

Annual General Meeting
November 2022



Dear S.O.A.R. Members and Guests:

I am honored for the opportunity to be part of “Survivors of Abuse Recovering (S.O.A.R.)” and to serve as your Chair of the Board of Directors. This year has been a year of change, growth, and continuing the support of adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse throughout Nova Scotia during a continuing world-wide pandemic.

I recognize the meaningful contributions of the Board of Directors, who put great effort into achieving our goals and moving S.O.A.R. forward, by sharing their talents and adding lasting value to the future growth of S.O.A.R. Thank you to our Board of Directors; Peter Kiefl (Treasurer), Margo Stevens (Secretary), Earle Illsley, Karen Cox, and Jill Connors. The Board of Directors accepted the resignations of Barry Livingstone in November and Kathy Whitewood in December, and then new member Judy Harrington in April.

While we no longer have a physical space to call our own, the Youth Portal of Kentville has generously offered their space to us. We have used it often for Peer Supporter Training. Many thanks to the Youth Portal for supporting us in this manner.

We continue to hold our meetings online using videoconferencing software. This technology is facilitating our continued expansion throughout the province, including a prospective Board member this evening from Baddeck. We have active Peer Supporters from Newfoundland to Ontario.

Despite the success last year of merging the Coordinator position with the new Peer Mentor position, staffing issues led us to separate them again this year. The silver lining to this is that we welcomed Jedidja Dzieziejko back into the S.O.A.R. family as our coordinator once again. We have created the Peer Mentor program and have two active mentors for our Peer Supporters: Alice Vanhattem and Karen Martin. We hope to hire consultant and fellow S.O.A.R. member Heidi Kalyani to complete our Peer Mentor project to train members as facilitators and create a group support program.

The S.O.A.R. Board continues to work to procure stable funding for an office and an Executive Director. An Executive Director would take over the day-to-day operations that the Board currently oversees, therefore freeing up the Board to concentrate on oversight and governance. To that end, we hope to embark on a Strategic Planning exercise in this coming year.

The Mutual Aid Project, a.k.a. The Sexual Violence Peer Support Network, concluded in March 2022, coming in two years late but on budget. We still struggle to see this group fulfill its potential.

In other committee work we continue to improve our policies, have reviewed and updated our website, have had two positive public relations articles published in the local newspaper, and are planning a couple of big events for the coming 30th anniversary year.

As we look to the future, some of our key priorities for the coming year include:

- Continuing to provide Peer Support services to peers who call upon us.
- Completing the current Peer Supporter training and incorporating the lessons learned into our program.
- Writing a Strategic Plan for the future of S.O.A.R.
- Securing stable funding for an Executive Director and a physical office.
- Celebrating our 30th anniversary.

The Board of Directors will continue working on these 2022/2023 goals and encourage you to attend our December 14, 2022 regular meeting. Meetings are always open to S.O.A.R. members and take place the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm online using Zoom. We look forward to also meeting in person again sometime in the future.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank all Peer Supporters and members for your dedication to S.O.A.R. and I look forward to serving you in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Vey,
Chair