

# Conference Summary 1973

# AL-ANON

Thirteenth Annual World Service Conference  
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS  
New York, N. Y. — April 25-29, 1973



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## Theme of the Conference:

## Participation: Key to Harmony

The spirit of this theme pervaded every moment of the Conference. It conveyed to all those present the need to enter into the fellowship's activities, to take part, to reach out to those in need and to cooperate without stint in Al-Anon's work. Only then can it fulfill its purpose throughout the world.

## Lois's Welcome

Dear Friends:

Welcome to Al-Anon's Thirteenth Conference for Delegates. The task before you is so important that it can affect the lives of Al-Anon members the world over.

I have all confidence in your complete dedication and that it will aid you in making wise decisions for its future.

But do not let the seriousness of your task stand in the way of your enjoying each other's companionship and the fun of working and playing together. I'm sure it will be the very best Conference yet.

The Conference began, as it traditionally does, with a gala dinner for the Conference members and their guests, and friends from the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Our Lois, glamorous in all white, welcomed us, after which there was an inspiring talk by Virginia M., our Delegate from North Carolina.

She had found, as so many of us have, that our happiness does not depend on someone else's sobriety, nor does that sobriety solve family problems until we learn to deal with our own character flaws. She said she was still "bitter, confused, resentful and thoroughly unhappy" when she first came to Al-Anon, where she finally found what she had so long needed.

"I ordered a copy of every piece of literature, including the books. I started reading—only reading at first, but then studying the Steps, the Slogans—and then came the sharing—all of which brought meaning to my life."

"When I came to taking my Step Four inventory, it began like a pocket mirror and grew into a full-length one." I now accept the way things have happened in my life as being necessary. God always meets my needs . . ."

It was a beautiful talk and was applauded to the echo! We

all knew what she meant, for all of us had shared, in some way, her experience.

After our dinner guests left, we settled down to the serious business of the Conference, which began with the report of the Admissions Committee:

## NEW CONFERENCE MEMBERS

Chairman Edith of the Admissions Committee welcomed two new Area Delegates: Rhode Island and Idaho have joined the

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Conference. Rhode Island has been assigned to Panel 13 ('73-'75) and Idaho to Panel 12 ('72-'74).

The groups of the United Kingdom and Eire and those of West Virginia have arranged to be represented at this WSC. We welcome them both!

\* \* \* \* \*

Penny, the Conference Chairman, then called the roll, after which Ted, President of the Board of Trustees, read the Twelve Traditions and welcomed us all to the World Service Conference.

### OPERATION DELEGATES HEADSTART

Last year at the suggestion of Elaine D. (Fla.) came one of the most valuable and needed innovations in Conference history: *Operation Delegates Headstart*.

This new program aimed to prepare first-year Delegates for their vital function in this top-ranking decision-making body of the fellowship. It spelled out Pre-Conference activities, explained how to make the best use of all elements of the Conference. It helped new Delegates approach their participation with confidence, gave them the support of more experienced members, made them feel comfortably at home with the vast mass of discussion and problem-solving that helps to guide the fellowship's WSO servants throughout the year. It explained in detail the methods of "delivering the Conference" to their groups.

Preparation is done months in advance by communication between the Chairman and the DHS panelists.

What follows gives ample proof how well this Conference feature is working. It shows how brilliantly Pauline S., the Chairman, and her panelists carried out the program initiated at last year's WSC.

\* \* \* \* \*

After a warm greeting, Pauline introduced Margaret R., (Va.) who gave us this inspiring message:

"The theme I was given to talk to you about is 'Getting Ready for the Conference' and my first thought was, 'How does one get ready to be thrown into a cement-mixer?' Perhaps that's not such an absurd comparison—aren't we many different particles who, undergoing the tremendous event of a World Service Conference, are being molded into something unified and unique, strong enough to hold all the different groups together? One thing is sure: after this experience, we will never be the same.

"How well I remember my first year's preparation. Our former Delegate, Dee M., gave me a stack of reports on the earlier WSCs; I studied them week after week, taking notes, trying to get a mental picture of what the Conference would be like. But you know how impossible it is to imagine it! I began to get an inkling of the love and care with which our Al-Anon structure and program are put together, from the great decisions to the most minute detail. We take so much for granted in Al-Anon. All we want to know is how to find help to ease our pain. We seldom wonder where this help is coming from and how much thought and work it takes to make it so effective.

"Now I was going to be one of those workers, learning the blueprints of this structure with all the other Delegates, the Trustees and the World Service Office, testing, comparing, concerned about its safety, its upkeep and its growth. I learned to use my Handbook as never before and this Handbook, especially in the new and easy-to-read edition, has become a reliable friend, a vital part of my Al-Anon literature.

"As a Delegate, I have to be well-informed and concerned with world-wide Al-Anon as well as with my own Area. Even though I had worked my way up through the ranks as a GR and DR, these new Area-wide and world-wide dimensions seemed overwhelming at first. Intensive study of the Twelve Concepts helped to answer many questions and to take a lot of the vagueness out of 'what goes on up there.'

"Finally, there is the exciting pre-Conference correspondence. Those letters coming from Headquarters, the questionnaires for the planned Workshops and the Delegates' Brochure which bring us up to date and help us prepare each session of the Conference.

"Of course reading and studying alone would not be enough; I needed nearly everyone in my Area to help me! I attended many District meetings to get to know the GRs and to have them know me and trust me. I learned about their needs, problems and ideas, and then met with the World Service Committee, this wonderful group of willing and giving Al-Anons without whom we simply could not do our jobs. But I had to remember my duties were not limited by the concerns of my Area—my concern from now on would be Al-Anon world-wide.

"I have never felt this to present a conflict, or even to be something like 'wearing two hats.' My love for Al-Anon is growing from the inside out, starting with a few individuals, then embracing my group, my District, my Intergroup, my state and now the whole world. It is the same love granted to me by the same grace."

Margaret then went on to speak of spiritual preparation which, she said, must be done by each of us in a very personal way.

"I cannot tell you how to do it, but I can tell you what can happen if you don't. I had the painful experience last year when I let myself get carried away with 'busy-ness'—ambitiously trying to be a 'perfectly-prepared' Delegate. Don't ever try it, please! Let Go and Let God is meant for Delegates, too. Forgetting this, I promptly fell into several of my oldest traps, one especially, *comparing*. It is so easy to be impressed by the activities in other Areas whose marvelous reports you will hear, and by the strong and glowing personalities you will meet, that in comparison your Area might seem rather underprivileged and you might feel totally incompetent. Please don't let this happen to you. We all are, as persons as well as Areas, in different stages of development. We are all special and unique. Delegates from predominantly rural Areas will always have different things to report than those from the cities; North is different from South, East from West; each state, even, has its own individuality. We can't all have rotating neon signs on skyscrapers like Texas, but we may dream about it for the future!"

Beverly from Maine was our next speaker on this vital topic.

"When Pauline called to ask if I would share in this panel, I said, as we're supposed to do in Al-Anon, YES. After we'd hung up, I panicked. What had I done! And that's the first thing NOT to do—*don't panic!*

"Really there is no reason to—there's always someone to help when you need it. No one need ever be alone, even a first-year Delegate!

"To me, being at the Conference is like being in my own home group. No question is too stupid to be asked; if it is bothering you, it's probably bothering someone else, too. So do ask!

"Before I left home last year, our previous Delegates had shared much of their experience with me. When I got here,



I found the same friendly helpfulness. I was given everything I'd need to take part in the Conference—the literature, the Delegates' Brochure—everything that told me where I was expected to be and when to be there. I read it all carefully.

"Taking notes was very important. The feelings and sights and sounds of the Conference were so overwhelming that I knew I couldn't possibly remember all I'd want to recall for future use. My notes served as an accurate reference of facts and figures and the sequence of events.

"Operation Headstart meant a great deal to me last year. It made me aware of why I was here and how best to serve that purpose.

"Before I had an opportunity to visit the World Service Office, I couldn't imagine the scope and size of it, and all the various facets. The Conference didn't mean just the sessions; every free minute was packed with inspiration and rewards. Mealtimes were opportunities to get together with other Delegates and Staff and Trustees. I never saw five days pass so quickly!"

The third speaker on the panel was Pauline herself. Like a true Al-Anon, she had undertaken the most exacting of the topics to be covered, and did it full justice! Her theme: *Reporting Back After the Conference*. Her suggestions are capsulized in the following notes and quotes:

- The most effective reports are those given *personally* by the Delegate, supplemented by a written report, made available at the Assembly so the information can be taken back and shared with the groups.

"It is important to convey the *feel* or *personality* of the Conference, to let your enthusiasm shine through. This makes the Conference come alive when it is shared with the groups back home.

"I have used charts, graphs, pictures of the WSO staff, the other Delegates, the RTs. I even had a rock from Lois's home, *Stepping Stones*, and I almost brought a spray of forsythia from her garden but alas, I left it behind in my hotel room. I've worn the badge given me by the gracious Hospitality Committee. All such little mementoes of the Conference create a personal touch and bring out a lot of questions.

"When Lois gave her report on her round-the-world trip, and it was re-given in our Area, everybody felt as though they had been with her to Africa and the Far East. It was thrilling to see their deep love for her on their faces.

"I share with the groups back home all the great things that happen to me when I see the WSO and the volunteers in action. I explain what a sense of security it gives me, when I leave New York, to know that those trusted servants, guided by our Twelve Traditions, will be serving us with love and dedication."

- Emphasize the constant need for expansion of the WSO and its staff to keep pace with the increasing growth of our fellowship. Groups should be informed of the various needs, including financial.

- Call attention to the General Secretary's Report, particularly such matters as the importance of a permanent mailing address and the need for prompt return of the Data Card.

- All crucial policy decisions, made or confirmed by the WSC, should be brought at once to the attention of the groups. Other Conference matters can be included in the Delegate's report and re-printed in newsletters and group mailings throughout the year.

- Inform groups of the election of new Delegates and RTs.

- All groups should be told about the Conference Summary—the detailed information about happenings at the Conference. Districts should be urged to hold meetings to read and study the Summary and the Delegate should ask the GRs and DRs to give their impressions and suggestions. Such interchange makes all members feel they have actually participated in the Conference.

"Even in my report of my first Conference, I emphasized the need to read, study and *follow* the Handbook. Some of our members saw the Handbook for the first time that day! We had no Area World Service Committee, so the Chairman and I selected the Conference Workshop on *Assembly Inventory*. Members were so enthusiastic over the Handbook, they wanted to buy them by the carload; the Handbook rush was on! Would it last? Yes! And it continues to this day. The next Assembly voted to follow the Handbook. This resulted in dividing our Area into Districts and electing DRs. As Delegate, I was now to have some able and willing assistants. It was during the Workshop with Holly that the vision was born and carried out—one day at a time.

"The needs and possibilities of our Area are so great that we could use nearly all the information gained from the Conference. Our next Assembly included a Workshop on *Finance* from the WSC. Our Area Treasury used to keep a backlog of \$400—we called it the Delegates Fund. This Workshop opened our eyes to other needs that should and could be met. Districts began passing the basket for the DR's expenses. For the first time, the groups began setting aside small weekly sums for their GRs expenses to attend Assembly.

"On my return from the Conference last year, my great welcome-home event was our first Area WSC meeting to hear the report of the Conference decisions and my impressions. We appointed Coordinators for Alateen, Institutions, Public Relations, Literature and Convention. I got promises of help on Area activities from all the WSC members and the DRs extended invitations to hear the Delegate's report at their newly-formed Districts.

"In my role of communicator and a source of information I must listen to the voice of the Conference and my Area; consider carefully the issues raised at the Conference so I can vote intelligently; endeavor to give my Area groups a clear, comprehensive picture of world-wide Al-Anon.

"God willing, I hope to be of service to Al-Anon wherever I am asked and needed, at whatever level of service."

The next speaker was Joyce B. of Wisconsin, whose assignment was "*Working in Your Area Throughout the Year*."

Joyce faced a problem that probably exists in other large states, so her experience should be helpful. As a freelance court



reporter, she travels extensively and so could discover the difficulties to be overcome in (1) uniting the two sections of her state and (2) bringing them more actively into the World Service picture.

The very week that Pauline assigned Joyce to this part of the DHS session, Joyce happened on this quotation: "If you'll have it done, GO; if not, SEND." Joyce went.

"These problems may be unique to Wisconsin, its size, the conglomerate of ethnic groups, our inexperience in World Service affairs and, perhaps to my own shortcomings.

"My Al-Anon experience in the northern part of the state prepared me for the problems I faced in carrying out my responsibilities as Delegate. For organization we had our state officers and our yearly Assembly—and that was all. The Assemblies had been held in southern Wisconsin and, because of the division of the state into two AA Conferences, there was almost total lack of communication between the two halves.

"Aware of the communication gap, I enlisted the aid of the past Delegate and the Treasurer. We mailed out notices to every group about the Al-Anon meeting to be held at the southern Wisconsin Conference in Milwaukee and urged attendance. Very poor response. The northern AAs didn't attend, their wives didn't either.

"Two years before, my group had organized our first Workshop and invited groups from roughly a 100-mile radius. This was the first opportunity for most of us to hear a Delegate's report. Inspired by our success, groups in other parts of the state held Workshops, so I had three additional opportunities to give my report. Yet I knew I was not reaching all groups.

"An AA Conference is held in the northern part of the state in the fall. I wrote to the host group asking what plans had been made for an Al-Anon program, offered assistance and my report. No reply. So I went to the Conference and found the same old format; a room set aside for wives, a speaker arranged for by an AA member. I sought out the person who seemed to be in charge and asked for a few minutes time to give my report. This was granted, and led to discussions, questions and an opportunity to share information. I then knew what the stumbling blocks were and what I would have to do before I could feel I was functioning effectively in the total Area. We brought it up for discussion at our next Assembly and agreed to hold two Assemblies a year mid-state, and leave the AA Conferences for fun and games. A questionnaire was sent to all groups; it was divided into headings: *World Service*, *Public Relations*, *Conference-Approved Literature* and *Alateen*. A copy was also sent to the WSO. Response was terrific! From the returned questionnaire, I compiled a list of groups, addresses, meeting places and times, GR's names and addresses. This gave me a clear picture of areas to be bolstered up, practices to be encouraged (and discouraged!)—in short, points to be stressed on my visits.

"I wrote newsy letters to a list of 17 DRs and other contacts, passing along information from Area Highlights, Alateen, Institutional Newsletter, and other WSO communications. I find asking a question or two stimulates response, keeps it a two-way pipeline, for their information and mine. Letters to officers are written as need or question arises; a letter to one has copies for the others, so no one operates in the dark, all are informed and consulted.

"This sounds like a great deal of 'send' instead of 'go'; the written and printed word is important, too, but we couldn't have accomplished as much had it not been for personal contact as well, my own and others. Much of our growth in Wisconsin

is due to this. Our 1971 Directory shows 116 Al-Anon groups and 20 Alateen; in '72, there were 138 Al-Anon and 28 Alateen; last count, '73, 173 Al-Anon and 31 Alateen.

"In conferring with DRs, I stress the need to visit the groups. If they invite you, fine, if not, drop in anyway; visitors are always welcome.

"I keep a briefcase packed with the essentials: *World Service Handbook*, *Delegates Brochure*, *Fact File*, *Directory* and the literature samples provided at the Conference. I take copies of the books when attending workshops, order blanks, a map of the state showing division into Districts, copies of *Institutional Guidelines*, *Why CAL*, *Suggestions for Beginners Meetings*, *Suggested Welcome*, *Preamble and Closing*, and other available material. These are handy for answering questions and are also a token of sharing, which is appreciated and remembered.

"My talks at meetings, invited or impromptu, are brief—mostly a summary of my report. I like the question and answer discussions, as well as the unhurried coffee-klatsch following the meeting. Questions can generally be answered from Al-Anon literature; *Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work*, the *Fact File* and the *W. S. Handbook* are indispensable. Questions on group and individual problems present no problem if we keep the Traditions and Al-Anon's spiritual principles in mind. I ask that questions and requests for information be put in writing instead of being asked by telephone, so I give them the time and consideration they deserve.

"I see my work as a sharing of what I have learned in the fellowship, the Conferences and the invaluable help of other Wisconsin Al-Anons. This is not a 'go-it-alone' enterprise; my state is alive with untapped talent, just waiting to be asked. Many hands lighten the load. Write letters, use the telephone, but best of all, go, go, GO.

\* \* \* \* \*

Pauline then introduced the final speaker in this session, Helen H. of Arizona whose topic was "*You're Not Finished Until the Last Day of Your Term of Office—and Then Some.*"

Helen spoke of having shared the responsibility of her work with her Alternate, who, fortunately, was also her sponsor. With two able people sharing the job, much more complete coverage was possible.

"It is vital," said Helen, that you meet with your Alternate and share your notes and impressions of the Conference with him or her. I really feel this could be a neglected source of help. She will have ideas and suggestions, gleaned from your re-living the excitement of Conference happenings, and can then pass them along to everyone she meets, too.

"In addition to spreading the word about the Conference, I will be continuing my Al-Anon work; in our Area, the past Delegates are members of the Area World Service Committee, so I already have my work cut out for me.

"My predecessors told me the World Service Conference is like nothing else in the world. I have found it so. My life has been changed because I have had the privilege of sharing your experience, strength and hope. I have so much more to learn; I need Al-Anon now more than ever."

\* \* \* \* \*

The next morning began with appointments of Delegates to the Standing Committees. Each includes six Delegate members and four or five in-town members. Henrietta S., our General



Secretary, announced the appointment of the new Panel 13 Delegates who will serve along with members of Panel 12 on the following Standing Committees:

#### ADMISSIONS

##### Panel 12

Margaret H., So. Car.  
Jeanne W., Nebr.  
Ethel E., Ark.

##### Panel 13

Betty Y., Ill. (N)  
Helen S., Ont. (S)  
John G., R.I.

#### AGENDA

Doris E., N.H.  
Dot S., La.  
Sue M., Wyo.

"T" S., Kansas  
Ruth R., Ky.  
Claire B., Que. (W)

#### ALATEEN

Ruth F., Ont. (N)  
Connie MacD., Conn.  
Lu C., Utah

Mary V., Md.  
Charlotte M., Ohio  
Virginia W., Tenn.

#### INSTITUTIONS

Jim C., Mo.  
Doris D., Sask.  
Renie Z., So. Dak.

Elsie Q., Calif. (S)  
Ellen P., Mich.  
Lucille C., Minn.

#### LITERATURE

Mary Beth H., Ill. (S)  
Opal B., N. Mex.  
Don. B., Nev.

Ruth F., N.Y. (N)  
Anne H., Penna.  
Blanche D., Texas (W)

#### PUBLIC INFORMATION

Becky J., Iowa  
Nancy R., N.Y. (S)  
Bev. D., Maine

Bonnie H., Calif. (N)  
Jackie M., Fla.  
Peggy R., Texas (E)

After this, each Committee met in a separate room in the hotel for a sharing of information and ideas. The Committee reports were later submitted to the Conference as a whole.

The Committee sessions lasted until noon when all of us joined for lunch in the Pine Room downstairs.

The first item on the Thursday afternoon session was the

#### TREASURER'S REPORT\*

At Conference time, our dedicated Treasurer, Carter Childs, was gravely ill, but he had valiantly completed his financial summation for 1972, so Ted, President of our Board of Trustees, could take Carter's place on the podium. Ted reported as follows:

"This is a supplement to the complete financial report in the Delegate's Brochure. In brief, the news was good—very good.

"Last year's results continued the encouraging trend, due largely to increased sales of books and literature and to the wonderful job you did in explaining to the groups that the World Service Office is dependent on the groups for its support.

"Contributions have increased substantially for which we are most grateful—to you and to your groups.

"But the almost incredible fact is that *nearly two thousand eight hundred groups*, who also share in the benefits of WSO's work, *do not contribute one penny!* It is true that some few groups really cannot afford to contribute, but the remaining large majority perhaps do not understand the need to do their share. This means that over eighty percent of the support for World Services comes from the sale of literature.

"You who are Delegates to the Conference, who have become familiar with the vast and costly work being done at the WSO, will, I am sure, continue to carry this message to these groups.

"As you know, we have begun to establish a Reserve Fund as a prudent hedge against a downturn in the economy which could seriously hamper our functions. Al-Anon *must* keep going, no matter what; it is too greatly needed by troubled people all over the world!

"Another factor affecting our financial prospects is that the spacious new quarters we moved into so hopefully only two years ago (the remodeling alone cost \$65,000!) have already become inadequate. Every day increases our activities to meet the needs of the pyramiding number of groups around the world. This means we need more office space, more staff, more equipment, printing, supplies, postage—all representing heavy demands on our funds.

"Can we make it? If every group would help (even as little as a dollar a month!) there would be no doubt!

"Thank you again for the tremendous help you have given to this particular corner of Al-Anon's existence, upon which so much depends."

\* The annual Financial statement is available to any group on request.

#### POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Mary S., Chairman

"Once again it is time to bring you a summary of the year's basic policy decisions which are always made in the light of our Traditions. There are fewer than usual because many matters discussed at the quarterly meetings of the Committee required only clarification of existing policies.

"I want to call your attention especially to a statement which was unfortunately omitted from the last Summary and Brochure; this omission had caused some confusion:

"'Contributions received from AA Conferences and Conventions which are offered to Al-Anon in acknowledgement of its support of these functions *will be accepted* by the World Service Office.'

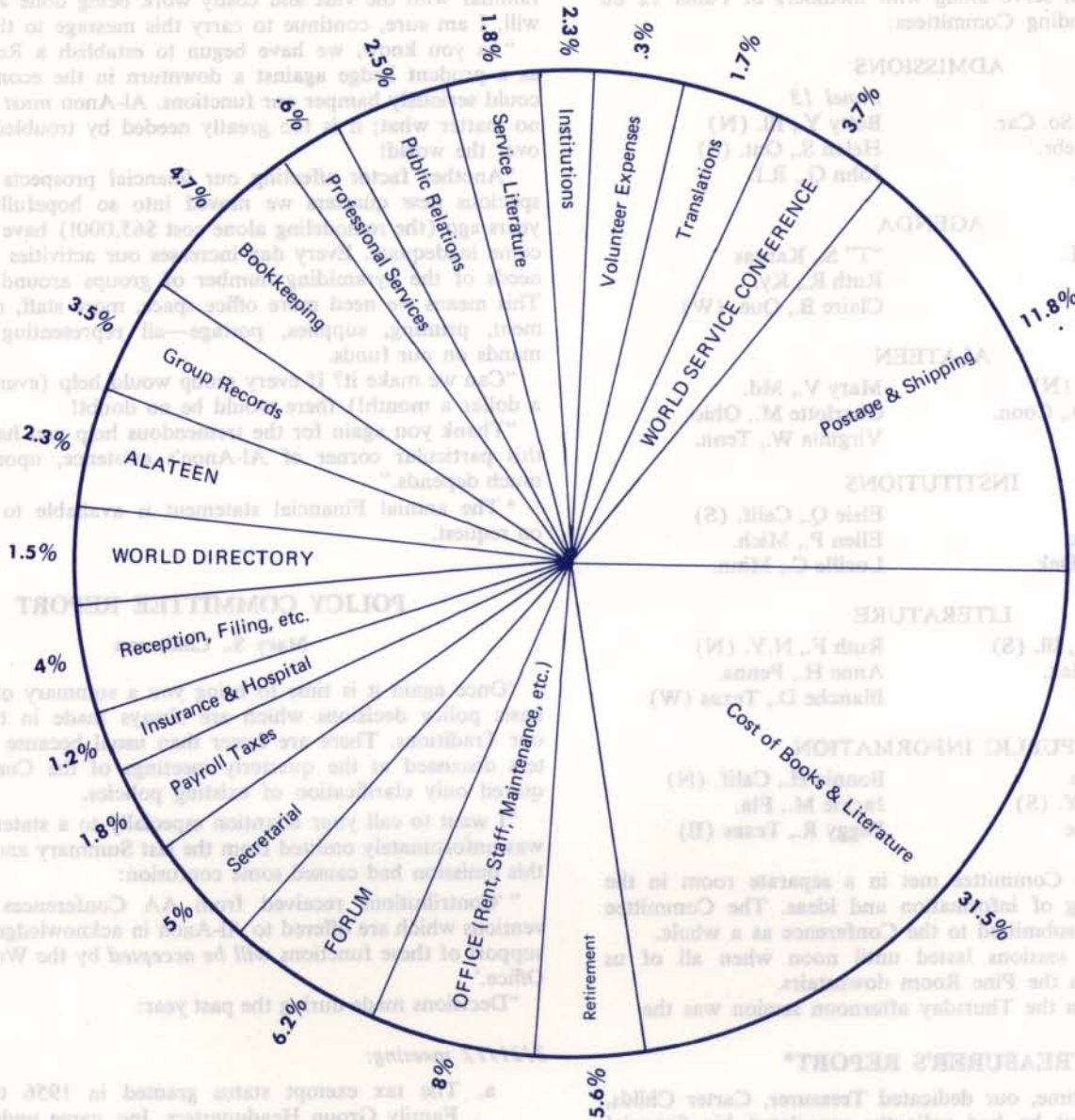
"Decisions made during the past year:

3/21/72 meeting:

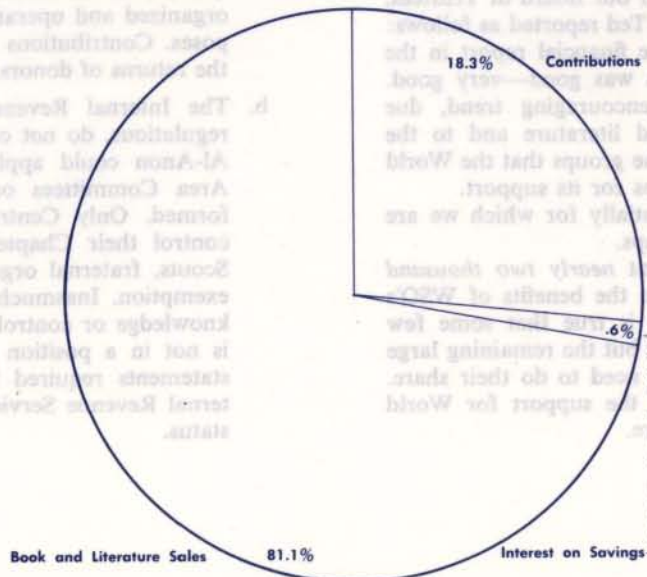
- a. The tax exempt status granted in 1956 to Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. came under Sec. 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code as a Corporation organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes. Contributions to Headquarters are deductible on the returns of donors.
- b. The Internal Revenue Code and the Commissioners' regulations, do not contain any provisions under which Al-Anon could apply for blanket exemptions for its Area Committees or local groups now or hereafter formed. Only Central organizations which effectively control their Chapters or local units (churches, Boy Scouts, fraternal organizations) can apply for a group exemption. Inasmuch as Al-Anon Headquarters has no knowledge or control over Assembly or group funds, it is not in a position to furnish the necessary financial statements required to be filed annually with the Internal Revenue Service in order to maintain tax-exempt status.



# AL-ANON W.S.O. EXPENSES . . . 1972



# AL-ANON W.S.O. INCOME-1972





#### Board of Trustees Meeting 4/22/72

The World Directory will be published in two parts, effective 1973. The first part will be published in the spring and will include all the groups in the U.S. and Canada. Part 2 will appear in late summer or early fall and will contain all groups in other countries. Each group will receive, *without charge*, the Directory edition in which it is listed and may, if they wish, purchase the other edition.

6/20/72: The WSO should not be asked to intervene or involve itself in local disputes or misunderstandings which could better be resolved at the District or Area Assembly level.

9/19/72: The WSO will accept for registration Al-Anon industrial groups. However, if their membership is limited to employees or to those having a card permitting them on the premises, the group will be listed in a special category similar to that of an Institutional Group.

7/25/72: The film, LOIS'S STORY will be leased to Al-Anon General Service Committees overseas at a price of \$150. annually. These prints may not be purchased.

The new Preamble, submitted by a special committee which was appointed by the Policy Committee Chairman, has been approved. It will be substituted in the appropriate literature as each piece is reprinted.

Since private film-makers have indicated interest in producing documentaries concerning AA and Al-Anon which they intend to peddle to public agencies, it is recommended that no commitments be made by either groups or individuals to such producers. It is suggested that the prospective film-makers be instructed to write to the WSO, explaining the proposed project and its probable audience.

### THE FORUM REPORT

Margaret D., Editor

As you may know, our Committee, (Louise M., Doris R., Loretta L., Alice B. and I) meets each month to consider everything sent in to the FORUM. Each piece of material is read by each member and comments made on how it might best be handled. Naturally not all of it can be used; some letters or articles are too long, some are too similar in content to others, some describe situations too specialized to be of general interest.

Editing is kept to a minimum; all of us feel it is important for each contributor to express himself in his own way. Controversial letters are welcomed; the FORUM is the place where two—or ten—sides of a problem should be aired. We have been fortunate in receiving countless letters of approval and appreciation. We rarely use them because we're too modest!

Another interesting thing about the FORUM which you might not know is that we have received letters from every state in the union and every province of Canada, with the possible exception of Northwest Territory. Many letters come from overseas countries, too—from Europe, Australia, New Zealand, India and the South Pacific. And many from individual AAs, which are always welcome. Truly a world-wide fellowship! Henrietta's report showed well over 211,000 FORUMS mailed last year; if only one item in just one issue helped one member, think of the Twelfth Step work our little publication does!

We're certainly delighted with the increase, but our dreamed-of goal is A FORUM for EVERY MEMBER. Many groups are reaching it—please help us to make that 100%!

Again, we'd like volunteers to help in our war against misspelling our beautiful name, Al-Anon. If our fellowship is as

dear and as life-saving to us as we say, we should be aware of its real name and learn to spell it correctly. For a long time Alateens beat us all hollow, but lately, they, too, are falling into evil ways and we get Al-teen, Ala-teen and other variations.

And do please tell everybody to trust us with full names and addresses. We *never* use them when we're asked not to, but we *must* have them. Pen names or Anon will be used on request. Sometimes when a writer is very upset and resentful, we can't write to give needed help because we have no identification but a blurred postmark.

Our struggle to discourage the sending in of poetry goes on and on. Sometimes it tapers down to a mere trickle and we think we've made it; then the next month there may be six or eight! We *love* your beautiful prose, so let's just stick with that and forget about having things rhyme.

And finally, about this dedication business. People are constantly telling me how dedicated I am. There are lots of dedicated members, but my devotion comes not from "dedication" but from an equally compelling motive: *self-preservation*. Without Al-Anon, I wouldn't be here in more or less my right mind. I love Al-Anon, and always have, but the ratio of my debt to it is not that of one-horse-one-rabbit, but rather one-dinosaur-one-flea!

And my grateful thanks and love to each of you, along with those of the Committee, for your interest and tremendous support of the FORUM.

### REPORT OF THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE AND ITS COMMITTEES

#### Al-Anon's Dramatic Success Story:

In our fellowship we often hear the phrase "trusted servants." It is the key word of our Second Tradition. It is analyzed in our *Concepts of Service*. We hear it from our Delegates at the World Service Conference.

Who are these trusted servants?

It's the one who gets to meetings early to start the coffee; the one who's always ready to help somebody in trouble. It's the Chairman, the Secretary, the Treasurer of the group, the member who willingly goes out to speak at meetings, the GR, the DR, the Delegate. It's everybody who *serves*.

It is also the people who serve at your World Service office in New York, who keep records of the more than 7500 groups around the world, who manage the business affairs—now *very big* business affairs—of the fellowship. It's the staff, the volunteer members of committees, and the other army of volunteers who give their time, talent and work so that Al-Anon can continue and grow.

And these are "servants?" you may ask. They are. Not one among them is more important to Al-Anon than the newest member of a group. There are no bosses. Nobody makes decisions for the fellowship; everything is decided after careful thought and discussion by committees. And if it's crucial, every member of the Conference has a part in making final decisions.

These are your servants. The reports which follow are reports to *you*, about what has been done on your behalf during 1972.



## GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Henrietta S.

Since Henrietta's responsibilities include much negotiation with outside firms, she is known to them as our *Executive Director* in dealing with a multitude of business problems day by day.

As Personnel Administrator, she employs and supervises the staff secretaries, coordinates the work of the Standing Committees and handles the complex financial business of the fellowship, corresponds with the membership in foreign countries, deals with the many problems of the General Services which have sprung up in many lands and makes arrangements for literature translations. All these functions are performed with the approval of the Executive Committee, the Policy Committee and/or the Board of Trustees. She summed up her situation briefly at the Conference:

"The excellent spirit of cooperation among the staff and with Committees and their Chairmen and the other WSO volunteers made possible all that was achieved during the year."

### PUBLICATION DIVISION

ONE DAY AT A TIME continued popular; 46,178 copies were shipped, nearly 10,000 more than in the previous year.

LIVING WITH AN ALCOHOLIC, 6,948 copies, an increase of 826.

AL-ANON FACES ALCOHOLISM, 4,572 copies, an increase of 577.

AL-ANON'S FAVORITE FORUM EDITORIALS, 3,075 copies (a small decrease, now being overcome by heavier orders since the publishing of an Index for AFFE, which has made so many realize what a goldmine of meeting topics it is!)

THE DILEMMA OF THE ALCOHOLIC MARRIAGE, 10,079, an increase of 4,140.

TOTAL BOOK SALES rose to \$240,000, an increase of \$63,000. over the previous year.

OTHER LITERATURE SALES also had a healthy increase, from \$184,000. to \$254,000.

"The quality of our material continues to appeal to professionals as well as to our growing number of groups; most of them now use only Conference-Approved literature at meetings.

FREE LITERATURE. Nearly 100,000 pieces were sent out—to proposed groups, students and public relations contacts. This was an increase of 45%.

THE FORUM. 211,719 copies were mailed, 20% more than the previous year due to the increase in number of paid subscriptions and the larger number of free copies sent to groups.

MIMEOGRAPHING AND SHIPPING. The cost of shipping and postage went up 28%—from \$31,800 to \$40,700. This was due to larger orders, higher costs of packing materials and an increase in the number of letters mailed.

Packages Mailed: 51,898

Letters Mailed: 106,584 (compared to 96,763 the previous year.)

Sheets Mimeographed: 438,000

### GROUP RECORDS AND DIRECTORY.

New Groups Registered: 1,748

Groups Discontinued: 892

### Total Registration (Dec. 31, 1972)

Al-Anon .....	6,167
Alateen .....	1,040
Lone Members and Alateen Contacts .....	232
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>7,439</b>

Henrietta spoke of the greatest handicap the WSO has to cope with—the difficulty in getting groups to return their data cards before the January deadline. The office must have this information to keep its records up to date, and for accurate preparation of the World Directory. In the past year, barely half the groups in the U.S. and Canada returned their cards before the deadline; many changes came in *after* the Directory had gone to press.

Every group from which no word had been received during the year was asked to advise the WSO of their present status. Those which did not respond within three months were dropped from the active list.

Delegates were urged to remind their groups to notify the WSO promptly of changes of address, and if they have post office boxes, to pay the rent on time. This would save us a great deal of postage; returned mail could be substantially reduced. We pay 10¢ for every returned letter, and 8¢ for remailing, plus the cost of staff time.

### GROUP SERVICES

During 1972, the office served over 7,000 groups throughout the world. Each proposed group received a letter of welcome, suggestions for procedures, a free starter packet of literature and a FORUM. After registering, they each also received a Directory, "Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work" and, where there was Conference representation, a *World Service Handbook*. All groups and Loners received free FORUM subscriptions, a Conference Summary and a Directory. ALATEEN TALK is sent bi-monthly to all Alateen groups, and AL-ANON EN ACCION to the Spanish groups each month.

An Ann Landers article in January brought 11,000 letters. All were answered, with referrals to the nearest groups. The flow of individual inquiries continued throughout the year, resulting from other favorable news items.

*General Correspondence.* Replies to questions and problems from members were handled by members of the staff and volunteers. Typical were these:

- help in preparing talks for a family panel of AA, Al-Anon and Alateen.
- a format for setting up an Answering Service
- material for a blind teenager
- objection to TV appearances in silhouette
- may Al-Anon members, as individuals, accept speaking engagements from *Overeaters Anon*?
- suggestions for a meeting on sex
- must all Al-Anon groups in a locality agree to support an Information Service or Intergroup before it can be formed?
- are groups permitted to donate our books to libraries?
- should house guests, co-workers, teachers and other professionals be permitted to attend Al-Anon meetings?
- should an Intergroup stock non-CAL literature?
- should an Al-Anon member who had accepted numerous invitations to speak at AA meetings continue to accept them?



- should an Information Service or Intergroup contribute to the WSO?
- objection to "touch therapy" at meetings; holding hands while saying the Lord's Prayer
- objection to a member's giving a lengthy and enthusiastic account of a Retreat she attended
- help for developing a program on sponsorship
- should Al-Anons seek help for a spouse who has "slipped?"
- may a member divulge her affiliation with Al-Anon?
- criticism (by an AA member who is a counselor) of Al-Anon meetings being announced in newspapers
- sale of beauty products at meetings
- questions as to belonging to more than one group
- requests for historical data on Al-Anon
- how long should one be in Al-Anon before chairing meetings?
- complaints about too much time spent on business meetings
- complaints about lack of elections in local groups and appointments to Intergroup offices for indefinite periods
- Is the Treasurer permitted to purchase gifts for close friends who are moving away, paying for them with group funds without consulting anyone?
- A GR appointed privately without consulting group
- complaints about Delegates "managing everything," not fulfilling duties or not accounting for contributions accepted from Area groups
- opposition to AAs (one a GRS) holding office in an Al-Anon group and suitability to chair meetings
- complaints about AAs dominating Al-Anon meetings
- complaint about AA Clubhouse charging Alateens too much rent
- requests for skits, speakers' questionnaires and non-CAL literature—and hundreds more

Many of these problems could have been resolved at the local level or District meetings by referring to the Traditions and our literature. Those which are based on personality differences could be solved by the individuals' closer application of the Twelve Steps. Nevertheless, the WSO is always happy to be of help!

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE AL-ANON

### French

As the agent of the WSO in the translation and production of the FORUM and CAL, the French Literature Committee in Montreal services French groups around the world.

Harriet L., who translates the FORUM, is making good progress on the French version of ODAT. A number of new and many revised pieces were produced during the year by Alberte, the chairman, and a volunteer committee. Harriet translated the script of LOIS'S STORY; a French adaptation of the film was ready in time for the 1972 Bilingual Conference in Quebec. Alberte produced the descriptive sheet which was sent to the groups.

Several requests from groups in France asked about forming an Intergroup. The Tenth Anniversary of Al-Anon in France was celebrated in October by the Paris Intergroup. Two members of the U.K. and Eire General Services attended and wrote us glowing reports of the occasion. The Intergroup Secretary sent copies of the Anniversary talks.

### Spanish

The General Service Committee in Argentina made great progress in 1972, renting an office within easy reach of any part of Buenos Aires. Fifty members were needed to pledge support; by year's end 109 were contributing regularly. Addition of a much-needed staff member is now being considered.

Many pieces of literature were reprinted with WSO permission. By mid-September, 1,000 copies of VIVIENDO CON UN ALCOHOLICO were off the press; production was made possible by members paying for their orders in advance.

The Secretary of the Argentine GSC, Lilian C., asked us to send a circular letter to all 45 registered groups enlisting their cooperation with the national General Services.

An earlier attempt to form a Mexican GSC had failed, but in 1972, 12 members of Mexico City groups joined in establishing a GSC. It is now helping groups in different sections of the country with program suggestions and literature. By mid-summer, eight Officers and Committee Chairmen had been elected and an office was leased in the heart of the city. The Chairman of Group Relations wrote to every group in Mexico. Committee members are working to unify the groups by speaking at joint meetings in nearby states. The WSO notified the 116 Mexican groups that sole literature distribution rights had been assigned to the Mexican Al-Anon GSC, suggesting that groups order directly from the Mexico City office.

At an AA Convention in Puebla in November, the GSC announced plans to hold an Al-Anon Assembly in 1973 and asked for volunteers from various states to act as Delegates, to help unify the groups in their states and to promote interest and support for the GSC office. The WSO supplied information on structure and the *World Service Handbook*. We told them how the U.K. and Eire had adapted the latter to their own needs and suggested that Mexico might follow a similar procedure.

Susy K., the Secretary, submitted a translation of Louise M.'s CAL presentation at the 1972 WSC which was included in "CAL—Al-Anon/Alateen." The complete piece is now available in Spanish. Laura, a bilingual member of the Committee, is trying to unify the Alateen groups and has translated sections of "For Teenagers . . ." for distribution in Mexico.

The director of a government school for social workers in Mexico City arranged to have Al-Anons address more than 1,000 students at several meetings; Mexican Health Authorities want to start a council on alcoholism and have invited an Al-Anon member to join the planning board.

"Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" taken from LIVING WITH AN ALCOHOLIC, was produced in El Salvador. "Alcoholism, the Family Disease," revised by our Spanish staff member with the help of Father Roberto C. of California, will be produced by the WSO. El Salvador was given permission to reproduce our Al-Anon poster.

Numerous other letters from Spanish-speaking countries related to literature, service structure and group problems. Consuelo de S, Secretary of the GSC in Costa Rica, sent an updated meeting list of groups and wrote of plans to meet Angela de V. of the El Salvador GSC in Panama at the AA Congress Easter week-end.

An item by an AA in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in the September issue of "Al-Anon/Alateen En Accion" brought excellent response to his plea for Al-Anons to write letters to his arthritic housebound wife. A Venezuelan-born member in Erie, Pa.,



asked permission to translate occasional pages of ODAT to send to the Spanish Al-Anon group in Caracas. A group in Peru requested permission to reprint Spanish literature. We suggested that thought be given to starting a GSC and sent guidelines for overseas service structure. The Secretary of the group in Aviles, Spain requested "How-Tos" for PR projects and information on establishing a national General Service. We also sent her the Spanish version of "The Al-Anon Information Service—What It Is—How It Serves"

Opal B. (WSO N. Mex.) recommended a valuable assistant in Spanish translation. She is a professor in a University Language Department who has volunteered to revise the translation of ODAT, begun by Theresa, our bilingual staff member, and Fr. Roberto.

The U.S. Department of HEW published a pamphlet titled "Spanish Language Health Communications Teaching Aids" in which our literature is listed second, just after AA's.

#### Dutch/Flemish

After a long silence the WSO heard from Karel M., Secretary of the ADB Nederlandstalige in Belgium who sent us file copies of the Flemish "So You Love an Alcoholic" and 25 copies of the sponsorship pamphlet as a contribution. Permission was given to publish two Alateen pieces and *Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work*. There is great interest in spiritual growth and in the quality of the progra which Karel feels is due to CAL. He reported growing interest in Alateens in Belgium. No progress has been made in establishing a General Service for the Netherlands, but he keeps in touch with their groups.

#### Finnish

During 1972, translations of the pamphlet "A Merry-Go-Round . . ." and the book, AL-ANON FACES ALCOHOLISM, were sent the WSO, reviewed by our Finnish AA friend Mikko L., were returned to Helsinki, and were off the press before year's end! Twenty complimentary copies of each were forwarded to the WSO as a contribution. Mikko also corrected the translations of "Al-Anon IS for Men"—"Questionnaire for a Step Four Meeting" and the cartoon booklet. In September, we were visited by a Finnish newspaper woman, an Al-Anon member whose husband had died of alcoholism at thirty. She was in the U.S. to research treatment methods.

#### German/Swiss

After more than a year's effort, the Al-Anon Zentrale Kontaktstelle (General Services) in Germany obtained registration as a society and as a charity organization. This made possible the publication of much-needed literature. A number of pieces have been reviewed and approved for publication by WSO volunteers.

Henrietta and Henny, our Office Manager and bookkeeper, attended an Al-Anon meeting in June in Lucerne where Jean B., Secretary of the Swiss-German GSC, gave us her translation of the minutes of the April 15 meeting of the GSC in Frankfurt/Main. Much of the discussion revolved around literature problems. Al-Anon literature gets much valuable publicity in AA's monthly "Informationen."

At the October meeting of the GSC in Munich, it was decided to publish "A Guide for the Family"—"Freedom from Despair" and "Homeward Bound." Publication of LIVING WITH AN

ALCOHOLIC, approved more than a year ago, was postponed for financial reasons.

All publications will be available at cost to the Swiss GSC and the WSO.

The November appeal letter to overseas groups was reproduced in Switzerland's Al-Anon publication, M&F, which is sent each month to all German-speaking groups.

Opportunities in radio and TV are opening up for Al-Anon in Switzerland.

Five additional translations were revised by Margaret R., WSD Va., a WSO volunteer and Ursula P. a Utah member who had offered her services after hearing references to foreign language literature in Lois's film.

#### Japanese

Harumi K., the member responsible for our three Japanese pieces, started translating the leaflet "Lois's Story." She sent us copies of articles about Al-Anon to be used in a bulletin for families of patients in the alcoholic ward at the Tokyo hospital where she works. These are being reviewed by a Japanese member in New York.

#### Portuguese

The Secretary of the GSC in Sao Paulo, Brazil, has written that after six years' effort, Al-Anon is taking hold. Ten new groups were formed in 1972. She asked us which CAL should be published first with profits from the sale of the Portuguese LWAA. (Neither Al-Anon nor AA groups contribute to their service centers.)

#### Other Languages

A member of a new English group in Oslo, Norway, was given permission to translate, mimeograph and distribute CAL in Norwegian.

A priest who started an Al-Anon group at a family health agency in Valencia, India, sent us a copy of his book on alcoholism, written in *Konkani* (a dialect of one area of India) in which he refers to Al-Anon as a resource for the family.

An Al-Anon group in Ceylon, whose members speak *Sinhalese*, was started by an AA who had written to the WSO for information.

#### ENGLISH AL-ANON OVERSEAS

##### U. K. & Eire

Dorothy H., Conference Chairman of the General Service Board, wrote us that this was a record year for visitors from the U.S. Henrietta and Henny visited the London office in June: later there were several former Delegates, and staff members Evelyn, Timmy and Holly. Evelyn brought back two copies of the *District Representatives Handbook* prepared for the Third Al-Anon U. K. & Eire Service Conference held in October.

Dorothy is also chairman of the Southern District and active in the Chichester Hospital Group; Gloria D., originally of Bogota, Colombia, now living in London, has assumed Dorothy's office responsibilities.

The Conference Chairman reported on the success of their third Conference of which we will receive a Summary. Thirteen out of seventeen Districts, (equivalent to our Areas) were repre-



sented. The DRs had voted overwhelmingly to again send Helen M-S as Representative to the WSC and to underwrite the expenses.

After many frustrating delays, registration as a charity organization was finally obtained.

#### Australia

At the Third Australian Trial Conference held in Brisbane, Queensland, Easter week-end, Delegates from the six Australian states attended. They returned home to suggest election of sub-committees in their respective states to study the *Twelve Concepts* and the *World Service Handbook*. The Chairmen were to communicate with each other before the next meeting in Perth, Western Australia, 1973, for further discussion on the adoption of a constitution for Australia.

Victoria and New South Wales will continue to sell their CAL to other states. Reprints of "Purposes and Suggestions" and "This is Al-Anon" were forwarded by Victoria. They supply new groups with sample literature for a start with CAL before our gratis packet arrives from WSO. Professional inquiries have increased. According to the Secretary, "this indicates the growth of Al-Anon's reputation as an agency of help to the families of alcoholics. I sometimes think we take for granted the service WSO provides to all groups. The visit of Lois and Evelyn made us all feel so much closer."

There was much correspondence with all the Australian states during the year; the WSO regularly receives copies of their monthly newsletters, and minutes of the various Central Service committee meetings.

#### New Zealand

An Al-Anon "Field Worker" was appointed to serve on the Board of the N. Z. Al-Anon Service Conference to visit groups on invitation, to guide them in PR, group practices, use of CAL, etc. We were asked what her responsibilities should include. An Auckland member inquired if there was any precedent for such an officer in the Al-Anon structure, questioning the need for this office.

As a result of our replies, the Secretary forwarded a copy of the N. Z. Al-Anon S. C. Guidelines, minutes of their latest national conference and descriptions of their structure. Area Delegates (two each from four Areas in the country) serve three years and may be re-elected for a second term. In-town Service Delegates serve indefinitely, producing an annual magazine, a monthly newsletter, PR, literature and plans for the annual conference and convention.

New Zealand rented a copy of Lois's film for one year.

#### South Africa

The Al-Anon General Service in Pretoria was also sent a copy of the film and information on distribution. The Secretary asked how they could make their monthly business meetings more stimulating and suggestions were offered. They explained the structure of their General Service body and agenda usually planned for meetings. They were perturbed about the possibility that neighboring Johannesburg might start an Al-Anon Information Service Office because this might adversely affect their contributions. We suggested that this would be only temporary; eventually the increase in the size and number of groups in Jo'burg could increase support of the national office.

A Johannesburg member sent lengthy correspondence relating to this matter, and was sent a copy of "The Al-Anon Information Service—What It Is and How It Serves."

#### Europe

Major John Squires of the *School of Aero-Space Science*, Lackland Airforce Base, Texas, Social Actions Officer responsible for European installations, visited the WSO in November and asked us to write to the Social Actions officers at 31 bases in Europe. Letters and literature were sent with a view to forming Al-Anon groups at the bases, and to suggest that officers at bases where there are groups, provide families with information about Al-Anon.

### THE 1975 INTERNATIONAL AA CONVENTION

"As in the past, AA GSO has invited Al-Anon to participate in its International Convention to be held in Denver, Colorado, July 3-5, 1975. Formal meetings with AA, however, have been postponed until after this Conference.

"Some preliminary arrangements have been made. The hotel for Al-Anon activities has been selected. All the public rooms have been reserved for our use. The Grand Ballroom of the Denver Hilton will accommodate 2,200 people, and according to Ted, who went there last June, the many other meeting facilities are much larger than those we had in 1970 at the Eden Roc in Miami.

"As suggested by Marge, (WSD. Colo.) we have appointed Dorothy E., a long-time eminently qualified Denver member, to chair the Host Committee. The Colorado Al-Anons have already begun to accumulate a fund to assure a fine welcome for Al-Anons who will be coming from all parts of the world.

"We will begin to plan programs later this year. Before then we will send Speakers' Questionnaires to all Delegates to be disseminated in their Areas so we can assemble a roster of interesting, qualified participants in our Al-Anon sessions."

Henrietta then spoke about our *WORLD DIRECTORY*.

"Each Delegate received, in the Conference portfolio, two copies of the World Directory, Part I. One is for you—the other for you to pass along to your Area Secretary.

"If there has been a change in your address or telephone number since it was printed, I would appreciate your making corrections from the floor now, to give the other Delegates a chance to correct their own copies.

(Several Delegates announced changes.)

"Thank you. Part II of the World Directory will be published in early summer and a free copy mailed to each Delegate. Extra copies will be available at 50¢ each.

"And now I want to thank you all for your wonderful cooperation in responding so promptly when we asked about filling Directory orders from outside agencies. When a Delegate felt that the Directory might be misused by such an agency, the order was not filled, and a letter of explanation sent. In many instances, however, the people at such outside agencies were AAs so we could safely assume they would observe our Tradition of anonymity in making referrals."



## AGENDA COMMITTEE REPORT

Mary Alice R., Chairman

At the start of the 1973 Conference, this busy Committee began its all-year-round task of planning the 1974 Conference. Members of the Committee were Ruth R. (Ky.); Farris L. (Ga.); Doris E. (N. H.); T. S. (Kan.); Dot S. (La.); Florence G. (Alta.); Mary Alice R. (Okla.); Sue M. (Wyo.) Rita T. (Que.) and Helen M-S, (UK & Eire) met with our Conference Chairman, Penny B., and made various suggestions which were reported to the Conference and will be discussed throughout the year.

The Committee expressed deep appreciation to Penny and other members of the Conference Committee for their untiring work on behalf of the Conference.

## ALATEEN COMMITTEE REPORT

Carole K., Chairman — Timmy W., Staff

*Soon after last year's Conference, Rita C., who had served as Chairman of the Committee for the past eight years, found it necessary to resign. Fortunately another long-time Al-Anon member, Carole K. agreed to serve as Chairman.*

Late in the year, Janine W., the original Alateen member of the Committee had to resign.

Janine had attended the Alateen Committee meeting at the 1972 WSC; her ideas were welcomed by the entire Committee. Her glowing report of the meeting appeared in the July 1972 issue of *Alateen Talk*.

Two other Alateens, John L., of Trenton, N. J. and Mary D., Elmhurst, N. Y. joined the Committee.

During the year, 516 letters were written to new or proposed groups, enclosing the free starter packet, 32 "possible" proposed groups were also sent letters and material. 172 letters were written to groups. Some were problem letters which required discussion at staff meetings, correspondence with the Alateen Coordinator and/or Delegate of the Area concerned. 185 letters with literature enclosed were written to people asking for help.

*Alateen Talk* was sent gratis to all groups six times during the year. A number of groups ordered extra copies at 10¢ each. The first installment of an Alateen history appeared in late 1972 and will be continued in future issues.

Many outside agencies have asked about starting Alateen groups. A special sheet was prepared explaining that, as Alateen is part of Al-Anon, it requires Al-Anon sponsors. This sheet is now being sent to all inquirers with the location of the nearest Al-Anon group.

At the Policy Committee's meeting in December, it was suggested that our policy regarding *Preteens* be revised. Several *Preteens* and their sponsors had again asked for separate recognition by the WSO, and asked us to revise our present policy statement for consideration at the January meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Alateen Conferences hit an all-time high in 1972, with several "firsts; No. Cal., Midwestern (combined this year with the 8th Southeast Roundup), Interprovincial (Sask., Man., Alta.)

Other Alateen Conferences: 4th Texas A. C. (TAC); 2nd So. Cal. A. C. (SCAC), 3rd Middle Atlantic A. C. (Big MAAC), 3rd Metro (N. Y. & N. J.), 11th Eastern Seaboard A. C. (ESAC).

Alateens also participated in AA/Al-Anon Conferences and

Conventions, often with their own programs and facilities.

Timmy attended the Interprovincial, Big MAAC and Metro; Carole, Timmy, Ted, Pres. of the Board of Trustees, and Louise M. of the Lit. Committee appeared on a panel at ESAC: "Everything You Always Wanted to Know about WSO But Were Afraid to Ask." Many questions were answered; it was a good sharing experience with Alateens and their sponsors.

## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Penny B., Chairman — Holly C., Staff

The Conference Committee is deeply grateful to all the other Committees and to every Conference member for their wonderful cooperation throughout 1972.

The 1972 Conference theme, *Pass Along Understanding*, was taken from our *Twelve Concepts of Service*.

At the *Delegates-Only* meeting, it was recommended that new Delegates and sponsors be put in touch with each other before the Conference to become acquainted through correspondence. Success of this plan depends on WSO receiving the new Panel Delegates' names sufficiently in advance. As soon as the name of a newly-elected Delegate was received, the Conference Secretary sent a letter of welcome and the name of the new Delegate's sponsor.

The Staff Secretaries (PR, Alateen, Institutions, Conference) meet each month with Henrietta and Penny to discuss Conference matters.

**COMPILING THE WSC AGENDA.** Delegates are assigned to an appropriate panel or to serve as reporters for one of the Workshops. Each one is advised well before the Conference to allow time to prepare for their assignments. Phone calls are made to invite participation; follow-up letters are sent with instructions. Topics and suggestions from the Area W. S. Committees are welcomed and acknowledged all through the year. Much of the material is used in preparing the Workshops.

**THE CONFERENCE BUDGET** requires thorough study of our needs for the days we are to be in session. This is submitted to the Trustees for their approval at their January meeting.

**AREA HIGHLIGHTS** (Quarterly Report: March, June, Sept., Dec.) Three copies are sent to the Delegate, the extra copies for two other officers of the Area WSC. Newsletters may use excerpts from *Area Highlights* in reports to the groups.

**GROUP INFORMATION** about new and inactive groups and copies of group contributions are mailed to Delegates each month, to be shared with the DRs. The World Directory letter, asking groups to fill out and return current information for correct listing in the next year's issue, is also mailed to the Delegates as well as the tri-annual appeal letters. The latter may be reprinted in Area newsletters.

**REGIONAL TRUSTEE EXPERIMENTAL PLAN**, as revised at the 1972 WSC, was mailed to all Delegates and Area Chairmen in the Canadian Region. Each of the nine Assembly Areas were invited to name a candidate before January 1, 1973. Conference members who will be voting at the 1973 Conference were sent copies of the candidates' resumes. Six of the nine Areas in Canada named candidates.



**WORLD SERVICE HANDBOOK for Al-Anon & Alateen Groups** was re-edited and, for the first time, *printed*. Complimentary copies were sent to all groups in the Assembly Areas before the Conference.

**SPECIAL MAILING LIST.** When a Delegate's term expires, he/she may continue to receive, on request, the Conference Summary and *Area Highlights*.

**1972 CONFERENCE SUMMARY.** Delegates could request a reasonable number of copies for distribution to Area officers and possibly DRs. 902 copies were sent. Production of the Summary was expedited by the cooperation of the Delegates who sent in their presentations in advance so work could be started early.

\* \* \* \* \*

The sharing at each WSC Conference is a joy! Members and their families contributed much time and talent in the Hospitality Room. They have also been most generous in stocking the larder with samples of their favorite recipes, where the coffee tastes best—in the Hospitality Room!

## FRENCH LITERATURE COMMITTEE REPORT

Alberte C., Chairman

The French Literature Committee provides service to 302 Al-Anon and Alateen groups. Quebec: 189 Al-Anon, 47 Alateen; Ontario: 11 Al-Anon; New Brunswick: 3; U.S.: 3; Switzerland: 13; Belgium, 23 (1 Intergroup); France, 13 (2 Intergroups); Lone members: 18; Martinique, 1 French contact.

One great accomplishment for the year is the French version of the film *LOIS'S STORY*. The script, originally transcribed from the English, was translated by the FLC; dubbing was done by a professional artist. Prints may be ordered from the WSO; \$35 fee to accompany order. The premiere took place at the AA Convention in October; it was given an enthusiastic reception. Several groups are raising funds for its rental. Our sincere thanks to the WSO for financing this project.

**COMMENT VIVRE AVEC UN ALCOOLIQUE** has been a great success. We are almost ready for a second printing! Sales to date made it possible for us to repay our loan to the WSO and even to build up a special fund toward the cost of re-printing.

New Publications in 1972: five; Revisions: four.

Gratifying increase in sales:\*

	1971	1972
Literature	\$ 5,004.74	\$ 5,976.34
FORUM	2,189.10	2,826.36
Books	3,488.00	3,304.00
Total	\$10,681.84	\$12,106.70

\* includes sales to overseas groups and outside organizations in Quebec, N. B. and Belgium.

To keep prepared for the volume of incoming orders, we carry an inventory worth \$7,076.86.

The ODAT translation will be ready in time for the October AA Convention.

We know how earnestly it is wanted.

## INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Jo K., Chairman — Myrna H., Staff

It was a banner year for Institutional Coordinators who have generously given time and effort in guiding institutional projects in their Areas. Shared experience, by local committees, created a chain of achievement world-wide. More Institutional Committees were added, more new groups and plenty of Alateen activity. The WSO heard many useful ideas on establishing institutional groups and meeting programs, etc.

We had extensive correspondence with social workers, nursing supervisors, court officers, chaplains, marriage counselors and alcoholism coordinators in institutions.

*New Institutional Groups* were added in Birmingham, Ala.; Aurora, Chicago, (2), Chicago Heights, Geneva (Alateen) Oak Lawn, Palos Park, (Alateen), Ill.; Lexington, Ky.; Crownsville, Olney, (1 Al-Anon, 1 Alateen), Seneca, Md.; Belmont, Somerville, Mass.; Minneapolis (6), St. Cloud, Anoka, Minn.; Independence, St. Louis (Alateen), Mo.; Belle Mead, N.J.; Brooklyn (1 Al-Anon, 1 Alateen), Central Islip, Elmhurst, Jamaica, Rochester (stag), N.Y.; Goldsboro, N. Car.; Philadelphia, (Alateen), Pittsburgh (2), Pa.; Somerville (Alateen), Tenn.; Dallas, Texas; La Crosse, Menominee, Stoughton, Wisc.; In Australia: Shepparton, Victoria; Eararing, N.S.W.

*Institutional Guidelines* has been expanded to include information about Coordinators and a suggested meeting format.

*"Institutional Highlights"*—four issues were published during the year; many members responded to our request for material. Information Services (Intergroups) have been added to the mailing list. Several newsletter editors quoted excerpts in their institutional columns.

*Institutional Coordinators.* When the forms listing the Area WSC members are returned to the WSO, the new Institutional Coordinators are added to the institutional mailing list. A letter of welcome is sent, inviting them to send items of interest to our Newsletter. We also send the *Guidelines* and recent issues of *Highlights*.

*Annual Letters AA Institutional Groups* were once again sent out with AA GSO cooperation by addressing our envelopes. Yellow stationery and envelopes were provided for this mailing, which will be used for other institutional correspondence as well.

This annual letter has resulted in many referrals from groups in the U.S. and Canada and letters of inquiry from all over the world.

*Institutional Correspondence* has been heavy—many letters from new Institutional Coordinators and from groups asking for guidance. Institutionalized alcoholics continued asking us to get in touch with their families.

Many requests for information came from professionals; often they are eager to have groups formed at their institutions. We welcome their enthusiastic interest, but explain that meetings must be Al-Anon conducted.

## LITERATURE COMMITTEE REPORT

Louise M., Chairman

Louise's comment that the Committee had had an eventful and fruitful year was made abundantly clear by her review of its many and varied achievements.



She began on a note of sadness: Bill A., a talented and dedicated member of the committee died suddenly, and is much missed.

Two Alateen members, Dolores B. and Woody R. who joined the Committee last year, are making effective contributions to the work.

The Eastern Seaboard Alateen Conference (ESAC) expressed a wish to become more closely involved with the production of Alateen literature and agreed to appoint representatives from each of the three Conferences which comprise ESAC—the Middle Atlantic, the Metro and the New England. So far only the Middle Atlantic Conference (MAAC) has responded.

Louise then proceeded to detail the work of the Committee during 1972:

**New Literature.** "Just for Today" for Alateen. An Index for AL-ANON'S FAVORITE FORUM EDITORIALS. A new *Suggested Closing* for Al-Anon meetings. *Guidelines for Beginners' Meetings*. An analysis of the concept of *Conference-Approved Literature* based on Louise's report to the 1972 WSC. The latter is free on request; limit four per group.

**Major Revisions.** *Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work*. This indispensable manual, which every Al-Anon member should know from cover to cover, has been revised to include important developments and decisions. The mimeographed sheet *Inter-groups, What They Are, How They Serve* is now titled *Information Services* and covers the various committees and activities established by many groups for cooperative local work. The *Fact File for Professionals*, with a number of important changes, has been reduced from 75¢ to 25¢ per copy to encourage its wider distribution.

**Minor Revisions** on mimeographed sheets were made on the *Welcome and Preamble* (to the Twelve Steps), the *GR Inventory*, *Group Structure*, *Information for Newcomers*. Changes were also made in "Alcoholism the Family Disease"—"What's Next? Asks the Husband of an Alcoholic"—"This is Al-Anon"—"A Guide for Alateen Sponsors"—the Wallet Card, and in the book *THE DILEMMA OF THE ALCOHOLIC MARRIAGE*.

**Other Changes.** The color of the cover on "Alcoholism—A Merry-Go-Round Named Denial" was changed to blue to distinguish the Al-Anon version from the original. The Steps, Traditions and Slogans have been added to ONE DAY AT A TIME IN AL-ANON. Our Preamble (to the Twelve Steps) was changed with the approval of the Policy Committee. The new version will appear in various pieces of CAL as they require reprinting.

**Work in Progress.** "100 Questions" a booklet suggested by a FORUM feature of some years ago, is undergoing substantial editing because the over-ambitious Literature Committee produced considerably more material than would make a booklet of reasonable size. It will be finished shortly. • A booklet for parents with young children is currently having its final editing. • A hard-cover book for Alateens, using the revised version of "For Teenagers with an Alcoholic Parent" as its nucleus, is now being read and corrected by the Delegate members of the Literature Committee. This book, approved by the Board of Trustees in October, will include chapters on Traditions and

Slogans, as well as a history of Alateen and many personal stories. A booklet, "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions for Alateen" will be in production shortly. Only final editing remains to be done.

**Future Projects.** A booklet for adult children of alcoholics, mentioned in the December issue of the FORUM, brought response indicating that such a piece of CAL would be welcome. We now have sufficient material so the Committee can start work on it shortly.

A cartoon booklet for Alateens has been under consideration for a long time. A booklet of this kind, especially for younger Alateen members, would fill a real need. It would also serve as an excellent Public Information tool.

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Correspondence has been heavy throughout the year: a continuous interchange between the local committee and the Delegate members, answers to questions and suggestions, requests for permission to reprint parts of CAL, ideas for improvement; letters to members who sent in personal stories for proposed booklets, requests for information from members about outside publications—we've even had to answer some outright criticisms!

The over-all feeling of the letters we receive is one of gratitude to Al-Anon, concern for its well-being and a desire to be helpful. It is a privilege to be able to communicate with them through our fellowship.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Henry G., Chairman — Josie C., Staff

*In the summer of 1972, Henry E. G. (Hank) was appointed Chairman of the Public Relations (now Public Information) Committee. In addition to his professional experience, and a special interest in this important area of Al-Anon service, Hank fortunately has the required time to devote to the work.*

Loretta L. and Carter C. resigned earlier in the year to assume other responsibilities at the WSO.

Walter W. recently joined the other members (Marilyn B., Marie B., and Mary C.).

All this professional experience has made 1972 a most productive year. Many projects have been initiated and are now in various stages of development.

**Trade Publications.** The Board of Trustees approved the Committee's request to prepare editorial articles for trade and other publications.

**Public Service Announcements.** The Committee developed several mediums to portray the image of Al-Anon to the public, including TV spots, radio scripts and tapes, rubber mats for newspapers and other publications, posters for buses, taxis and subways.

**Research Study.** An in-depth study has been proposed to provide facts and figures about Al-Anon membership and the benefits from the program.

**Industry.** Means are being explored and developed for Al-Anon to be brought to the attention of industry, as a resource for employees and the families of employees.



## PARTICIPATION IN OUTSIDE EVENTS

*The National Council on Alcoholism* held its annual meeting in April at Kansas City, Mo., where we were represented by Bernard M., Chairman of the Nebraska Assembly.

*The National Conference on Social Welfare* held its 99th Annual Forum last spring in Chicago. We were represented by Charlie Z., former WSD (Ill.) who coordinated the necessary volunteers.

*The National Medical Association* held its 77th Annual Convention and Scientific Assembly in August at Kansas City. This was the first time we had participated. Jim C. WSD (Mo.), represented us.

*The North American Association of Alcoholism Programs (NAAAP)* held its 23rd Annual meeting in September at Atlanta. Farris L., WSD (Ga.), represented Al-Anon at this event.

Jim McInerney, Director of Alcoholism Programs at Lutheran Hospital, Park Ridge, Ill., presented a paper entitled: "*Al-Anon as an Aid to Professionals.*"

Our professional display was shipped to all of the above and was seen by thousands of people, which resulted in many requests for information.

## P. I. MAILINGS

In February, we announced our new cartoon booklet: "*Jane's Husband Drank Too Much*" which brought excellent returns in orders.

In August we announced the revised version of the *Fact File* and the new Alateen wallet card "*Just for Today*"

Releases were sent to both "outside" and Al-Anon P. I. lists. Response was beyond expectations.

Toward the end of the year, two more releases were sent to our P. I. list; one announced the TV Exchange Series (HEW) "*No Place Like Home*" and notice of the fact that SEVENTEEN Magazine had interviewed an Alateen member for "Youth on Youth," a syndicated service. The other mailing concerned Dick Cavett's having taped two 90-minute programs on alcoholism to be released early in 1973.

Several Al-Anon newsletters reprinted these releases in whole or in part to make sure the information reached our membership.

## PUBLICATIONS

Woman's Day, March 1972: "*Do These Self-Help Groups Really Help?*" Woman's World, March, 1972: "*The Battle of the Bottle.*" and mentions in Ann Landers syndicated newspaper column.

## OTHER CONTACTS

On November 2nd, an instructor at Rutgers School on Alcoholism spent several hours at the World Service Office with 15 of his students who are being trained to work in poverty programs as para-professionals. The staff secretaries helped to explain how Al-Anon can cooperate with them on their assignments.

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

Bookstores	7
Educators	310
Industry	33

Legal	5
Medical	397
Religious	73
Student Letters and Packets	602
Authors of Proposed Articles	28
Councils/Commissions on Alcoholism	27
Government Agencies/Depts.	130
Libraries (School and Public)	249
Social Agencies	40
News Media	7
Miscellaneous	16

## VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE REPORT

Evelyn C., Chairman

Again this year, I give heartfelt thanks to the great work done by our little army of local volunteers who come regularly to the office and lighten the load of our heavily-burdened staff.

A listing of what they do will give you an idea of what real dedication can accomplish:

- Preparing the FORUM for mailing (19,500-20,000) copies monthly, often for different types of distribution
- stuffing thousands of letters to groups in world-wide mailings
- assisting with sorting of another 11,000 letters received in response to an article by Ann Landers, coding these letters to the nearest group to which each inquirer was referred; addressing thousands of replies

Another group that Al-Anon couldn't live without are the volunteer chairman and their committees, who concentrate all year long on special segments of Al-Anon—FORUM Editorial, Alateen, Conference, Investment Advisory, Literature, Policy, Institutions, Public Information—and my own little Committee which is constantly on the search for volunteers.

And last, but by no means least, a special tip-of-the-hat and a warm thank you to those nice people who staff the Hospitality Room at the George Washington at all hours, ready to welcome even the first early-bird Delegate who comes to the Conference.

I've saved the most important thanks for last—you beautiful volunteers, our Delegates, who over and above your once-a-year appearance at the Conference, labor ceaselessly to bring all Al-Anon together. Thank you all.

## REGIONAL TRUSTEE REPORT

Loretta L., Committee Chairman

The Regional Trustee Committee was formed in 1972. Since we are still in the experimental stage in the nominating of Regional Trustees, the purpose of this Committee is to keep Delegates and the World Service Office informed about the functioning of the RT Experimental Plan to insure its running smoothly.

Our Canadian Region encountered some difficulty during the year, one Area having assumed that its invitation to nominate a candidate was sent much later than those of the other Areas. It is to avoid such misunderstandings that a special meeting is to be held during the 1973 WSC with the Delegates from the U.S. Eastern Region, whose next Regional Trustee is to be nominated at the 1974 Conference.



\* \* \* \* \*

The FIRST TRADITION was discussed by Eleanor C. of Alabama.

*"Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon Unity."*

"Webster's definition of unity suggests something complete in itself; being one in spirit and purpose."

"At a Workshop I attended, where the Steps and Traditions were discussed, one member said, 'I couldn't accept the Steps, especially the first one, for some time after coming to Al-Anon. However, I could accept Tradition One because it meant my welfare, and that of the other members, should come first. After all, I was still managing the alcoholic, or so I thought.' Several members felt it vitally important that the Traditions be explained to newcomers because so many group problems could be worked out with their help. The First Tradition gives us guidance. If, for example, a person is a disrupting influence at meetings; this should be corrected to preserve the unity of the group. We must be careful, however, to insure that she does not seem to be disruptive to just one or two members but to the 'greatest number.' This, then, becomes a matter of group conscience."

"ONE DAY AT A TIME, November 22, says: 'When each member of the group is familiar with the Traditions, and helps to make them work in the group, we are safe from any of the hazards that beset people who come together for a particular purpose.'"

"Having served on the Literature Committee for the past three years, I have become convinced that the use of only Conference-Approved Literature at Al-Anon meetings is one of our ways to apply Tradition One. The use of CAL gives us the quality of being one in spirit and sentiment, a uniformity of purpose. The Traditions are the cement that holds our fellowship together."

TRADITION TWO was discussed by Florence G. of Alberta.

*"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."*

"Other societies and organizations have laws, rules, and regulations administered by people in authority. We have only our Traditions."

"It is a miracle that Al-Anon still exists considering the confused thinking of the frustrated, emotionally upset people who come into it. Yet our groups function, develop and grow in number, world-wide, without rules or a ruling caste, but with leaders who are truly Trusted Servants. We have something greater than structure; we acknowledge an Authority outside of and above ourselves."

"The Three Legacies of the program, Acceptance through the Steps, Unity through the Traditions and Service through the Concepts, are the guidelines given us by our inspired founders for all time, a framework within which we can carry on all our affairs in harmony."

"This Tradition is for me. I came to Al-Anon with great capabilities for managing, only the results were never as I had planned. But here in Al-Anon I was asked to turn my life and my will over to a Higher Power, to hand over control to Him, the ultimate Authority. And He was waiting to be a partner with me. This participation with God is the key to harmony in my life."

"What is Group Conscience? Let me share a memory with you. In 1960-61, our first Alberta Representative was Mercy, wife of the late AA Trustee, John D., both dear friends. Our Assembly was young and funds were very low. It was only because Mercy was accompanying her husband, who was the AA Delegate, that we could have a Representative at the WSC. Then we were to elect our first Delegate, a big step, since we were still short of money. There were two candidates. After explaining procedure our Chairman asked for a moment's silence for all to seek guidance to make the right choice. The quiet that covered us told of our unity of purpose. AA was then holding its elections in another part of the city. Result? Al-Anon elected Norma, wife of Don N., who was elected AA Delegate. That was Group Conscience in action. We were guided by a loving God through our Group Conscience."

"Being a Delegate has made me very much aware of being a Trusted Servant. The end of my three-year term is drawing near but I hope I will be privileged to show my gratitude by continuing as a Trusted Servant in Al-Anon."

## LITERATURE COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

Louise M., Chairman

"The theme of this Conference is especially apt for our Committee; we've been living with it all year!"

"When we started work on the new Alateen book, we needed more Alateens on the Committee—and two volunteered! So we know from experience that *'Participation is the Key to Harmony.'*"

"And now to introduce our first speaker, Dolores, or Dee, as we fondly call her. She's eighteen, has been on the Committee for three years and is a full-time college student and, of course, is devoted to Alateen."

"Dee found the time to come to my house almost every week to help on Alateen literature. When she tells her story, she usually closes with the words: 'It's great to know I'm an O.K. person.' Well, I can tell you that Dee is one of the most O.K. people I know."

Dee: "I used to think that it wouldn't make any difference if each group did its own thing. Tradition Four was an eye-opener for me; I know now there can be harmony only if we all use the same literature and follow our program in the same way."

"Working on the Literature Committee, I am constantly being compelled to evaluate just how well I am living the program. My progress, or lack of it, comes into sharper focus when I read the letters we receive from other Alateens."

"I am so grateful for the understanding I have gained of alcoholism and our beautiful program."

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Introducing her next speaker, Louise said:

"Last October, I attended the Eastern Seaboard Alateen Conference. There I met another prospect for the Committee, Woody. He was so outspoken and critical he made me think of *'The Angry Young Man.'* At last year's Conference, our theme was *'Pass Along Understanding.'*"

"I said to myself: 'What this kid needs is more understanding of the way our World Service operates.' So I invited him to join the Committee. I had misgivings but I was willing to risk it, and it certainly worked out beyond my fondest hopes."

"Woody has been a tireless and dependable worker—lets



nothing stand in the way of coming to our meetings. I'm awfully proud of Woody, and now I want you all to meet him."

Woody: "I'm happy to be here and to share with you my thoughts on the participation of Alateen in the fellowship as a whole."

"Before I became a member of the Literature Committee, I knew nothing about the service end of Al-Anon/Alateen; very little about the Traditions and even less about World Service. I now understand why procedures are important. It gives me a good feeling to be able to explain the reasons for them to the group, to help them see how the fellowship works so they can spread the word to other Alateen and Post-Teen groups."

"When I participate in a worthwhile project, I have a sense of pride; I feel as though I had made a worthwhile contribution. I no longer have as many inner conflicts. The Alateen program has helped me pull myself together."

Louise: "Thank you, Woody."

She next introduced Eleanor of Alabama.

Eleanor: "Being part of the Committee has done much to confirm my belief that only CAL should be used for Al-Anon meetings. Before that, I took it rather more lightly."

"Through two World Conferences and my work with the Literature Committee, I have been sold on Conference Approved Literature, so I could sell my Area on it."

Louise: "Thank you, Eleanor."

Next, Louise introduced Sharon from Washington.

Sharon: "Just before I came to New York our State had its first Literature Display Contest. Competition was keen; the Districts really got to know not only our literature, but each other! And an added benefit; the displays can be used for Public Information work."

"It's true that *Participation is the Key to Harmony*. Sometimes that participation means some loud arguing, some disagreements and frustrations, yet often a lot of laughter and getting to know one another. It's all participation. And isn't that what Al-Anon is all about? It's an act of sharing, an act of loving—and anyone can do that!"

Louise's final speaker was Mary from Montana.

Mary: "My experience with the Literature Committee has been a means of growth for me. The new Alateen literature, which we have been reviewing for the past two years has made self-evaluation a must for all of us working on it."

"Serving on the Literature Committee is great Twelfth Step work, as is everything we do for the fellowship."

Louise: "Thank you, Mary."

"As you can see, our Literature Committee is well blessed. It is truly an honor and a privilege to work with people like these. The benefits I have reaped from my association with them and with all of you can never be measured. I can only say: Thank You."

The next session began with the

## ALATEEN PRESENTATION

Carole K., Chairman of the Committee said:

"My first year as Chairman is almost completed; it has been a good one for me. I have traveled to many Alateen groups in

the East, and was much impressed by the meetings. One great experience was our participation in ESAC (Eastern Seaboard Alateen Conference) whose theme was: '*Alateen is Growing Up*.' They are indeed growing, not only in number of groups and size, but in their maturity in working the program and their effective handling of their own Conventions."

The panel then began discussion of a question which has been in the forefront throughout the year: whether the World Service Office should register and service *Preteen Groups* for children from eight to twelve.

Proponents of both views felt very strongly about this matter; there are some highly successful groups, but even more that have encountered serious problems. In the course of the year, many letters have expressed views on both sides and these views were presented to the Conference Delegates well in advance for their consideration.

The panel, consisting of Carole, Timmy W., Alateen Secretary, Amy S. and Mary D. (Alateen) of the WSO committee and Delegates Helen H. (Ariz.); Connie Mac D. (Conn.); Pauline S. (Miss.); Marion G. (N. J.); Ruth F. (Ont.); and Lu C. (Utah); considered in depth the following alternatives:

1. Preteen groups (8-12) could be registered under a new category and serviced accordingly. (They could receive ALATEEN TALK and a free copy of the World Directory where they would be listed. They probably would not receive the FORUM nor the HANDBOOK, since they would not be eligible for representation at the Area Assembly.)
2. They could be registered and serviced as a regular Alateen group, using Preteen or Junior Alateen in their name if they wish.
3. The present policy of registering Alateen groups with members 12 years of age and over could remain. However, we would continue to encourage the younger members of the family to join an Alateen group which, by autonomy, has the prerogative to divide into age segments.

Helen said that Preteen groups had been tried in Arizona but had presented so many problems that they were discontinued. Parents left their children at meetings as a sort of baby-sitting service; there were serious behavioral problems; most of the children had too short an attention-span.

Connie said the feeling in Connecticut was that they were not ready to undertake Preteen groups, although the Alateen groups are eager for them.

Pauline said there is one Preteen group in Mississippi and that it functions very well, having been in existence for five years. She said that Alateens make better sponsors for Preteen groups than Al-Anons. She also indicated that the young members are conscientious about preparing for meetings and that the sponsor reports they chair their meetings quite well. Pauline has had direct experience with the group; two of her children are members of it.

Marion felt there is a definite need for Preteen groups, but could understand the WSO's policy that they could not *responsibly* service them. She said the Preteen groups in N.J. worked and planned their programs well; in some cases the meetings opened with the Preteens and Alateens together, then separated and held their own sessions. Marion indicated that much depends on good sponsorship.

Ruth, said Ont. N. has mixed feelings about Preteens: "Some have found the children too young; meetings bored them and



they could not understand or take part. Other sponsors found this age group receptive and impressionable. Often teenagers acquire rebellious natures and this might be prevented by reaching them earlier with love and understanding."

There was some discussion from the floor after the Panel had presented its views; however, there was much mixed feelings about the matter. Since no conclusion could be reached, Penny appointed a special committee to explore the subject further. The following were named: Conn., Miss., Nev., Ill. N., Wisc., Pa., N.J., Ted, Carole and Timmy.

In the discussions of Alateen itself, the news was uniformly good—the enthusiasm and growth and general awareness of the importance of this part of Al-Anon all showed marked increase.

Ruth said that although there are only seven groups, most of them new, there is interest and some progress.

"Most Al-Anons are beginning to realize the importance of sponsoring Alateen and it is discussed at all meetings. Plans for our first 'Sponsor and Co-Sponsor' meeting are underway.

"Alateens themselves have approached Al-Anon asking for sponsors. They are very active and have even branched out into Institutional work at a local sanitarium and at a boys' correctional school." Ruth said they have no Alateen Coordinator as yet, but that the Alateens are cooperating with her in a great way.

Marion said that a Sponsors' Meeting is held nearly every month and that these are attended by the GR from every Alateen group. "Activities and speaking dates are announced, as well as new groups, those that have closed, and groups floundering and needing help."

Pauline confirmed that Al-Anon members are coming to realize the need for Alateen sponsorship.

"They know it is a responsibility which must be met. Most of the credit for this must go to the Alateens themselves—their GRs participate in Assembly discussions and elections. One member of our WSC Committee is an Alateen, and also serves as Coordinator. Her goal is an Alateen group for every Al-Anon group.

One Al-Anon group has solved the sponsorship problem by means of a steering committee which keeps a slate of Al-Anon members qualified to act as Alateen sponsors."

Connie: "Of the many roads to recovery in our program, the biggest, for me, has been working with the young Alateens. These 'Al-Anons of the future' really opened my eyes and showed me the true meaning of living and loving.

"What beautiful vibrations one gets at an Alateen Conference—their growth, understanding, love, and honesty—even when it hurts!

"One way we found to create interest was to have Alateens share at Al-Anon meetings . . ."

From Helen: "Most of the Alateen groups in our state have more than one sponsor, but we do not use AAs as co-sponsors. Two of our groups have older Alateens as co-sponsors.

"Our Alateen Coordinator keeps in touch with sponsors. Although the great distances between meetings in Arizona make it difficult, she always carries the message of Al-Anon responsibility to Alateen wherever she goes."

Mary (Alateen and WSO Committee), reminded the Conference of a point too often overlooked:

"A sponsor should not govern or even participate unless

asked by the members to provide answers to questions. Some sponsors 'run' the meetings like a classroom; this should not be." In Mary's view, this often determines whether Alateens will remain members or not.

Amy said: "I was very grateful for the opportunity to be a sponsor. Like many other Al-Anon members, I was reluctant at first. I learned from the kids; I feel many of them have a better grasp of the program than we grown-ups. If more Al-Anons could realize how much these young people can contribute to their growth, it wouldn't be so hard to find sponsors."

Lu: "Much to my regret, Alateen is not thriving in Utah. We have not had an Alateen Coordinator and Al-Anons throughout the state don't seem interested in sponsoring Alateen groups. Wherever I go throughout the state I talk Alateen. The majority of those I talked to expressed the opinion that as long as they attend their Al-Anon meetings and their children attend church, this should be sufficient. This leaves out the important element of *identification* and I have tried to point this out. I have also encouraged the few Alateens in our Area to speak at open AA/Al-Anon meetings."

## THE INSTITUTIONS WORKSHOP

One of Al-Anon's outstanding successes in spreading the word is the work done by our Institutions Committee. The families of people confined to hospitals or prisons are desperate and are grateful to find an organization prepared to give needed help. Each year sees more institutions groups forming, and more groups wanting to learn how to get into this activity.

This year, a Workshop in which the entire Conference met in four separate sections, was presented by Jo K., Chairman of the Committee. Each section was assigned a Moderator and a Reporter. Finally the four reports were condensed into one by the Workshop's Summary Reporter.

Typical of the questions that were brought before the Workshop:

Does your Area have an Institutional Coordinator?

What approach should be taken to bring Al-Anon to an institution?

What part of the program do you emphasize when bringing it to new people in an institutional group?

What qualifications are important for members wishing to do institutional work?

How can we get more members interested in it?

Each question had a variety of possible answers to start the Workshop members in developing the various subjects.

The summary of the four sections was prepared by Barbara McC. (Mass.)

- Only about one-half of the Areas have Institutional Coordinators.

- Far more interest in some states than in others.

- Beginnings very important.

- Ways to bring Al-Anon to institutions: personal contact with social workers, directors of alcoholism projects, judges and AA sponsors of existing AA Institutions groups, or writing briefly explaining who we are, what we do and how Al-Anon helps



families. Or requesting personal interviews, providing literature for the professional. Personal contacts seem to produce best results.

- In conducting meetings, the Preamble and Welcome should be read, stressing that alcoholism is a disease. We should emphasize the First Step, explain that the whole family is affected; bring out that it is nobody's fault and that there is hope of recovery for ourselves through our self-help program.

- Literature used at most Institutional Meetings: "Homeward Bound"—"So You Love an Alcoholic"—"Just for Today"—"A Guide for the Family"—"Facts About Alateen"—"To the Mother and Father"—and ONE DAY AT A TIME. Literature should always consider the nature of the situation.

- Qualifications for membership on the Institutional Committee: a sound Al-Anon background, an "understanding heart" and at the same time, being objective to avoid becoming emotionally involved with personal problems.

- It is helpful for various groups to be responsible for meetings on a weekly basis, preferably represented by a member who has done this kind of work. She/he could also visit other groups to persuade them of the importance of this Twelfth Step work.

- Support (for literature etc.), comes from local Information Centers or Intergroups or from group, District or Area funds.

- The groups who meet in these facilities provide a service to the families, so they do not pay rent. As they are transient in nature, they are not obligated to support the local Information Service, Assembly or the WSO.

- Alateens are encouraged to participate in this work and many do so enthusiastically. In some Areas they serve on the District Institutional Committee.

- It was brought to the attention of the Workshop members that material from *Institutional Highlights* could be reprinted in newsletters.

It was a most interesting and revealing session and many indicated that there would be more future activity in this important field.

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The evening was devoted to the Delegates-Only meeting of which a report would be made to the Conference as a whole at a later session.

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After roll call Friday morning, Session VI began with talks by two outgoing Delegates.

Marge A. of Colorado, spoke on TRADITION THREE:

"The Third Tradition, for me, answers the Who, Why and What of Al-Anon. *Who* can be there—*What* is an Al-Anon group—*Why* are we there. It reads:

"*The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.*"

"*Who can belong to an Al-Anon Group?* No one can be denied membership who has been or is being affected by a

drinking problem in a relative or friend.

"I learned that alcoholism is a disease—a family disease; I knew how that disease afflicts the family as well, for I had progressed from headaches, upset stomach, nervous exhaustion and finally to convulsions. I was in a state of total despair, with self-respect and self-control gone. I was afraid to live and afraid to die.

"Tradition Three says I am a member if I have the need. And I had it!

"*What is an Al-Anon Group?* When it is practicing the principles of the program. Outside influences cause controversy and confusion. An individual may go anywhere, read or listen to anything, or further any cause, but as a group we are expected to adhere to this principle.

"*Why do we come to Al-Anon?* For mutual aid—to receive and to give. 'You can't keep it if you don't give it away. And we sure give it away if we don't have it.' Our theme, 'Participation—Key to Harmony' clearly describes mutual aid. When someone took my hand and said 'Welcome' at my first meeting, the act of sharing began. This sharing guided me. Today I feel secure with my God, my family and within the fellowship of Al-Anon."

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TRADITION FOUR was then discussed by Edith T. of Atlantic Provinces:

"*'Each group should be autonomous excepting in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole.'*

"The word 'autonomous' is the key; it means self-governing or independent. Yet this autonomy of ours is limited to *what is good for the fellowship as a whole*. If a group departs from the principles that make for the greatest good for the greatest number, it assumes responsibility for damaging the fellowship to which we all look for help.

"If any group wishes to limit itself to being a ladies' auxiliary, merely serving coffee at AA meetings, it isn't fulfilling its primary purpose.

"There are no 'musts' in Al-Anon, but in this Tradition we are asked to be 'obedient to the unenforceable.' The growth and unity of all Al-Anon depends on willing cooperation.

"Only since coming into World Service have I learned the importance of our traditions at all levels of our fellowship. Problems can arise which can be avoided or easily resolved, if we adhere to the Traditions.

"Al-Anon is nourished by the friendship and concern of all members for each other and from discussions in depth of our Twelve Steps, Traditions and Slogans. All this has been revealed to me here at WSC.

"Tradition Four says we are autonomous, but we must always keep in mind our responsibility to Al-Anon as a whole and remember always that regard for the anonymity of Al-Anon and AA members is vital to our growth."

## WORKSHOP:

### YOU AND THE NEWCOMER

Again the Conference divided into four sections, each to consider a series of questions aimed at discovering how the fellowship as a whole deals with the troubled people who come to us for help.



Alice B. (WSO) made the presentation; four reporters took notes of the proceedings: Helen H. (Ariz.), Don B. (Nev.), Dot S. (La.), and Becky J. (Ind.). Their notes were then ably summarized by Opal B. (N. Mex.).

The first question concerned how newcomers are welcomed. Very few had arranged to have someone assigned to greeting the newcomer, but all agreed that it should be done. WSO hears too often from speakers, invited but not known personally, who arrived at a meeting place and were ignored. They have wondered how such a non-welcome would affect a troubled person who had come for the first time.

Do groups provide newcomers with telephone numbers of one or more members to call in case of need? This appears to be another area in which we could do better. Suggestions: providing new members with booklets (free from the telephone company) in which are listed the names and numbers of several members who may be called. Other groups use name badges with telephone numbers on them.

To a question on sponsorship, most established members are willing and eager to sponsor newcomers, but there was some confusion as to how newcomers and sponsors get together. In some groups, temporary sponsors are assigned until the member gets acquainted and can choose someone with whom she feels comfortable. Everyone agreed that the booklet: "*Sponsorship—What It's All About*" is not used as much as it should be. The panels were reminded that "old-timers need sponsors, too."

Many thought that there was not enough follow-up on "drop-outs"—that calls should be made to let people know they are missed by the group. In making calls, we should find out what times are convenient so the person will be free to talk without being overheard.

There was considerable discussion about men members. Opal pointed out that men wouldn't feel particularly attracted to a group that called itself a name like "Cuties of New Life"—once actually used in her state. Many agreed that an Al-Anon meeting should not look like a sewing circle and that knitting and other handicrafts be discouraged if possible. One group plays tapes by male members to make men feel more at home.

On Beginners' Meetings, the Delegates agreed on the importance of a good foundation in the program. Members who start with a course of Beginners' Meetings are more likely to stay. Some groups use the outline available from the WSO; many more could. Much more could be done in this area of our work, using the literature suggested in the Beginners' Meeting Guide. There was only limited agreement as to whether longer-time members should attend these meetings; some said they tend to "take over" and interfere with the orderly progression of the planned program. But in general it was felt that the established member could attend—to listen.

The total substance of this session seemed to be: *Let's be aware of the newcomers and their needs; let's watch out for the new face that comes to our door and make it a point to extend a warm welcome on a personal level until the person feels comfortable and secure in Al-Anon.*

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After the Workshop, everybody went to lunch. The Delegates from the Eastern Region joined Loretta, Chairman of the RT Committee, Ted, Holly and Henrietta for a luncheon session in the Walnut Room, where they reviewed the resume forms and procedures to be followed in the Areas in the nominating of a candidate. The next Regional Trustee, elected at the 1974 WSC, will replace Jewel S. of Illinois, who will then be completing her

three-year term as the RT from the U.S. Eastern Region.

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## REGIONAL TRUSTEE EXPERIMENTAL PLAN

The business of Session Five began at 1:30 with a review of the *Regional Trustee Experimental Plan* presented by Loretta L., Chairman of the RT Committee. Loretta gave a fascinating capsule summary of the history of the Plan whose purpose is to provide broader representation on the Board of Trustees. The out-of-town members of the Board are elected at each Conference to serve three years—two from the U.S. (Eastern and Western) and one from Canada.

Loretta explained briefly the many decisions that had to be made in relation to the Plan—the nominating of candidates by the Region, the voting procedures at the WSC and the changes which suggested themselves after the plan had been put into effect by the Conference.

After these explanations, a specified number of Conference members cast votes for a Canadian RT candidate to replace Edythe D., who was completing her three years of service on the board.

\* \* \* \* \*

The candidate chosen at the voting session was Jean A. (Ont. S.), the alternate, Cay C. (Que. W.). These choices were later brought before the meeting of the Board of Trustees for confirmation.

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And then, after these many long, serious sessions, came one of the lighter moments we all look forward to—A SKIT—with Ruth F. (NY N.) as director and star and a cast of what seemed like THOUSANDS! The performance, a brilliant take-off of the trials of an *Al-Anon Answering Service* showed the star receiving a succession of calls from people who needed Al-Anon. Every few minutes we heard Ruth's "One ringy-dingy—two ringy-dingies" in imitation of the telephone. She answers—and then the characters at the other end of the line appeared to us in person, wildly costumed and voluble about their problems. The almost true-to-life situations were so caricatured that everybody roared with laughter. And oddly enough, in each call, there was just enough realism to make a tiny lesson for the audience.

It was truly a professional performance and everyone enjoyed it. And what took only fifteen little minutes out of the many days of solid concentration really relieved the tension and sent us back to our work with light hearts.

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TRADITION FIVE was discussed by Betty S. of British Columbia:

*"Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose—to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics."*

"Up to now, this Tradition has seemed self-explanatory, but since Penny's phone call, I find I really had to put thought into it.

"Bearing in mind our purpose—to help families of alcoholics—keeps us in line when we go off on a tangent on topics that have nothing to do with Al-Anon.

"We are urged to practice the Twelve Steps. In my early days in Al-Anon, I listened and wanted what they had. Would I have stayed if they hadn't demonstrated, by word and action, how they used the Twelve Steps? And knowing how much help



I received, I want to offer comfort to all who live in an alcoholic situation.

"... by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives—' this part really stumped me for a long time, when the illness was progressing at such an alarming rate. What was there to encourage? Understanding came slowly to the self-righteous, arrogant person I was. But bit by bit I became able to encourage and understand both my husband and my mother.

"—and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics—' This means doing all we can to see that Al-Anon is always available to those in need, attending meetings so there always is a group to welcome and give comfort. This also means being ready for Twelfth-Step calls, not being irked when my husband's Twelfth-Step calls interfere with plans we'd made, remembering not to become involved in the personal problems of new members and concentrating always on Al-Anon therapy.

"I can never pass up the opportunity to voice my deep gratitude for mother's contented sobriety in AA for nine years before her death, and my husband's having found his way to AA and above all, for having found my way to Al-Anon."

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TRADITION SIX was discussed by Farris L. of Georgia:

*"Our Al-Anon groups ought never to endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Alcoholics Anonymous."*

"Al-Anon is a fellowship of individuals with a single purpose—to learn how to live with the disease of alcoholism. Any affiliation that involves endorsing, financing or lending our name to any outside enterprise gets us away from our primary purpose. We are free to help other organizations or groups as individuals, but no member has the authority to bind an Al-Anon group, or Al-Anon as a whole, to any other cause.

"Endorsement or affiliation with others would destroy the very basis of our unity.

"Al-Anon's sole purpose is to help with the problem of living with an alcoholic. Meetings last only an hour, once or twice a week. If a newcomer should come to a meeting and find the group all involved in plans to help other causes, fund-raising drives or other, I'm afraid the newcomer would walk away with the same despair, loneliness and frustration that he came with and would feel that avenue of hope was closed.

"Regardless of good intentions and dedication of many in the professional field, they cannot know what it is like to go through the experience of living with an alcoholic whom you love. Only someone who has been there can know the complete frustration and bewilderment we live with. Many professionals are doing a wonderful job and are an invaluable aid to us in making referrals and distributing literature. We should cooperate with them but if we affiliate our program will be diluted and warped.

"We are also an entity separate from AA. Although we use the same tools in working our program, we cannot understand the mental and physical agony of the compulsion to drink, and the anguish of sobering up its feelings of remorse and guilt.

"This Tradition, like all of them, evolved from the failure and successes of many situations in many groups all over the world. And like everything else in the program, if you will work it, it works."

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## OUTGOING REGIONAL TRUSTEE

We then heard from Edythe D., our outgoing Regional Trustee from Canada, whose too-brief talk was packed with ideas that are well worth sharing.

Ede explained that the duties of an RT are exactly the same as those of the in-town-members—that RT is not representing a region, but Al-Anon as a whole.

Along with the other members of the Board, the RT must be constantly alert for new ideas for more efficient operation and better service to the groups.

As an example, Ede described the decision-making that had to go before the production of Lois's film.

"In 1971, the WSC voted to make the film. It was an excellent idea. However, the cost factor hadn't even been considered—and that made it a huge undertaking. It took months of deliberation to decide whether it should be done or not. Fortunately, contributions from the groups, spearheaded by Florida, finally brought the project to reality. The film has been welcomed and enjoyed in many parts of the world. It has given untold thousands of members an opportunity to see their WSO people as *people*, Al-Anon friends, not just symbols.

"The Board of Trustees must be ever mindful about the *Traditions and Concepts* and to keep *principles* above personalities in all their decisions.

"At the Regional level, a Trustee can be of service to *any* group; but he does not function as a Delegate does nor can he make any Area decisions.

"The RT is essentially a good-will ambassador for the whole fellowship."

Ede traveled long distances over Canada during her term as Trustee—the 2,500-mile round trip to Winnipeg; the 7,000-mile one to British Columbia and others. She has certainly carried the message, and despite a long illness, has served magnificently on the Board.

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TRADITION SEVEN was discussed by Eunice K. of North Dakota:

*"Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."*

"This shortest of the Twelve Traditions, has only eleven words but they are pretty specific and shouldn't require much interpretation. However, every once in a while questions arise.

"Early experience of both AA and Al-Anon was the guide in establishing this Tradition which makes our fellowship financially independent. We could endanger our primary purpose if we were to accept outside contributions. Our groups need only enough money to take care of rent, literature, refreshments and contributions to our Area Assembly and our WSC (and in Areas where there is an Intergroup or Information Service, these would require group support.) Large amounts of money in a group treasury cause group problems. What would a newcomer think if she learned we had a big fat surplus in our group treasury when she's been feeding her children on oatmeal three times a day.

"It might be tempting to accept a large amount of money when we think of all the good we could do with it, but outside donations usually have strings attached to them. If our groups or Headquarters accepted these donations, it would change the entire structure of the fellowship. It would affect the close relationship between the WSO and the groups.



"In the spring of 1969, when the Mighty Mouse River roared down upon Minot, North Dakota, deluging much of the city, our Al-Anon meeting place, too, was under water. Almost every home that wasn't flooded opened its doors and housed an extra family; every church took in victims.

"One of the churches opened its doors to our group and did not expect rent from us, but we insisted on making a small donation anyway, although we were to meet there only temporarily.

"I'm glad I can say that, so far as I know, Tradition Seven is being applied by all our groups in North Dakota.

"With our WSO depending on the groups for its maintenance, and our groups being dependent on the WSO for its wonderful service, our Al-Anon fellowship will continue to grow.

"Let us accept no outside contributions; that would deny the privilege of participation to every Al-Anon member who is willing and able. And participation, as we learn here at the Conference, is the Key to Harmony."

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Marion G. Delegate from New Jersey, then spoke on **TRADITION EIGHT:**

*"Al-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional but our service centers may employ special workers."*

"Our answer to a call for help—Al-Anon's Twelfth Step work—is a wonderful experience both for the newcomer and the one who provides help. For us, it's an opportunity for growth and responsibility while sharing with newcomers our strength, help and concern. I often think: 'who's helping whom?'"

"It brings me back to my first year in Al-Anon, taking the 'little steps.' I didn't realize they were the foundation blocks on which I was going to build my life.

"What amazed me was how my sponsor knew the source of my 'ailments' and what to do to get me to meetings and teach me to work the program. Little by little, this program and the people in it helped to bring order back into my mind, my home and my life—and to live one day at a time.

"My introduction to Twelfth Step work was just to work the program: when I talked at a meeting about a problem I had and how I handled it, that was Twelfth Step work. The feeling that I was helping others began to build my confidence. I learned that even our *presence* at a meeting is a way of giving support. Next was holding office in the group—after, of course, refreshments and cleanup. All this, and sponsorship, is carrying the message, what Tradition Eight says 'should remain forever non-professional.'

"Our service centers such as WSO, Information Centers and Intergroups need to employ special workers to do special jobs, but even to them, our officers and committees will want to apply the program so that their functions will be performed smoothly.

"We must be sure that the purpose of our program doesn't become buried in the business side. Remember our gentle phrase: 'Do what you can.' The gentleness of our program should never be abruptly disregarded, even by our professional workers, lest it hamper the working of our program."

Marion made it clear that the Eighth Tradition has much to say to us all—that it is a reliable guide which we can all safely follow.

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After a brief coffee break, we went back to our places and continued with a third.

## WORKSHOP: RESPONSIBILITY IN SERVICE

The presentation was made by Holly C., Conference Secretary, who had sent out in advance of the Conference the battery of questions to be discussed by the four break-up sessions. Reporters were Beverly D. (Me.), Connie MacD. (Conn.), Nancy R. (N. Y. S.) and Jeanne W. (Nebr.).

Beverly, as summary reporter, capsulized the notes made by all four reporters.

Typical questions: Is literature displayed at meetings, including the five books? Do groups hold special meetings to explain the duties of group officers? How can groups keep meetings focused on the Al-Anon program? How many groups have Advisory or Steering Committees? Do groups reimburse GRs and DRs for traveling expenses to Assemblies? When problems arise, where do members look for answers? Is affiliation with one "home group" essential? What is being done to encourage the helping professions to refer families to Al-Anon.

In her summation, Beverly explained that it was not possible to cover all 28 questions but she did review those that were discussed:

Most groups display CAL, including our five books, but few members own all five. Would like to see the books used at more meetings.

Discussions of politics, medical matters, religious and other extraneous subjects should be discouraged; refer to Traditions and CAL.

The book indexes are very helpful.

Few groups have Steering Committees, but those that do have find them effective—some orderly procedure is needed.

Some groups reimburse their GRs and DRs for expense of traveling to Assembly meetings; some hold open meetings to which professionals are invited.

It is desirable to belong to one "home group," but we can, of course, attend as many meetings as we want to.

The questions listed for this Workshop and the ensuing discussions clearly revealed that there is a great need for our membership to become more familiar with the Traditions and their application in problem-solving, the *World Service Handbook*, *Al-Anon Family Groups at Work* and the *Twelve Concepts of Service*.

It was felt that far fewer difficulties would arise, far fewer problems would remain unresolved, if we were to rely consistently on these valuable guides.

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Friday's program continued with a long evening session which began on a beautiful note with two of our outgoing Delegates speaking to us on the Ninth and Tenth Traditions.

Mary Alice R. of Oklahoma, had this to say about **TRADITION NINE:**

*"Our groups, as such, ought never be organized but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."*

"I'm so grateful that Al-Anon is a fellowship of equals—each member as important and worthy of respect as all the rest. Al-Anon's 'trusted servants' have no authority or power over other members; this does away with the competition that would



reduce the effectiveness of our program. Our group responsibilities are rotated so that all will have an opportunity to serve; there is no reason for jealousy or maneuvering for positions of leadership. We have no rules—only suggestions that have been helpful to others. Our members are never disciplined, only loved and encouraged to do better.

"Tradition Nine provides in its last 14 words, a plan for achieving the orderliness needed to get things done. This is further explained in our Handbook, in the Suggested Duties of the GR, the DR, the Area W. S. Committee, the Assembly and the World Service Conference.

"Our Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters operates only to share solutions which have helped others.

"The aim of this WSO is to bring Al-Anon recovery within the reach of all who want it. If no one assumes the necessary chores to get this done, Al-Anon would wither and die. Therefore special boards and committees are needed to operate efficiently and they are directly responsible to those they serve: the group conscience of Al-Anon.

"We don't encourage organization as such, but we do encourage the participation of each member in service, for this is the key to harmony."

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Then it was time for Darla J. (Ore.) to tell us some interesting things about the TENTH TRADITION:

*"The Al-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues, hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy."*

"The history of this Tradition should be of special interest to us in Al-Anon. How did it come about that the AA founders decided to keep AA free of all involvement and gave us their example to follow?

"The Washingtonian Society, a movement among alcoholics which started in Baltimore a century ago, seemed to have an answer to alcoholism. At first the society was composed entirely of alcoholics. Their membership of more than 100,000 was well on the way to a success, when politicians and reformers, alcoholic and non-alcoholic, joined the society and made the Washingtonians into temperance crusaders and abolitionists and involved them in other causes entirely unrelated to their original idea.

"AA surveyed the wreck of this movement and its course was clear: they would stay out of public controversy and causes. This was the cornerstone for Tradition Ten.

"As individuals, we are free to engage in any activities that interest us, so long as we do not involve Al-Anon in political, religious or other connections. We limit our activities to dealing with problems related to alcoholism.

"As long as we in Al-Anon do not dissipate our strength on divisive issues, we will continue to grow and flourish. We have to keep our differences of opinion within the framework of the Twelve Steps and Traditions. Any issue that does not contribute to our personal spiritual growth can only be a detriment.

"Tradition Ten is one of the many links in the chain that binds our groups tightly together. Each is important to our unity. Participating in a common cause, our fellowship finds harmony."

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## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Ted, President of the Board of Trustees, announced that the only changes in the composition of the Board will be to re-

place Edythe D., Regional Trustee, Canada, with Jean A., the candidate nominated at the Conference and confirmed by the Board.

Penny B., our Conference Chairman, has returned to the Board of Trustees. Her term on the Executive Committee had expired; she was replaced by Alice B.

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## PUBLIC INFORMATION PRESENTATION

Hank's report on activities in this important area shows the results of his experience applied with intensive effort and the cooperation of the Committee: Josie C., Secretary, Walter W., Marie B., Mary C., and Marylin B.

Here's Hank G.'s presentation to the Conference:

"I would like to share with you tonight some of the plans, problems and successes of the learning and digesting period our Committee has gone through during the last year.

"The Public Relations Committee (now to be known as Public Information), since it does not *promote* but simply *attracts*, must act as a sort of radar, searching out those who need Al-Anon and Alateen and having found them, convey in word and picture an image which can be accepted by the emotionally-troubled family and friends of alcoholics who so badly need the comfort and understanding of our fellowship.

"Among our many planned activities, the following six were given top priority:

1) TV, radio and newspaper public service coverage; 2) unions and industry; 3) Cooperation with other alcohol-oriented organizations such as AA, NCA, NAAAP and others; 4) better distribution of information to the groups, 5) instructions for local Al-Anon groups on handling public information and 6) handling public information problems which are sent in to the WSO.

"Once these six projects are underway, we will add a thorough-going program to help military personnel and their families. And finally, we will add Alateens to our Committee to reach the schools and the young people who need Alateen.

"The most interesting phase of our program is the development of spot announcements for radio and TV, for newspapers and for bus and subway posters. This can be one of the most exciting and productive programs our Committee has so far developed.

"Of great interest, too, is the program for unions and industry which is coming along rapidly and should, by this time next year, be showing great strides."

"THE P-I KIT has been going through substantial revision and should be in the hands of all groups later this year.

"A SURVEY is under way which, when once developed, should parallel AA's excellent survey. It will measure a cross-section of Al-Anon members across the country to develop facts and figures representing typical Al-Anon members. This survey is primarily for professionals who do not understand Al-Anon but are anxious to learn about it. It should also have important secondary value for our membership as well.

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"Our panel speakers have been Public Information Coordinators in their states and have had considerable experience with ways of bringing Al-Anon to public attention.

"And now to Marge A. who will tell us what's been going on in Colorado."

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"P-I activity in Colorado has developed such intense effort, so much cooperation from the media, so much enthusiasm and response, that Marge could practically write a text book on it! Here are a few examples:

"Three years ago, the WSO asked us to get in touch with a radio station that wanted to make spot announcements on Al-Anon. We were also asked to set up a Public Information Committee, and Jennie J. agreed to be the Coordinator. She asked for a Committee member from each District—and they went to work!

"A reporter was invited to a meeting in Denver where several members told their stories. That resulted in a full newspaper page, with illustrations. Since then there have been ten articles throughout the state, telling what Al-Anon is and where to find it.

"When Ted, of the Board of Trustees, visited Denver in connection with plans for Al-Anon participation in the 1973 International AA Convention, he was interviewed on a TV news program.

"Three Al-Anons appeared on a half-hour Q & A show. Impromptu, so they had to be ready with answers. This was broadcast right before the football games on a Sunday—no wonder we had a lot of response.

"One article, written by somebody not connected with Al-Anon or AA, not only gave the impression that the fellowship was for the children of alcoholics alone, but broke someone's anonymity. A member visited the editor and explained—and the result? A whole editorial on Al-Anon, with our Service Center on top.

"Another member sent her story in as a letter-to-the-editor. It was printed as written, along with the editor's comment: *"Light at the End of a Tunnel.* They call us hard-boiled newspaper men. We've seen or heard it all. Well, I don't mind admitting I was very much touched by a letter which came to my attention early this week. It tells the story of a local woman who was married to an alcoholic and the sheer hell on earth it created. While her heart-tugging message won't win any prizes for journalism, its simple eloquence comes across—it has the ring of stark reality. The bad experience is behind her now; the sun is shining. Her husband hasn't touched a drop of alcohol in ten years. Still, she wants to share her experience with others, help someone else who is going through the same nightmare. . . ."

"Yes, Colorado is getting to know about Al-Anon—due to the awareness of its members. They know what's good 'attraction material' for Al-Anon and they're using it."

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We then heard from Sharon B. (Washington) whose Area is only now getting a good start in this field:

"When our Area Committee met last year, after my return from the Conference, we came up with the alarming conclusion that Al-Anon, in our state at least, was the most closely-guarded secret around.

"We began our state-wide campaign with a familiar slogan: *'If you've got it—flaunt it!'* Our Public Information Chairman immediately enlisted everyone's help, even those who'd never thought about it.

"In 1971 and 1972 we launched a massive campaign to reach children. Much work was done, but I'm happy to say that the results were great. We reached children at grade school and junior high levels by sending speakers to schools to tell the story of Al-Anon and Alateen. We reached hard-core reform schools, got them interested in sending the boys to outside meetings, and soon, we expect to have our first 'inside' institutional group.

"Our P-I Chairman is always reminding us to be alert; listening one morning to an interview with a California State Penitentiary warden, she heard him ask whether Al-Anon was active in Seattle. The interviewer didn't know, so Mary Ellen sent him some literature with a letter. This resulted in an hour and a half of free radio time on this one station during the year.

"The members of the Committee paid to attend classes in Public Relations. They learned how to prepare material for newspapers, how to get articles accepted—and, said Sharon, 'it paid for itself a hundred times over!'"

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Hank had mentioned the priority of P-I work with unions and industry, a field we had hardly touched earlier, but which promises a tremendous source of new work for Al-Anon.

Walter W., member of the Committee at WSO, brings a wealth of experience to this activity and reported in detail his efforts in making contacts with such super-corporations as Metropolitan Life, General Motors, Union Carbide, Western Union, Exxon, Merrill-Lynch, Western Electric—and many more. They were all receptive, provided him with lists of their offices and plants and the names of the people in charge. Great work, Walter!

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Then came the highlight of this session, if not the most dramatic period in the entire Conference—the viewing of the TV spots prepared for public service showings on stations all over the country.

Non-alcoholics told their story in pictures, in full color, with the same brief phrase applied to each situation—to wives, husbands, sons, daughters, parents. Each took only a few seconds, but the impact was unforgettable. Each ended with the line:

*"You Can See What It's Doing to Him (Her)  
But Can You See What It's Doing to You?"*

These films will be made available to all groups and to Area P-I Coordinators to be given to local TV stations who will certainly welcome them because they are brief and have a telling message.

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One of the first important items on the Saturday morning agenda was a discussion of TRADITION ELEVEN by Margaret R. (Va.)!

*"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, TV and films. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all AA members."*

"The first part of this Tradition makes me think immediately of a current TV ad where an aging movie star with a once-famous name promotes a well-known food product. She gives it her all—her alluring voice, enthusiasm and charm. I can't imagine she convinces anyone; she's simply selling a product. This is promotion—and Al-Anon doesn't need it. Promotion is superficial; it can be bought; its sincerity is questionable.

"We also have friends who, not for pay, but out of personal enthusiasm promote a variety of things—special diets, Transcendental Meditation and 'speaking in tongues,' hypoglycemia and religious retreats. Let's keep Al-Anon free from such outside activities. Our attractiveness can never be put on; our program



can't be raved about—it has to grow quietly from the inside out and that takes effort, perseverance, time and humility.

"Of course we can't attract anyone by 'hiding our light under a bushel.' We have to let the world know we're here; though promotion is a No-No, information is a Yes, Yes! Far too many Al-Anons seem to think they belong to a secret society instead of learning about the really simple and clear-cut differences between carrying the message and promoting. Our personal anonymity is required only in dealing with the public media and in protecting the anonymity of AA members.

"Some TV stations argue that showing us only from the back or in silhouette has a sinister effect and demand that we should be seen full-face. There is a possible compromise, worked out with our WSO. We can agree to appear full-face as long as we are not identified as Al-Anon members, only as spouses or other relatives of alcoholics. The choice is ours—and our spouses, whose full consent we would naturally need. In all dealings with the public we 'need guard with special care the anonymity of all AA members.'

"In agreement with my husband, key members of our Citizens Association and our church may know about our membership in the program. We are free to break our *personal* anonymity and this has already resulted in several families joining us on meeting nights. This is how we share our experiences without violating the spirit of the program or its Traditions."

The final statement on our Traditions—the TWELFTH—came from Joyce B. (Wisc.)

*"'Anonymity is the Spiritual Foundation of All Our Traditions, Ever Reminding Us To Place Principles Above Personalities.'"*

"That first word, *Anonymity*, is the most widely recognized and most generally misunderstood principle of our fellowship. To the uninitiated, the name of our parent group, 'Alcoholics Anonymous,' suggests 'secret society.' When the work of this little band of revolutionaries began, this was very much so. They feared disclosure; publicity of any kind could mean disaster, not only to the individual, but to the group. Their fears were not groundless; the stigma of alcoholism was real. I do recommend reading what AA has to say about the background of our traditions in its 'Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.'

"Anonymity, from the beginning, involved sacrifice. To forego opportunities for personal gain by our founders was a decision surely arrived at under the guidance of a Higher Power. It was their selflessness which generated the trust and confidence that enabled AA to grow world-wide, and provided the foundation for the birth, nurturing and growth of Al-Anon and Alateen.

"When we try to practice these principles in all our affairs, we, as individuals, grow spiritually and so does our group. Where there are flaws in the practice of these principles, problems develop.

"We need daily reminders; here's one for you:

Reading the Preamble and Welcome sets spirit and tone  
For the gathering of troubled, they're no longer alone.  
Reading the closing near the end of your hour  
Is a gentle reminder from whence comes our power.

"I hope you'll forgive the doggerel; it's the thought that counts! A group which remembers and practices anonymity as our spiritual foundation, places principles above personalities in all its affairs, is thus free in peace, unity and harmony to fulfill

its purpose, that of helping families of alcoholics around the world."

\* \* \* \* \*

## REPRESENTATIVE FROM U.K. AND EIRE

Then we had the great pleasure of hearing from Helen M. S. our Representative from the United Kingdom and Eire, who spoke on

## USING WSO EXPERIENCE

"I am so glad to have been asked to talk on this subject; we think a great deal of the WSO experience and are grateful to be able to use it. We have used WSO's help through the years, but we only recently became an Area so we could take part in these Conferences. As you may know, we can never be a full member of the Conference, and so must take care of our own expenses for these journeys. And that is a considerable item in our budget; I am very conscious that the money for these expenses is put into the collection pots by the members, when often they could well use it for other purposes. So you see I must get as much from this experience to carry back with me as possible.

"There are various sources—first, the experience gained at the Conference, then the tremendous pool of experience available at the WSO, and there are also the many mimeographed pieces sent to us from time to time.

*The Mimeographed Material.* If it is something we can make use of in our Area, we run off our own copies. This is because small details often need changing. For instance, in '*Guidelines for Institutional Work*,' there is a mention of Intergroups, and we don't have any. We have the WSO's permission to make any such small changes. We are, of course, careful not to change any of the Al-Anon content.

"Let me take one particular piece we received this year—and how we made the fullest use of it.

"When I received the '*Suggested Beginners' Meeting*' format, I made four copies and sent them to two hospital groups, one to a well-established group and one to an Al-Anon member who was about to start a new group.

"The well-established group turned down the idea of beginners' meetings, the others found it a good idea. My next step was to make small alterations and to ask the Coordinator at our General Service Office to have 300 copies run off. As always, she said: 'Of course,' as if she had hundreds of volunteers sitting around with nothing to do. From then on, the GSO took over, adding the piece to our Price List (we rarely give anything away free), and announcing it in our magazine: '*News and Views*' with suggestions for its use.

"We also found another use for it. We get letters from partners of AAs who want to start an Al-Anon group but are very nervous and inexperienced. In these cases, we suggest they take their first six meetings from the '*Beginners' Meetings*' format as this would give all the members a good grounding in the Al-Anon program. So this piece has been added to the free literature we send to new groups.

"We have done this also with '*Guidelines for Institutional Work*' and the *Suggested Welcome, Preamble and Closing Remarks*.



"One piece we doubted we could use was the press release of some TV and radio programs. As we don't get these programs, this seemed to be something we couldn't use. But then I noticed the last sentence, which reads: 'When you announce these programs to your groups and members, please suggest that they call or write the local TV and radio station. It is always important for a station to hear from its audience. Our members can do this as interested and concerned individuals without breaking any Traditions.'"

"We had recently taken part in a nation-wide radio program and I suggested to our General Secretary that when telling the groups about this program, she should ask them to contact the producer, giving their views on its presentation."

"As I visit the Districts I quote from *Area Highlights* and *Institutional Highlights* and our Editor quotes from these also in 'News and Views.'"

"We have found the Structure Chart from the *World Service Handbook* very useful. I find that when I talk about the structure of Al-Anon it is easier to have a visual aid, so I take a poster-sized Structure Chart around with me. In one District the GR said to me after the meeting that he thought it psychologically brilliant to put the Al-Anon group at the top. In any business, the Board of Trustees would be there. I said I did not know if it had been planned psychologically, but that, in fact, it was simply true. The group is the most important thing in Al-Anon—it's what the fellowship is all about. The whole of the rest of the structure exists only so that groups may share their experience and receive from the WSO services which leaves them free to concentrate on Al-Anon purposes—helping the families of alcoholics. I now repeat this conversation."

"*Using the Conference.* We make good use of the experience gained at the Conference. After discussing it with our Board of Trustees, I set about using what I had learned at the Workshops. Starting off with the idea that any project should be undertaken by the Area as a whole, I compiled suggestions for a Public Relations project with social workers. This explains a very simple exercise the groups can undertake to contact social workers in their localities. We get so many questions from groups asking how to set about public relations work, so I describe very simply each step they should take. When I next go around the Districts, I will ask them how useful they found these guidelines, and the result of their approach to social workers. Some groups have already been asked to speak about Al-Anon to the Council of Social Workers in their town."

"All the groups think public relations work is a good idea, but that someone else should do it. They now realize that if they do not contact the helping agencies, no one else will."

"*Literature Produced In Our Area.* Our first piece of Al-Anon literature was ('A New Life' from AL-ANON FACES ALCOHOLISM). We also produced a press handout which was later incorporated in our Public Relations leaflet, 'The Al-Anon Family Group.' We also printed an Al-Anon poster. All these had Conference approval. In 1969 our groups voted to use only CAL."

"*Compiling Our Own Service Handbook.* We are now engaged in producing our own Handbook. Perhaps I should explain why the World Service Handbook is not entirely suitable for our needs."

"It has always been the thinking of the World Service Board

that each country or closely-related group of countries outside the U.S. and Canada should eventually develop its own service structure."

"We reached this stage in 1970 when, with the help and encouragement of the WSO, the U.K. and Eire became an Area divided into Districts. We also became a non-profit company, applied for registration as a charity which application has just been granted, appointed a Board of Trustees, and held the first of our annual Area Conferences."

"What all this means is that we can only use the World Service Handbook up to a certain stage. A Committee with a Chairman appointed by the Board of Trustees, has been working on this since last autumn; we are now circularizing a draft form to our DRs, our Board of Trustees and of course, Henrietta, for their comments. We hope to have the Handbook accepted by our Board next month and by the Area Conference in October. The Handbook will be experimental for three years."

"*The Importance of Terminology.* We soon found that it was important to keep to the same terminology used by the WSO. This was sometimes quite difficult. Although we use the same language, there is considerable difference in usage in each country. The speakers at this Conference, for instance, use Americanisms which sound strange to my ears. And I am sure that some of the expressions I use sound odd to you. So it is not surprising that we had to change some of the terminology in the Handbook."

"It is not only between our Area and WSO that confusion could result from any changes we made in terminology. Australia is now holding experimental Area Conferences and they have asked us to let them know our experience in holding these. Supposing they were confused by some of our terminology? Australian is a *fourth* version of the English language. One can foresee that some time in the future a world-wide Conference might be held with Delegates from everywhere. No one would know what anyone else was talking about, so we have settled for using the terminology used by WSO."

"In working on the Handbook, we have found the Concepts a great help in stating clearly the responsibilities that each link in the chain of our structure should carry."

"*'Participation—the Key to Harmony'*—well, these are a few of the things I wanted to tell you about Al-Anon in England. It would all have been much more difficult, and we might have strayed from Al-Anon principles, had we not been able to draw on the experience of the WSO and the Delegates at this Conference."

"Participation? I like to think about the producing of our Beginners' Meeting format, the member who gave up her Sunday afternoon to take a hospital meeting, the secretary of the group who wrote to GSO asking for copies of the format, there are the volunteers at GSO London, who cut the stencils, ran off the copy and posted them. There is the Secretary at WSO who decided to send us the format—and all the volunteers and staff involved in that. But that is only the half of it. A long chain of participation was involved *before* the format landed on a desk at the WSO. Through all this, small groups in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales are using the format to help confused and unhappy newcomers. And this, of course, is what our Conference and our fellowship are all about: *Participation.*"

Helen's talk was followed by an annual feature of the Conference,



## THE ASK-IT BASKET

Before and during the early periods of the Conference, Delegates bring questions which have been asked by Area members. These are the basis of the Ask-It Basket session, which this time was taken care of by Edythe D., Regional Trustee from Canada, Jewel Shupe, Regional Trustee from U.S., E. and Timmy W., Alateen Secretary.

\* \* \* \* \*

Q. 1. Is the material used in the FORUM and in ALATEEN TALK considered CAL?

A. *No. As its title suggests, the FORUM is like a meeting in print. Many of the items are the individual experiences and views of members. The same is true of ALATEEN TALK.*

Q. 2. Is an AA member who does counseling of alcoholics eligible for membership in Al-Anon?

A. *Eligibility depends solely on whether he or she is personally affected by the alcoholism of a relative or friend.*

Q. 3. When groups order five books, they save 50¢ per book or \$2.50. Some groups use this money to buy more literature, selling the books at the retail price (i.e. \$3.50 for ONE DAY AT A TIME) Doesn't it violate our Traditions to have some groups sell the books at \$3.00 while others maintain the \$3.50 price?

A. *This must be left to the discretion of the individual groups. A majority of the members should agree on the price, and the reasons for it. It does not violate a Tradition; the groups are not in commercial competition with one another.*

Q. 4. What is the recommended number of groups to a District?

A. *No specific number recommended. It depends largely on distances between them. In states with widely scattered groups, six might be a usual number. The range seems to be from six to ten.*

Q. 5. When a local problem has not been solved at the group or Assembly level to the satisfaction of most of the members, is it permissible for individuals to write to the WSO for help?

A. *Certainly anyone may consult WSO about a problem, but its source of solutions is the same as their available groups—our Twelve Traditions. The WSO does not mediate in local problems based on differences of opinion. But it would try to help when asked.*

Q. 6. Is it necessary for speakers to outside agencies to give a talk before a "Speakers Bureau," which is now in the process of being formed? These are speakers selected by the local PR Committee which feels qualified to judge. Sometimes the prospective speakers are given no more than 24 hours notice.

A. *It does sound quite authoritarian for a fellowship like ours, just as the term "Speakers Bureau" sounds rather formal. The Committee's desire to make sure the message is effectively given is understandable, but it doesn't seem reasonable to ask a member to prepare and practice a talk on such short notice.*

Q. 7. Couldn't the WSO publish paperback books that small new groups could afford to buy for the raffle? If the (name deleted) Press can afford to publish paperbacks for a dollar and make a profit why can't Al-Anon Headquarters?

A. *The (—) Press is a publishing empire with wide-ranging markets. It is not practical for us to have our books printed in the huge quantities required for paperbacks. We use hard-cover books because our members read them over and over and paperbacks wouldn't stand that strain very well. Many groups use our books for raffles. Incidentally, book prices on the general market are far higher than ours, so those who buy the existing Al-Anon books get an even better bargain than they would in a dollar paperback. This matter has been discussed from time to time and no sound reasons have as yet been found to have Al-Anon books printed in paperback. As to the future, who knows?*

Q. 8. Our Intergroup has suggested a need for Al-Anon literature to help Al-Anons who are divorced and widowed. Do you agree?

A. *Al-Anon's mission in life, repeatedly stated in our literature, is to help "those whose lives are, or have been, affected by the alcoholism of another." The program—Steps, Traditions, Slogans—is geared to help us achieve serenity through improving ourselves and learning to cope with our problems whatever they may be. Individual applications of the kind you suggest do appear in some personal stories in AL-ANON FACES ALCOHOLISM, but the principles of the program apply to anyone.*

Q. 9. If certain members of a group are causing trouble and keeping others away, should they be asked to leave for the good of the group? If so, by whom?

A. *The Chairman (or, in the case of Alateen, the sponsor) should speak privately to the offending members and suggest that they are depriving other troubled members of the help they need. Perhaps a meeting on "Courtesy" might help.*

Q. 10. An Intergroup in my state is constantly pressuring groups for contributions and pledges, disregarding the groups' obligations to the District, the Assembly and WSO. Is this a general practice?

A. *Not that we know of; indeed, many Intergroups divide their surplus funds between the Assembly and the WSO, or ask for no more than they need for the support of the Intergroup. Intergroups which accumulate large amounts of money are not living up to the Al-Anon spirit nor its Traditions.*

Q. 11. Some members in our Area take exception to the Intergroup's Chairman calling herself President? Is this a usual practice in our fellowship? She is a long-time member.

A. *So far as we know, this member is unique. Perhaps she justifies this impressive title by the Tradition that says each group is autonomous. But it also suggests we avoid anything that affects the fellowship as a whole, which such a precedent could do. It makes us sound like an Organization with a capital O, whereas we are all equals and our officers are merely trusted servants. Maybe she wants to be a very special kind of trusted servant? Length of mem-*



bership has no bearing on it; many a relative newcomer has better Al-Anon under her belt than some with many years in the program.

Q. 12. My Assembly would like some ideas about how to keep outsiders from attending closed meetings; social workers, clergymen, teachers and other professionals who drop in uninvited.

A. Unless they identify themselves, there is no way of knowing at once if they are potential members or not. When they do, some tactful member should be assigned to speak to them after the meeting and explain that our meetings are closed, restricted to members, because they do not feel as free to discuss their problems in the presence of outsiders. They might also be assured that they would be welcomed at open meetings, and that they will be sent a notice well in advance.

Q. 13. What can be done when an AA member comes to meetings, takes charge of them, preaches religion and so on?

A. If the AA qualifies as a member of Al-Anon because he has another alcoholic in the family, he comes under the same strictures as any other bossy or disruptive member. The Chairman should use the gavel and keep the meeting open for others to speak. He should also be spoken to privately and told that meeting-time must be shared with all. If he is not also an Al-Anon member, he should be asked not to come to closed meetings; Al-Anon members aren't welcome at AA's closed meetings, either.

Q. 14. Could we include in Alateen sponsor guidelines something about sponsors not dating Alateen members?

A. This problem must be worked out on an individual basis.

Q. 15. It is suggested that ALATEEN TALK invite Alateens to write how they use the Serenity Prayer, the Slogans and the Steps. Also that they have a ONE DAY AT A TIME of their own.

A. To the first question, Alateens are constantly urged to write their experiences with the program to ALATEEN TALK. To the second, Alateens are perfectly capable of using ODAT, and do!

Q. 16. Are the Delegates really carrying the message of the World Service Conference back to their Assemblies?

A. Indeed they are—most of them, at least. Some even travel many hundreds of miles to carry it to the groups. Operation Delegates Headstart (see page 2) serves to promote this work, and so does wide distribution of this Summary to groups and individuals.

Q. 17. Would like to see some literature on living with sobriety.

A. People who are working the Al-Anon program live with sobriety in the same way as they lived with active alcoholism—by practicing the program for themselves. Remember that in its early years everybody in Al-Anon was living with sobriety and the literature was geared to learning how to live with the sober alcoholic. We don't come to Al-Anon to get the alcoholic sober, but to live with the alcoholic, drinking or sober.

Q. 18. How can we generate interest in open meetings?

A. Some groups keep a list of all possible persons who might be interested—teachers, social workers, clergymen, doctors, and so on. Notices of open meetings are sent to them. Copy should tell the subject of the meeting and be graphic and informative.

Q. 19. What is the best way to inform members of policy statements and the decisions made at the World Service Conference?

A. Policy decisions, always based on our Twelve Traditions, appear currently in Area Highlights. Each year, after the WSC, this Summary reviews the year's decisions of the Policy Committee and gives the Conference decisions. Policy statements of past years are now being coordinated into a complete record which will be made available to all groups. It must be noted, however, that policy changes are made as conditions change; these will be reflected in the complete presentation.

Q. 20. On the back of "Just for Today" is a prayer. We no longer call it the St. Francis Prayer; it is now called Prayer. The pamphlet is Conference-Approved; is the prayer also? Is it not a religious prayer? Should we not be consistent in our suggestions?

A. The prayer, regardless of its source, is a spiritual statement with universal application. It is at every point in harmony with the program we practice. Al-Anon, whose purpose is spiritual, does not hesitate to use such inspiration. The identification with the saint was removed to avoid identification with a specific religion.

Q. 21. What would be the best material to take along for a potential newcomer?

A. 1. This is Al-Anon; 2. A Guide for the Family; 3. What Do You Do About the Alcoholic's Drinking?; 4. Al-Anon, You and the Alcoholic. (See our Literature List for other ideas.) Caution: don't give a newcomer more than one or two to read; it would be apt to confuse.

Q. 22. In one of our Districts, an Al-Anon member serves on a National Council Board as an Al-Anon Representative and is even listed that way on their printed stationery. Any suggestions?

A. This violates Tradition Four, since her public identification with another organization as an Al-Anon member could affect other groups or AA adversely. It also does not conform to Tradition Six relating to outside affiliations. Perhaps the member doesn't realize this and would be willing to serve on the NCA board as an individual rather than as an Al-Anon member.

Q. 23. When an article about alcoholism appears in the national press, does our PR Committee make contact toward cooperating or to inform those in charge about Al-Anon?

A. This is only one facet of our PR (now known as PI or Public Information) Committee's work. Follow-up procedures depend on the nature and source of the article. If you would like information about specific situations, please write details to the Committee.



Q. 24. If groups such as Schizophrenics Anon, Gam-Anon, etc. use the Al-Anon program—Twelve Steps and Traditions—and CAL—must they have permission from the World Service Office?

A. *The Steps and Traditions originated with AA, and it is their prerogative to allow us to adapt them to our use—Al-Anon and probably any other organization dedicated to helping people help themselves. If Al-Anon members should happen to see any of our copyrighted material being printed and distributed by outside groups, the WSO would appreciate knowing about it so we can take steps to protect our copyright.*

Q. 25. Will the Conference consider "written books" such as "Search for Serenity" to be converted or edited so as to become Conference-Approved Literature?

A. *This is amply answered in the leaflet "Why CAL?", one copy available without charge on our Literature list. There are literally hundreds of "favorite" books that members would like to see Conference-Approved, but we have found that material written by and for Al-Anon best serves our purposes. Individuals may, and should, read anything they wish. AL-ANON FACES ALCOHOLISM, AFPE, DILEMMA and LIVING WITH . . . are fascinating reading!*

Q. 26. Can Conference-Approved literature be ordered on consignment?

A. *No, No, No! Under no circumstances. When we tried it out, material was held out for months and often came back in unsaleable condition. Incidentally, no C.O.D.'s, either—Sorry!*

A good portion of the questions asked could have been answered at the local level, by referring to the Traditions and the Steps.

### PRETEEN GROUP REGISTRATION

Following the Ask-It-Basket Session, Penny called on Ted, Chairman of the Special Committee on Preteen group registration, to give his report. Ted told the Conference of the many hours of serious discussion that the committee had spent. Even so, they could not come to a full agreement. He said: "There seems to be no clear leading of our Higher Power on this question at this time. Therefore it appears that we should wait for clearer instructions." Thus, the following recommendation was made: That the Delegates return to their Areas and learn everything possible about the Preteen groups, how they are functioning, problems they are having, who is sponsoring them, etc., and report back to the 1974 WSO. Several Delegates requested that a Questionnaire be prepared by the Aalateen Committee to assist them in their research and it was promised to them.

\* \* \* \* \*

After Ted's report, we went to lunch at 12:30 and just got through in time to get aboard the big buses that were to take the Conference members to *Stepping Stones* for a few more hours with Lois in her beautiful home surroundings.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sunday Morning, an appropriate time for our yearly Spiritual Meeting. Penny introduced the two speakers with a message as moving as a tiny sermon.

The first was our Henrietta, who told her own story, and the part Al-Anon has played in her life. It was a story of pain and ultimate joy and all of us could live it with her.

And then there was Jim Clarke of Missouri, whose keynote went straight to our hearts: "I belong to the Al-Anon Family Group. It is wonderful to be able to say that I belong somewhere. Before I was driven to this program I did not belong anywhere."

So many of us could share that lost feeling with him, and rejoice that we found ourselves—our real selves—in Al-Anon.

### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DELEGATES ONLY MEETING

On Thursday evening, all Delegates met in private session in the Regency Room, with Mary B., Montana, as Chairman and Sharon B., Washington, as Secretary.

The results of this meeting were presented to the entire Conference at a brief session on Friday. The Delegates decided to recommend:

1. that the Literature Committee prepare an illustrated booklet similar to AA's "Twelve Traditions."

*Ted, President of the Board of Trustees reminded the Conference of the "Policy Digest" which is now in preparation and which would serve the same purpose as the booklet suggested. The matter will be studied, however.*

2. that the leaflet "Alcoholism—The Problem Brought Up To Date" be replaced with a current report or dropped from the Literature List.

*To keep this piece current would require annual revision; it would therefore be preferable to eliminate it. Much of its material is covered in other pieces of literature.*

3. that the Delegates send the WSO, by December 31st of the year of their election, any preference (first, second or or third choice) as to the Standing Committee they would like to serve on. This would make it possible for them to know before coming to the Conference which Committee they have been chosen for. Also that each appointee be sent a copy of the appropriate Committee's guidelines in advance of the Conference.

*This could create serious problems; it would be practical only if the names of the elected Delegates were to be received by the WSO before December 31st. Long-time experience has been that first-year Delegates do not announce their election promptly. There are not enough Committee openings for all Delegates to be appointed. The fairest way would be to leave it to individuals to volunteer.*



- 3A. that the Conference be convened at 9:00 A.M. the day of the banquet and that the Delegates be advised of the additional cost per Area so they can take this information back to their Areas for consideration.

*This question will be studied and reported on. The decision will have to be made by the Conference after all the facts have been assembled. Therefore no decision is likely until the 1974 Conference.*

4. that the Workshops be smaller in size of attendance, the list of questions be briefer so that each can be given adequate discussion time. Also that the Workshops be scheduled earlier in the sessions.

Agreed . . . AGREED!

5. that all Delegates want to express their satisfaction at seeing Penny's load has been lightened by the appointment of a co-Chairman.

*Thank you. We'll do all we can to make it easier for her to do this stupendous job.*

6. and lastly, it is with great gratitude that the Delegates to the World Service Conference give thanks to Lois for consenting to make the film: "Lois's Story" which has meant so much to all of us—and to the World Service Office and the Board of Trustees for their willingness to undertake the hard work of making this film a reality.

*And thank you for YOUR cooperation and support, without which it could not have been possible!*

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DELEGATES ONLY MEETING

Prepared by Conference Committee  
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.  
P. O. Box 182, Madison Sq. Sta.  
New York, N. Y. 10010 U. S. A.

1. that the Literature Committee prepare an illustrated book for similar to AA's "Twelve Traditions."

Ted, President of the Board of Trustees, presented the Committee of the "Twelve Traditions" which is now in preparation and which would serve the same purpose as the booklets suggested. The matter will be studied, however.

2. that the latest "Alcoholism"—The Problem Brought Up To Date" be replaced with a current report or booklet from the Literature List.

To keep this piece current would require annual revision. It would therefore be preferable to eliminate it, since it is not in other places of literature.

3. that the Delegates send the WSO, by December 31st of the year of their election, any suggestions (first, second or third choice) as to the Standing Committee they would like to serve on. This would make it possible for them to know before coming to the Conference which Committee they have been chosen for. Also that each representative be sent a copy of the appropriate Committee's guidelines in advance of the Conference.

This could create serious problems; it would be practical only if the names of the elected Delegates were to be received by the WSO before December 31st. Long-time experience has shown that first-year Delegates do not announce their election promptly. There are not enough Committee openings for all Delegates to be appointed. The fastest way would be to leave it to individuals to volunteer.

A. This is simply answered in the letter "Why Call," one copy available without charge on our Literature List. There are literally hundreds of "how-to" books that members would like to see Conference-approved, but for 41-44-45 that number is reduced to 10, and should, in addition, be printed. Individuals may, and should, request literature they wish AL-ANON FACES ALCOHOLISM.

- Q 36. Can Conference-Approved literature be ordered on commitment?

A. No. No. Not under no circumstances. When we wish to our material we hold out for months and often come back in miserable condition. Incidentally, no C.O.D.'s either—sorry!

A good portion of the questions asked could have been answered at the local level, by referring to the Traditions and the Scope.

## THIRTEEN GROUP REGISTRATION

Following the At-It-Broken Session, Penny called on Ted, Chairman of the Special Committee on Thirteen Group registration, to give his report. Ted told the Conference of the many hours of serious discussion that the committee had spent. Even so, they could not come to a full agreement. He said: "There seems to be no clear leading of our higher power on this question at this time. Therefore it appears that we should wait for clearer instructions." Then, the following recommendation was made: That the Delegates return to their Areas and learn everything possible about the Thirteen groups, how they are functioning, problems they are having, who is sponsoring them, etc., and report back to the 1974 WSO. Several Delegates requested that a Questionnaire be prepared by the Al-Anon Committee to send them in their research and it was promised to them.

After Ted's report, we went to lunch at 12:30 and just got through in time to get aboard the big buses that were to take the Conference members to sleeping quarters for a few more hours with Lois in her beautiful home surroundings.



# AL-ANON WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE CHARTER

(As Amended by 1972 WSC)

## INTRODUCTION

The Al-Anon World Service Conference Charter is a body of principles and relationships through which Al-Anon as a whole can function. The provisions of the document are not legal, but traditional, since the Conference is not incorporated. This charter is an informal agreement between all Al-Anon and its service center. Later, certain countries of the world, for language or geographic considerations, may desire to establish their own HQ and regional conference. This World Service Conference will then become the Senior Conference.

## CHARTER

### 1. Purpose

- a. To be the guardian of both Al-Anon's world services and its 12 Traditions.
- b. To be a service body, not a government.

### 2. Composition

- a. State, Provincial and Territorial Delegates from the U.S. and Canada and HQ members, the latter to include the Trustees of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
- b. Delegates from other countries when these countries as well as the Conference may be ready for their participation.

### 3. Relation to Al-Anon

- a. The Conference acts for Al-Anon in the perpetuation and guidance of its HQ services.
- b. The Conference is a vehicle by which Al-Anon can express its views on policy and note deviations from Traditions.
- c. Delegates are free to vote as their conscience dictates and not necessarily as instructed by their areas.
- d. But no changes are to be made in the Traditions, Steps or General Warranties of the Conference Charter (Item 12) without written consent of three-quarters of the Al-Anon groups.
- e. The Charter may be changed (with the exception of items 3-d and 12) by the vote of three-quarters of the Conference members.

### 4. Relation to Headquarters

- a. Traditionally two-thirds vote of Conference members in attendance is binding upon Trustees and any related corporate services.
- b. The above does not impair legal rights of HQ in conducting routine business and making contracts relative thereto.
- c. Traditionally three-fourths of all members registered at the Conference may bring about a reorganization of HQ if or when it is deemed essential and may request resignations and nominate new Trustees regardless of legal prerogatives of the Board. For this purpose only, the number of HQ members voting shall be limited to one-fourth of the total vote.

### 5. State and Provincial Assemblies: Purpose of

- a. Assemblies convene at least every three years and as often in between as is deemed necessary for the purpose of electing District Representatives (if not elected in their own districts), Assembly Officers, a Delegate to the WSC, and an Alternate.
- b. Assemblies are concerned primarily with World Service affairs of Al-Anon.

### 6. Assemblies: Composition of

- a. In each state and province elected representatives of all Al-Anon groups desiring participation meet together in a central location.
- b. States and Provinces with large Al-Anon populations may petition the Conference to divide and send an additional Delegate to the Conference, as provided for in the World Service Handbook For Al-Anon and Alateen Groups.

### 7. Assemblies: Preferred Method of Election

- a. District Representatives are elected from Group Representatives by written ballot.
- b. Delegates are chosen from District Representatives by a two-thirds written ballot or by lot.

- c. Alternates are elected at the same time and for the same term of office.
- d. It is strongly advised that the term of office of the Chairman, other Assembly officers and District Representatives follow the same pattern.

### 8. Panels and Delegates' Terms of Office

A third of the Delegates, called a Panel, are elected every three years for a three-year term. The election of each of the three panels is held on each of three consecutive years. This staggered election and tenure of office is provided so that a Conference shall always include a Panel of Delegates with two years' experience. (This method was adopted because some AAs found that their two-year plan resulted in too fast turnover and the valuable experience of two-year Delegates was lost to the Conference.)

### 9. Conference Meetings

The Conference meets annually in New York City unless otherwise agreed upon. In a grave emergency, special meetings may be called. Conference members may also be asked by HQ to render advisory opinions at any time by mail or telephone poll.

### 10. Board of Trustees: Composition, Jurisdiction, Responsibilities

- a. The Board of Trustees of Al-Anon HQ is an incorporated trusteeship composed of members of families of alcoholics. It chooses its own successors, subject to the approval of the Conference or a Committee thereof.
- b. The Board is the chief service arm of the Conference and is also custodial in character. Excepting for decisions affecting Al-Anon as a whole, concerning policy, finance, or the Al-Anon Traditions, the Board has entire freedom to conduct the routine policy and business affairs of HQ. It may appoint suitable committees and elect members to its Executive Committee.
- c. If any subsidiary services are later formed the Board of Trustees will be primarily responsible for their policy and financial integrity.
- d. The By-Laws of the Board of Trustees or any amendments thereto are always subject to approval of the Conference by a two-thirds vote of all its members.
- e. Except in great emergency the Trustees ought never take action liable to greatly affect Al-Anon as a whole without consulting the Conference. However, it is understood that the Board shall reserve the right to decide which of its decisions may require the approval of the Conference.

### 11. Conference Procedure

- a. The Conference hears financial and policy reports of the Board of Trustees and HQ services.
- b. Delegates and HQ members take under advisement all matters affecting Al-Anon as a whole, engage in debate, appoint necessary committees and pass suitable motions for the direction of the Board of Trustees and HQ.
- c. The Conference may recommend action respecting serious deviation from Al-Anon Traditions.
- d. The Conference may draft By-Laws and elect any needed officers by a method of its choosing.
- e. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the members registered at the Conference.
- f. At the close of each yearly session the Conference will send a full report of its proceedings to all Conference members, District Representatives and Al-Anon groups throughout the world.

### 12. General Warranties of the Conference

In all proceedings the World Service Conference of Al-Anon shall observe the spirit of the Traditions: that only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members; that all decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible by unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference serves Al-Anon it shall never perform any act of government; and that like the fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

NOTE: The term Al-Anon includes its junior segment, Alateen. Therefore, the above Charter applies to all registered groups, including Alateen.