean they have totally lost it. You'll be laughing at these meetings too, eventually.

Just by listening to others sharing their experience, strength, and hope, and sharing your own, you'll figure out ways of being that make you feel better and enrich your life. Reading this note from your future self, you probably don't believe me. But despite the drinking getting worse, (and yes, I know that sucks to hear...) most days you are happier than you've been in years, and your life is richer than ever. Keep coming back. This is for you, not for her.

Greg B.



Al-Anon Family Groups

Oakland County, Michigan

Strength and hope for friends and families of problem drinkers

Remember to check the website for more announcements!

OAKLANDAFG.ORG