

# Al-Anon Family Groups 1999 World Service Conference *Carrying the Message – Our Primary Purpose*

April 25-29, 1999

## Opening Events

Conference Theme .....	2
Greetings from the Board .....	2
Open Forum .....	3
Trip to Stepping Stones .....	3
Sharing Area Highlights .....	4
Approval of Annual Report .....	4
Standing Committee Assignments .....	5

## Board and Committee Sessions

Board of Trustees Selection Process .....	6
1999 Regional Trustee Selection Report .....	6
2000 Regional Trustee Plan .....	6
Nominating Committee .....	6
Conference Committee on Trustees .....	7
Fellowship Communication .....	8
Forum Editorial Advisory Committee .....	8
Literature Committee I .....	9
Literature Committee II .....	9
Finances .....	10
1998 Financial Report .....	10
1999 Budget Report .....	10
Group Services .....	11
Group Services Committee .....	11
1999/2000 AFG Service Plan .....	14
Membership Outreach .....	14
Admissions/Handbook Committee .....	14
International Coordination Committee .....	15
50th Anniversary Ad hoc Committee .....	15
2000 Conference Site Report .....	16
2000 AA International Convention .....	16
Regional Service Seminar (RSS) Committee .....	16
Service and Outreach .....	17
Inventory of our Service Structure Ad hoc Report .....	17
Long Range Study Panel (LRSP)/FFGs .....	17
Policies and Procedures .....	19
Policy Committee .....	19
Internet Ad hoc Committee .....	19
Public Outreach .....	20
National Public Information Canada .....	20
Public Outreach Committee .....	20
Public Service Announcement (PSA) Presentation .....	21
World Wide Web Site .....	21

## Workshops

Agenda Items .....	22
Open Discussions .....	22
Agenda Item Workshops .....	23
Directors' Presentation .....	25
Alateen Sponsorship .....	26
Leadership Workshops .....	26

WSO's Trial Structure .....	27
Business Services .....	27
Fellowship Communication .....	27
Group Services .....	27
Membership Outreach .....	27
Public Outreach .....	28

## From the Heart

Sharings from Panel 37 Delegates .....	29
Overseas Representatives .....	37
Spiritual Speakers .....	40

## Wrap-Up Sessions

Closing Sharings .....	44
Passing It On .....	44
Panel 37 Skit .....	44
Conference Members .....	45
Conference Motions .....	46
The Ask-It-Basket .....	48
1998 Annual Report .....	62
WSC Organizational Chart .....	88

## Concept II

The Al-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their Conference and its service arms.

"Our World Service Conference is the active voice and the effective group conscience of our society in world affairs."

—1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, page 153



© Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. 1999

## CONFERENCE THEME:

Marion W.,  
*Assistant Conference Chairperson,  
Executive Committee Member*

### Carrying the Message—Our Primary Purpose

At the last moment, our Conference Chairperson, Pat S., suffered some health problems that precluded her from chairing the WSC. In her stead, assistant chairperson Marion W. stepped in and did a beautiful job of keeping members focused on this year's theme: Carrying the Message—Our Primary Purpose.

After opening the Conference, the first order of business was a motion from the Admissions/Handbook Committee, requesting that the following persons be seated at the 1999 World Service Conference with voice, but no vote:

**Helen W.**, Chairperson, Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM), Al-Anon member

**Richard Keilly**, Director of Business Services, non-member

**Mariella S.**, representative from Italy, Al-Anon member

**Sheila A.**, representative from the UK and Eire, Al-Anon member

**Marilú C.**, representative from Mexico, Al-Anon member

**Annie M.**, representative from France, Al-Anon member

**Carole P.**, Public Outreach Service Manager for Canada, Al-Anon member

**Patrick Q.**, WSO Forum Coordinator, Al-Anon member

By a show of hands, the motion was carried.



Photo courtesy of Sheraton Stamford, CT

It was agreed by consensus that still picture taking would be permitted at the Conference.

Voting procedures were then discussed, and it was approved by a show of hands that subsequent votes would be taken by closed ballot. And it was agreed that substantial unanimity would be 2/3 of the votes taken.

## GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD

Helen R.,  
*Board of Trustees Chairperson*

Helen opened her remarks by citing the address of Al-Anon's co-founder, Anne B., to the first World Service Conference in 1961: "This Conference is the attainment of a long-hoped-for plan and it is, indeed, a privilege for me to be with you during the next few days' meetings and activities."

"I feel much the same!" said Helen. "This Conference is 'unique' in that we are meeting in Connecticut for the first time since moving our office to Virginia Beach, and I am excited and looking forward to the interaction with you—delegates, staff, and WSO volunteers."

Helen extended a welcome to those who returning to the WSC, to those who are attending their first World Service Conference as Panel 39 delegates, and to our international representatives.

She continued, "Our theme this year, 'Carrying the Message—Our Primary Purpose,' takes me back to our beginnings, reminds me of the struggles as well as the successes Al-Anon has had over these past 48 years, and keeps me firmly planted in our purpose today. We will see some of our history when we visit Stepping Stones, the home of our co-founder, Lois, and we will each participate in our history this week as we are guided in decisions by the group conscience. The Al-Anon program is a precious gift that we share with each other!"

Helen closed her remarks by inviting the members to join her in the Al-Anon Declaration, "Let It Begin With Me. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and—Let it Begin With Me."

## OPEN FORUM

This session provides the opportunity for delegates to share thoughts and concerns from the 1998 World Service Conference. All were encouraged to speak without fear of criticism or judgment on what they needed to state. Members were asked to adhere to a two-minute limit. Following is a summary of some of the comments that were brought to the floor in an open forum discussion:

- Why not have an AIS/LDC workshop with every RSS, rather than just once a year? Response: The need to ensure good attendance and to maintain manageable staff workload was how we came to the current system of holding one AIS/LDC workshop per year and moving it around the structure.

- Why not have our book discount match the quantity where the packaging break occurs—i.e., 25 books is the discounted minimum, yet a case may contain 24. Response: This has been rectified and now is in alignment.

- Could more books be printed with soft covers? Response: This will be discussed later in the Conference (see page 9 & 47).

- The recent selection of a hotel site for the USSW RSS created confusion. How can this be avoided in the future? Response: In the past, the WSO chose the hotel, then the RSS Committee changed the selection process to include the delegates in the region. A formula for selection criteria (how many meeting rooms needed, sleeping rooms, actual attendees, etc.) has been developed, and this unusual situation should not happen again.

- Praise was given on the improved processing of literature orders, while also requesting more literature on tapes and on Alateen.

- Clarification is needed on which dual members are allowed in service. Response: The only guideline on "dual members in service" refers to dual members of AA and

Al-Anon.

- Explanation on why we still use auditors from New York City was requested. Response: The auditors we use have done our books for many years, and those of numerous other non-profit organizations. One delegate shared an experience of changing auditors that created many problems in her business and at higher costs.

- Several asked why sales of literature cannot be broken down by state or area, if we consider CAL purchases the same as contributions. Response: The WSO is working on being able to break out literature sales by state, and to be able to break out the statistics by area where states are divided.

- A member asked if the creation of the journals was approved by the Conference. Response: Journals with quotes from Al-Anon literature are service tools for carrying the message. Service tools do not require Conference approval. The journals contain already approved CAL text and are available while supplies last.

- An area felt that there is such good momentum on the International Convention, we should do this in five years, not ten. This will be discussed later in the Conference (see page 47).

- Has there been a request for another book about Lois? Response: No requests have been received to date; the procedure would be to write and ask the Literature Committee to consider.

- Are Canadian contributions and sales reflected in American dollars in our financial reporting? Response: Yes, all figures are in American dollars.

In sharing issues, concerns, questions, and ideas, one main thought kept coming to the forefront: that trusted servants invariably unearth gems of recovery in their service experiences.

Ann H.,  
Moderator, Trustee

## TRIP TO STEPPING STONES

Delegates saw history "up close and personal" when they visited Stepping Stones, home to Lois and Bill W. (co-founders of Al-Anon and AA, respectively) in their final years. "It's as though they've just gone out for the afternoon," said one. "Sure is peaceful," said another. And, tucked into a wooded hillside, it was a peaceful place indeed.

Lunch on the lawn was prefaced by a crash course from the Executive Director of the Stepping Stones Foundation, who noted that, "It somehow never rained once when Lois held the Al-Anon picnics here. It's no surprise that

it's so beautiful today for all of you."

She went on to remind members that the Wilsons had been virtually homeless for years, living with Lois' father after Bill's recovery began. But many had never understood what that really meant. For example, after her father's death, Lois and Bill lived with AA friends, moving 52 times in the space of two years until finally settling at Stepping Stones.

After lunch, members moved quietly through the hip-roofed house, past the piano where Lois played and into the "spook room" where Bill kept his beloved violins. Cigarette



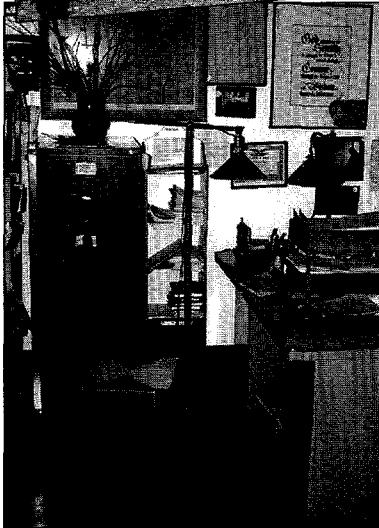
boxes, ashtrays, and lighters from days gone by... curtains hand-made by Lois in the sewing nook upstairs—all were catalogued and labeled. Delegates were amazed to see Al-Anon's first "WSO"—a metal desk with a three-tiered in-box labeled:

- Easy Does It
- First Things First
- Let Go and Let God

There were knickknacks and photographs virtually everywhere—one delegate actually found a Christmas card she'd sent

to Lois in 1965! "I'm just glad I don't have to dust all this," was overheard again and again. "Charming," and "It must have felt so good for them to finally have a place they could call home." It seemed as if every memento imaginable was on display, as though Lois somehow knew her home would one day help to tell the story of AA, Al-Anon, and the Twelve Steps through which so many have found their way.

As the afternoon ended and the tours wound to a close, the Conference contingent followed well-defined footpaths through the grass, past Lois' gardens, and back to the driveway. "We are literally walking in their footsteps," was overheard again and again. We were—and we are.



*Trip to Stepping Stones.*

## SHARING AREA HIGHLIGHTS

Each year on the evening before the Conference opens, delegates meet to share the concerns and successes of their areas. This is a time that was created originally in 1966, when "delegates only" were invited to discuss items out of earshot of Board and staff. Today, this meeting is open to all Conference members, and provides a forum for sharing of area experience, strength and hope.

Many delegates shared that that good things are happening in their areas. Some are already using the new WSO service structure for committees and are having fun experimenting.

Overall attendance at service meetings seems to be down, but in some areas, more people are getting involved. Others areas are experiencing under-representation in the service ranks, especially in Alateen.

Many areas are developing web sites, with one reporting 1,000 hits every month.

As we approach Al-Anon's 50th Anniversary in 2001, there is considerable enthusiasm for archives and exploring area history.

There seems to be increased interest in reaching Hispanic populations, and more meetings are supporting Russian groups.

## APPROVAL OF THE 1998 ANNUAL REPORT

Delegates had previously submitted questions on the Annual Report and were invited to ask additional questions in open discussion. One question referred to our tax-exempt status, whether we are tax-exempt in some things but not others. Ric B. explained that the property we now own under a fifteen-year trial is exempt from real estate tax. WSO is currently negotiating with the Commonwealth of Virginia to seek exemption from sales taxes on purchases not related to the sale of literature, and the City of Virginia Beach regarding hotel use taxes.

Another questioned the phrase that has been added on Conference Approved Literature (CAL) pertaining to support from contributions and sale of literature. It was explained this is not a change in policy, so it does not need a Conference vote. In a survey of WSC members, there was substantial unanimity from responding members regarding the suggested use of this phrase. Reference was made to a section in

the *1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, under Warranty One, which says we have always depended on the sale of literature. Page 195 states that the purchase of literature is a form of contribution, so it's not considered outside funds. Records indicate a dependency on literature sales from Al-Anon's earliest days. The Policy Committee will be reconsidering this issue at the next meeting in Virginia Beach.

A question was raised on the issue of marketing CAL to publishing professionals. WSO files that are now yellowed from age show that we have been contacting marketing associations for years. This is the main avenue for carrying the message through libraries; however, we have not seen great returns from these efforts.

A vote was taken and the 1998 Annual Report was approved.



# STANDING COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Delegates from each panel, trustees, and staff members comprise the standing committees that meet during the Conference. Many factors determine how a delegate is placed on a committee, such as the immediate past delegate's committee assignment, the number of

delegates from each region assigned to the committee, the committee requested by the new delegate, and the timeliness of the request. Below are the 1999 Standing Committee assignments:

Susan A.,  
Associate Director,  
Membership Outreach, Conference

Committee	Panel 37 (1997-1999)	Panel 38 (1998-2000)	Panel 39 (1999-2001)
Admissions/ Handbook:	Roberta V., FL(S) Cheryl C., MN(S) Geri Lea H., MI Anne H., RI	Dennis G., CO Linda S., GA Susia M., MS Penny H., MT	Miguel C., CT Juanita U., NM Pam C., WY
Conference Committee on Trustees	Willie W., CA(S) Lise M., PQ(W) Bonnie M-C., TX(E) Mary T., IN Lyn D., TN	Sharon S., WI Victoria A-H., VT Linda B., NC	Sheila K., NF/LAB Julie F., SK Mirta S., NY(S)
Group Services	Cathy C., CA(N) Bernice L., MB Wendy G., KY Lee T., MD/DC	Trudy C., PQ(E) Sandy F., OK Tim S., NJ Cindy H., MA	Robynn W., AK Debbie G., IA Ked K., UT Judy F., NV
Literature I	Dee R., FL(N) Deb R., PA LaVaughn R., NY(N) Lynda E., OH	Paula C., WV Cindy L., AP Bunny G., OR	Barb S., ON(N) Judy Z., NE Sue K., NH Brenda S., AR
Literature II	Susan N., DE Sheri A., TX(W) Ruth H., ON(S)	Dora H., AL Lana N., ND Janet K., BC/YT Nancy K., WA	Carmelo A., PR Pam A., ID Mary Lynn J., LA Laurie K., MO
Public Outreach	Dorena S., IL(N) Keo O'R., KS Brigida C., HI	Sherri S., VA Mary R., AB/NT Pam B., AZ Caroline P., MN(N)	Melanie F., ME Barbara Anne M., SC Jan L., SD Deborah H., IL(S)

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES SELECTION PROCESS

Helen R.,

*Board of Trustees Chairperson*

### 1999 Regional Trustee Selection Report

The process to nominate regional trustees (RTs) actually began a year ago. The nominating teams for each region are comprised of the delegates from each of the areas within their region, three other delegates (plus two alternates chosen by lot from among the first- and second-year delegates), and three trustees plus two alternates also chosen by lot at the January Board meeting.

The Chairperson of the Board serves as Chairperson of the RT Nominating Committee. He or she conducts the voting procedure and is

assisted by a member of the regional nominating committee.

Nominees are selected at their election assemblies. The names are forwarded to the WSO after the assembly and prior to January 1. Once all resumes have been received, the profiles are gathered for review by Conference members prior to the World Service Conference.

Roll calls were taken for the three regions nominating regional trustees (US Northwest, US Southwest, and US South Central), and the nominating process was continued.

Susan A.,

*Associate Director,*

*Membership Outreach, Conference*

### 2000 Regional Trustee Selection Report

At the 2000 World Service Conference (WSC), regional trustees (RTs) will be nominated from Canada West, Canada East, and Canada Central. This process began during the RSS breakouts, when the current regional trustees distributed packets to the delegates from these three regions.

RTs act as liaisons in three ways: by keeping informed of the dates of the area assemblies in their regions, following up with the delegates in these areas, and encouraging delegates to nominate candidates. Immediately following the election of a candidate at the area assembly, delegates send the nominating information (or notification that there is not a candidate) to the WSO by January 1, 2000. Failure to meet this

deadline constitutes forfeiture.

In June following the Conference, each area chairperson receives a packet identical to the one distributed to the delegates to alert them to the procedure for nominating an RT and for passing information along to their group representatives. All areas in the nominating regions are encouraged to submit a name for regional trustee and, whenever possible, an alternate.

After January 2000, when all resumes have been received, the profiles will be mailed to Conference members. The following WSC first- and second-year delegates were selected by lot from outside the regions to participate in the RT elections for Canada West, Canada East, and Canada Central:

REGION	VOTING	ALTERNATE
Canada West	Sherri S., VA	Sharon S., WI
Canada East	Sharon S., WI	Linda S., GA
Canada Central	Juanita U., NM	Ked K., UT

At the January 2000 Board meeting, one member of the Board of Trustees and one alternate will be selected to vote in each region.

Catherine J.,

*Chairperson, Trustee*

### Nominating Committee

Trustees-at-large (TAL) and regional trustees (RT) perform the same functions within the Board. The only difference is the election process. The procedure for electing an RT is similar to that for electing a delegate. Anyone interested in being an RT submits a resume to the area assembly or to the area world service committee—whichever method the area has chosen. One candidate is then selected, and the name and resume are then submitted to the WSO by the delegate before January 1. At the World Service Conference (WSC), the RT Nominating Committee selects a nominee by

closed ballot. This year, the RT Nominating Committee consisted of the region's delegates, three trustees (drawn by lot), and three out-of-region delegates, also drawn by lot. The nominees are given traditional approval by the Conference as a whole and are elected by the Board at the Annual Meeting.

Candidates for trustee-at-large do not come through the area structure, but are solicited from the fellowship at-large within Canada and the United States. Any AI-Anon member who thinks that he/she is qualified is asked to submit a resume to the WSO no later than

August 15. The resumes are then sent to the Nominating Committee and the CCT for rating. In October, six candidates are selected, and, with the Board's approval, invited to the January Board meeting. After a dinner interview, each candidate gives a ten-minute talk about their background and service experience. Three are then chosen by the Board to be presented at the WSC for traditional approval. Election takes place at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

In 1995, the WSC created a trial amendment to Article XII of the Bylaws. Motion Five of that Conference created an Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM). This committee, consisting of WSO's volunteer Treasurer, the Director of Business Services, and three at-large members, is designed to oversee the maintenance and operation of the building that houses the WSO in Virginia Beach. This is to keep management of our headquarters separate from the spiritual program of Al-Anon. Each member may serve three years. The chairperson is elected on a yearly basis and is seated at the WSC with voice only. The nominating process is the same as for trustees-at-large.

The voting process was explained and Conference members were asked to give traditional approval for the nominees for trustee-at-large, RT, at-large member of ECRPM, and Board officers.

Congratulations were extended to all.

**Traditional approval for trustee-at-large was given to:**

Margaret M., second three-year term  
Howland R., second three-year term  
John (Jack) S., first three-year term

**Traditional approval for Board officers was given to:**

Helen R., Chairperson  
Ann H., Vice-Chairperson  
Cecelia L., Treasurer

Ric B. serves as Secretary of the Board by virtue of his position as Executive Director.

**Traditional approval for regional trustees was given to:**

South Central: Carolyn W., first three-year term  
Northwest: Ann H., second three-year term  
Southwest: Nancy B., second three-year term

One person was nominated to serve as at-large member of the Executive Committee for Real Property Management:

Richard M., three-year term

Conference members were informed of nominees to the Executive Committee for 1999-2000 who will be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Board:

Doris S., third one-year term and chairperson  
Felix M., first one-year term  
Patricia L., first one-year-term  
Sandra F., Administrative staff member serving the second year of a two-year term.

Helen W. will continue to serve as Chairperson of the Executive Committee for Real Property Management.

---

**Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT)**

Since the candidate selection process happens between Conferences, a first-year delegate is chosen to serve as Chairperson-Elect of the CCT. That person is then elected chairperson at their second Conference, and chairs the meetings the following year. During our first meeting each year, we talk about the events that transpired between Conferences and attempt to enhance the candidate selection process for trustees-at-large (TAL) and the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM).

This year, the Nominating Committee reviewed a proposed notice of candidacy letter as requested by the CCT to be mailed to the delegates regarding concerns they may have about any individual candidate. The Board of

Trustees, however, did not agree with the text or intent of the letter. The Board requested that the Nominating Committee file a minority appeal with the CCT, and, pending the results of the appeal, send only a letter of notification to the delegates.

In discussing the need for a minority appeal to the CCT based on direction from the Board of Trustees, the Nominating Committee reviewed the history of the idea of seeking delegate input for trustee-at-large nominations. The committee decided not to file a minority appeal and to seek clarification from the CCT as to the intent of the letter. It was decided to recommend to the Board that a letter be sent to delegates asking them if they have facts to share regarding the candidates.

Willie W.,  
*Chairperson, Panel 37*

## FELLOWSHIP COMMUNICATION

Wilma K.,  
Chairperson, Trustee

Caryn J.,  
Director,  
Fellowship Communication

Pat Q.,  
WSO Forum Coordinator

### Forum Editorial Advisory Committee

The presentation began with a skit presented by members of the staff, past committee members, volunteers, past and present trustee committee chairpersons, and members of the Forum Business Committee. The skit, which included humor along with a call to action, depicted the impact of a delegate, a group representative (GR), and a Forum Coordinator on carrying the *Forum* message. The chairperson then reported on this year's activities as follows:

1. The 1998-99 committee members are from New Jersey, Ohio, Alberta, Arizona, and Arkansas. This past year, the committee met quarterly and reviewed 200 or more sharings at each meeting. In addition, the committee assisted staff in tallying the recent *Forum* survey and also assisted in carrying the message at the International Convention in Salt Lake City.
2. Subscription statistics reflect a decline of 2,735 issues from January 1998 (35,385) to March 1999 (32,650). Promotions to encourage subscriptions included a "baker's dozen" offer and gift certificates for literature purchases and/or *Forum* subscriptions. In July 1998, the subscription rate was increased by \$1.00 for both one- and two-year subscriptions and by \$2.00 for a three-year subscription.
3. Members continue to submit excellent sharings, photos, and, in some cases, art work for use in upcoming issues. *Forum* writing workshops have been conducted in all parts of the world over the last year, and members of the fellowship who may never have oth-

erwise put pen to paper shared from their hearts the many benefits of recovery in Al-Anon/Alateen. We continue to need more sharings from Alateen members and encourage Alateen groups to hold writing workshops as well.

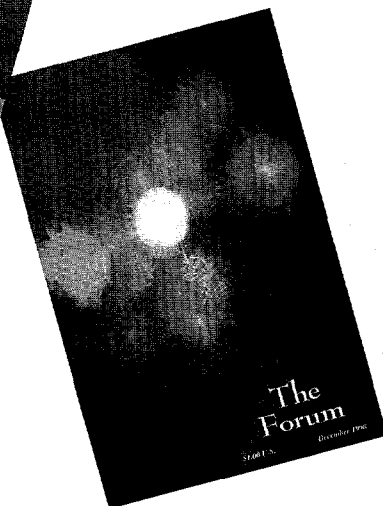
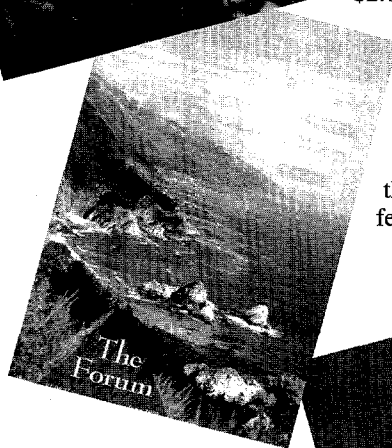
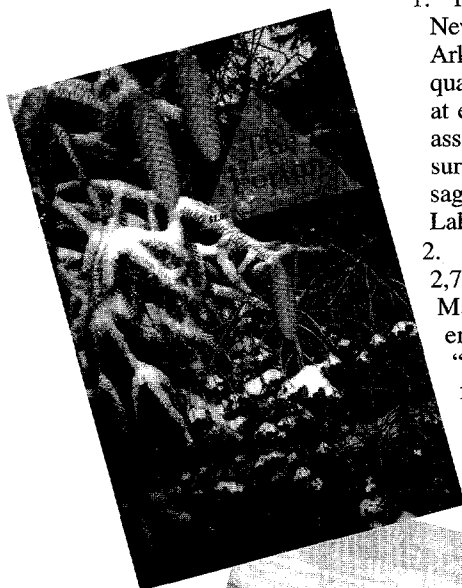
4. In late 1998, area Forum Coordinators were asked to survey attendees at assemblies. Through this effort, we gained new insight into the thoughts and feelings of our readers. Our most significant finding: only 40% of our service members subscribe to *The Forum*. From the surveys, we learned that:

- Eighty-one percent are happy with *The Forum's* features, departments, and services.
- Seventy-five percent have never given someone a subscription.
- Ninety-four percent have never purchased a subscription for a professional.

We have our work cut out for us in 1999 — to carry the *Forum* message to our membership, as well as to those who can provide us with referrals.

5. Kudos were sent to Ohio, where the area assembly used excess funds to purchase 200 *Forum* subscriptions for doctors. Maryland/DC took the challenge and followed through with a similar program. We have been told there are other areas considering such projects.
6. *The Forum* is one of many services provided to members of the fellowship. The committee, along with WSO staff and the Board of Trustees, would sincerely appreciate special attention paid to *The Forum* this year, the year of "carrying the message" by encouraging members to subscribe and submit their sharings for consideration.
7. WSO prepared two detailed mailings this year, asking area coordinators for their assistance with *The Forum*. Each month, beginning this year, delegates and area Forum Coordinators will receive a communiqué featuring highlights of upcoming issues, which can be used in area, district, and AIS/LDC newsletters to carry the *Forum* message.

Each Conference member was then given a packet of pertinent *Forum* information, including a suggested evaluation form for ongoing inventory. The chairperson concluded by encouraging all members to celebrate *The Forum's* 47th anniversary by sharing the May issue with someone who has never read "the voice of the fellowship."



## Literature Committee I

The committee convened in its usual manner, reviewing its charge as outlined in Concept Eleven.

Over 500 sharings have been received for the new daily reader, the working title of which is *ALATEEN EVERY DAY*. The committee has reviewed a total of 200 edited sharings; fifty more have been sent for review; another fifty will soon be completed by the writer/editor. Still more sharings are needed. Additional calls have been issued through WSO newsletters, particularly for sharings on the Steps and Traditions. We would like to receive an additional 200 sharings (just three per area!).

The revision and re-design of *Does She Drink Too Much?* (P-62) is now complete, with copies distributed during the first session of the Conference. Final edits were made in the first quarter on the texts of three other pamphlet revisions:

- *Al-Anon IS for Men* (P-1)
- *Sponsorship: What It's All About* (P-31)
- *Why CAL?* (P-35)

All three are now in WSO's production department. The new versions will be issued when current stock is depleted.

Last year, a member requested that his story be removed from *How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (B-22). Stories previously submitted were researched, and one possible replacement was reviewed by the committee. We would like to review addi-

tional stories. We are now asking delegates to carry the message that a replacement story is needed. To maintain the balance of experiences in the story section of the book, we are looking for a story from a male Al-Anon member who is (or was) married to an active alcoholic. The text should be roughly 4,000 words.

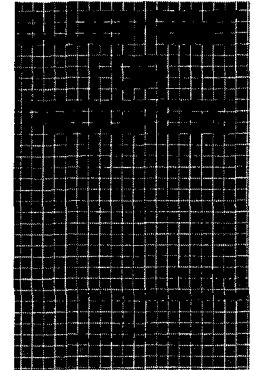
Both Literature Committees are analyzing of the results of our inventory. Completion of Phases One and Two is targeted for the end of 1999. It will encompass sixty-two recovery and service pamphlets and booklets. Phase Three (an inventory of seven books) will be conducted by areas during the coming year. Delegates were given their area book inventory packets, which contain complete instructions for working with Literature Coordinators to implement the area part of the inventory.

The committee spent some time reviewing the progress of the inventory of pamphlets and booklets. Discussion was held on the process to complete the inventory. The committee liked the idea of grouping pamphlets by type or category to enable us to look for duplications and possibilities of combining and/or consolidating some pieces. Some areas have not returned their inventory assignments from 1998. We will be in touch with these delegates.

Finally, after approval by both committees, a motion to expand *Blueprint for Progress* (P-5) was submitted to the Conference and approved. The motion is included in the section entitled Conference Motions.

Howdy R.,  
Chairperson, Trustee

Mary Lou M.,  
Associate Director, Literature



## Literature Committee II

The committee began with reviewing Concept Eleven in the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) and welcoming all members.

In November 1998, all delegates were asked to survey their areas on the need for a softcover *Courage to Change* (B-16) for potential institutional and/or personal use. Only twenty-eight of the sixty-seven areas responded. The results were tabulated and forwarded to the Executive Committee for consideration. Because less than a third of the areas responded (of which only a third felt softcovers were needed), the request was again denied. The committee was informed that a delegate planned to bring this issue to the floor of the Conference (see motion number 18).

RECOVERY TODAY is the working title of the Al-Anon adult children daily reader. Over 1,100 sharings have been received for consideration. The committee has approved 95 sharings to date. The third set of 50 sharings to be

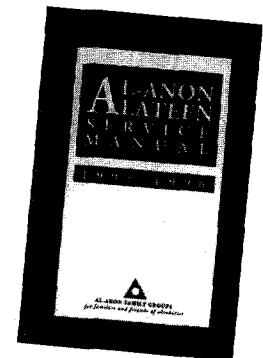
reviewed are being mailed from WSO to committee members. All sharings not selected for use in the daily reader will be submitted to the Forum Editorial Advisory Committee for consideration.

The development of the PROFESSIONAL BOOKLET (working title) began immediately after last year's Conference. The writer/editor of this new booklet provided a first comprehensive draft in late March. It was submitted to the committee to begin their review for discussion at the World Service Conference (WSC). Several suggestions were made to make the piece more comprehensive and meaningful for professionals. Members were reminded that the statistics will be updated when the fellowship survey is complete.

Committee members have completed their review of the original manuscript of *Al-Anon Family Groups* (B-5) and have reviewed the new preface, footnotes, and a second appendix containing lengthy annotations. Delegate

Blanche M.,  
Chairperson, Trustee

Caryn J.,  
Director,  
Fellowship Communication



members of the committee met during the Conference to discuss additional text changes, and approval was granted to the manuscript. The goal remains to have this book available at AA's International Convention in 2000.

The committee continued reviewing Phases One and Two of the Literature Inventory and is now analyzing the results. Book inventory

packets were made available to the 1999 WSC delegates. Both committees are on target for completing their literature reviews.

In the closing minutes of the meeting, the committee discussed structure as it pertains to Fellowship Communication, literature, and *The Forum*. Consensus was that the new structure is working well.

## FINANCES

### 1998 Financial Report

Income from operations totaled \$4,058,107 in 1998, about \$195,100 (5.1%) more than anticipated. Expenses for the year were \$3,602,757, or \$150,300 below projections. As a result the General Fund earned \$455,350. We had projected income of \$110,000.

A gross profit of \$2,670,839 was realized on literature sales, about \$109,800 more than expected. Sales of most books and other literature were within expectations. Several titles exceeded projections - our new book, *Having Had a Spiritual Awakening...* (by \$52,600), *Paths to Recovery* (by \$37,400), and *One Day at a Time* (by \$17,600).

Contribution receipts were \$948,813 versus a budget of \$878,000. Contributions reached a peak of \$1,043,200 in 1991; 1998 contributions were the highest since that year.

*Forum* subscription income totaled \$299,147, slightly less than expected. The subscription total of 34,000 at year end compared with a count of 35,000 at the beginning of the year.

French *Forum* sales totaled \$2,800. Investment income of \$23,540 was earned in 1998.

The 1998 International Convention recorded income of \$112,968; the budget anticipated income of \$103,000.

As noted above, operating expenses of \$3,602,757 were less than expected — specifically costs were significantly lower than expected for labor costs (by \$59,000); occupan-

cy (by \$16,100); postage (by \$21,900); stationery and supplies (by \$16,800); travel and meetings (by \$11,400); French *Forum* (by \$14,100). Miscellaneous expenses were higher than expected (by \$4,800).

The Reserve Fund had income of \$389,947 in 1998. Post-retirement health benefit costs are recorded in the Reserve Fund. A net charge of \$41,323 was incurred in 1998. \$27,896 was actually expended for these benefits. Significant expenditures for post-retirement benefits would not occur for 20 years, if at all. The Board of Trustees therefore directed that this liability would be assumed by the Reserve Fund.

Building Fund expenses are charged to the General Fund through occupancy costs.

At December 31, 1998, our World Service Office had total assets of \$10,539,956 and liabilities of \$3,494,432, leaving a balance of \$7,045,524 distributed between three funds - General, Reserve, and Building.

The Reserve Fund had a balance of \$4,399,473 at year end after recording investments at market value and assuming the cost of post-retirement health benefits.

The Building Fund, established in 1995 to record the purchase of the headquarters' office, shows the cost of the land, building, and building improvements at \$2,957,177.

A motion to approve the 1998 Audited Financial report was carried.

Don C.,  
WSO Treasurer, Trustee

Richard Keilly,  
non-member,  
Director, Business Services

Don C.,  
WSO Treasurer, Trustee

Richard Keilly,  
non-member,  
Director, Business Services

### 1999 Budget Report

The 1999 budget shows that we expect to breakeven for the year. We are projecting income and expenses of \$3,817,000.

#### Income

The downward trend in literature sales is expected to continue in the current year. Also, sales of *Having Had A Spiritual Awakening...*, released in 1998, should decline based on historical data for newly published literature. Partially offsetting the decline in the unit sales of literature will be additional income earned

from the April 1998 price increase; 1998 sales were only partially affected by the price increase. The gross profit earned on literature should remain constant at about 79%. Price increases on literature purchases should be offset by cost reductions which will be realized as we increase the production of pamphlets in our

in-house offset operation. Happily, contributions unexpectedly exceeded projections in 1998. Based on what we hope is a new trend and also on the expected receipt of a bequest in

1999, we now believe that contribution receipts will total about \$1,055,000. *Forum* subscription receipts will be slightly lower than in 1998 and investment income should be higher.

### Expense

Overall expense is budgeted to increase by \$214,000. Items classified as operating expense should increase by \$229,000 while non-operating expenses will be lower.

Labor costs are projected at \$2,252,000 an increase of \$113,000 (5.3%) over 1998. Several factors contribute to the increased costs. Five staff positions were vacant for several months in 1998 and will be filled in the current year; a mid-year salary adjustment is included for employees; and additional staff will be eligible to participate in our retirement plan.

Postage expenses will increase due to the recent postage rate adjustment; however, we have changed several mailing procedures which we expect will blunt the full effect of the postal increase.

Office services will increase by about \$10,000. Included in this category are the costs for staff training and development, translations, and computer services. Outreach activi-

ties will record a substantial increase as a result of a new press release campaign across the US and Canada.

The cost of the 1999 World Service Conference held in Connecticut are projected at \$65,000, an increase of \$16,000 over the prior year.

Two items excluded from the 1998 Budget are included in the current budget (regional service seminars and Public Information exhibits). They are expected to cost \$21,000 and \$12,000, respectively.

Included in non-operating expense is the cost for our membership survey. This survey is taken every three years. Also included is the new PSA campaign at a cost of \$65,000, about \$31,000 less than the 1998 campaign.

After questions from the floor of the Conference were answered, a motion to approve the 1999 Budget was placed on the agenda for later in the week. The motion was approved as submitted.

(1999 Budget charts are on pages 12 and 13)

## GROUP SERVICES

### **Group Services Committee**

This committee provides oversight for all of the Group Services Department services. Activities for the year not reported in the Annual Report were briefly reviewed. They included recommendations from the Alateen and Archives Advisory Committees. The major discussions held in the committee meeting were:

- A one-hour teleconference meeting was held in March, with nine of the 12 delegate members participating.
- A recommendation from the Alateen Advisory Committee that we strongly suggest having two sponsors at each meeting.
- The Board of Trustees approved the Safety Guidelines for Alateen Members and

Sponsors. Production should be complete by July 1, 1999.

- The WSO is in the process of obtaining equipment to convert the reel-to-reel tapes of prior WSCs onto compact discs. The goal is to eventually convert all WSC tapes and cassettes to CD formats.
- The Archives Advisory Committee is working on an instruction sheet to inform area archivists on how to produce a display similar to the WSO display (with color copies to be made available).
- New guidelines have been completed for the following functions: LDCs, area conventions, and correctional facilities (temporary update).

### Institutions

Now that Public Outreach serves institutions professionals and area Institutions Coordinators, the Group Services Committee discussed what actions, if any, are required for an "insti-

tution group." The committee agreed to develop a survey of area Institutions Coordinators to define an "institution group" and its needs.

*continued on page 14*

Cecelia L.,  
*Chairperson, Trustee*

Sandra F.,  
*Director, Group Services*

**AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP HEADQUARTERS, INC.**  
**1999 BUDGET**

**SCHEDULE 1**

	<u>1998 Budget</u>	<u>1998 Actual</u>	<u>1999 Budget</u>
<b><u>Literature Sales</u></b>			
Courage to Change	\$ 656,000	\$ 657,400	\$ 635,000
Courage to Change - large print	69,000	68,900	70,000
One Day at a Time	320,000	337,600	347,000
One Day at a Time - large print	32,000	32,400	35,000
Paths to Recovery	300,000	357,400	305,000
How Al-Anon Works	235,000	195,500	169,000
Courage To Be Me	76,000	51,000	38,000
Having Had a Spiritual Awakening	240,000	327,600	156,000
From Survival to Recovery	74,000	79,100	79,000
As We Understood	43,000	40,700	40,000
Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions	77,000	66,900	56,000
Alateen - a day at a time	67,000	65,400	65,000
In All Our Affairs	48,000	46,500	47,000
Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage	47,000	46,300	42,000
Alateen - Hope for Children	16,000	14,600	13,000
Lois Remembers	16,000	16,800	15,000
Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism	17,000	15,800	9,000
Al-Anon Family Groups	11,000	9,700	10,000
Forum Favorites - Volumes 1 - 4	13,000	11,200	8,000
French Literature	65,000	60,200	57,000
Other Literature	<u>935,000</u>	<u>913,600</u>	<u>900,000</u>
<b><u>Income from Publications</u></b>	<b><u>3,357,000</u></b>	<b><u>3,414,600</u></b>	<b><u>3,096,000</u></b>
<b><u>Cost of Literature Distributed</u></b>			
Courage to Change	125,000	102,000	108,000
Courage to Change - large print	12,000	14,200	12,000
One Day at a Time	80,000	76,300	73,000
One Day at a Time - large print	12,000	10,100	11,000
Paths to Recovery	66,000	66,800	59,000
How Al-Anon Works	54,000	39,900	34,000
Courage To Be Me	23,000	13,600	10,000
Having Had a Spiritual Awakening	53,000	56,400	30,000
From Survival to Recovery	13,000	13,000	12,000
As We Understood	10,000	7,900	7,000
Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions	18,000	14,000	11,000
Alateen - a day at a time	20,000	18,300	18,000
In All Our Affairs	7,000	6,000	5,000
Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage	6,000	4,500	4,000
Alateen - Hope for Children	3,000	2,600	2,000
Lois Remembers	3,000	3,000	3,000
Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism	3,000	2,900	2,000
Al-Anon Family Groups	2,000	1,400	2,000
Forum Favorites - Volumes I - IV	2,000	6,800	3,000
French Literature	16,000	33,100	17,000
Other Literature	<u>253,000</u>	<u>251,000</u>	<u>234,000</u>
<b><u>Cost of Literature</u></b>	<b><u>781,000</u></b>	<b><u>743,800</u></b>	<b><u>657,000</u></b>
Gross Profit from Literature Sales	2,576,000	2,670,800	2,439,000
Forum Subscriptions	311,000	299,100	295,000
Forum Subscriptions - French	6,000	2,800	2,000
Interest Earned	10,000	23,600	26,000
Contributions	928,000	948,800	1,055,000
1998 International Convention	<u>0</u>	<u>113,000</u>	<u>0</u>
<b><u>Total Income</u></b>	<b><u>3,831,000</u></b>	<b><u>4,058,100</u></b>	<b><u>3,817,000</u></b>
<b><u>Less: Expense (Schedule 1A)</u></b>	<b><u>3,831,000</u></b>	<b><u>3,602,700</u></b>	<b><u>3,817,000</u></b>
<b><u>Excess of Income - General Fund</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 0</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 455,400</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 0</u></b>



**AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP HEADQUARTERS, INC.**  
**1999 BUDGET**

**SCHEDULE 1A**

	<u>1998</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>1998</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>1999</u> <u>Budget</u>
<b><u>Operating Expenses</u></b>			
Salaries (includes Temp Help)	\$ 1,660,000	\$ 1,605,300	\$ 1,685,000
Payroll Taxes	140,000	125,200	132,000
Employee Benefits	<u>418,000</u>	<u>408,500</u>	<u>435,000</u>
Total Labor Costs	2,218,000	2,139,000	2,252,000
Building Occupancy	335,000	308,900	310,000
Packing & Shipping (Net)	3,000	(500)	8,000
Postage - Forum	114,000	109,500	115,000
- French Forum	11,000	2,900	2,000
- other	155,000	132,700	142,000
Telephone - office	48,000	43,800	45,000
- 800 #'s	18,000	23,500	23,000
Stationery & Office Supplies	120,000	98,200	103,000
Office Services & Expenses	40,000	37,200	47,000
Outreach Activities	14,000	5,500	27,000
Repairs & Maintenance	20,000	15,000	19,000
Travel & Meetings - Committees	110,000	105,600	114,000
- Office	14,000	3,000	10,000
Regional Service Seminars	-	-	21,000
Legal & Audit	35,000	36,000	35,000
Printing - Forum	110,000	108,100	100,000
- French Forum	28,000	13,900	4,000
- Conference Summary	14,000	13,100	14,000
- Other	35,000	29,700	24,000
Direct Conference Costs (Net)	70,000	49,100	65,000
French Literature Service	20,000	15,100	15,000
Canadian Public Information	36,000	38,800	42,000
Public Information Exhibits	-	-	12,000
In-Office Volunteers	9,000	6,300	8,000
Insurance	14,000	12,500	13,000
Internet	4,000	6,100	14,000
Miscellaneous	<u>15,000</u>	<u>22,800</u>	<u>21,000</u>
<b><u>Total Operating Expense</u></b>	<u>3,610,000</u>	<u>3,375,800</u>	<u>3,605,000</u>
<b><u>Non-Operating Expense</u></b>			
Membership Survey	-	-	12,000
PSA/PI Campaign	91,000	95,900	65,000
Depreciation & Amortization (Excl. Bld.)	<u>130,000</u>	<u>131,000</u>	<u>135,000</u>
<b><u>Total Non-Operating Expense</u></b>	<u>221,000</u>	<u>226,900</u>	<u>212,000</u>
<b><u>Total Expense (Schedule 1)</u></b>	<u>\$ 3,831,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,602,700</u>	<u>\$ 3,817,000</u>

*continued from page 11*

Along with this survey, each Institution Coordinator will receive a printout of institu-

tions groups listed in the World Service Office (WSO) data base to see if the area's records are in agreement.

### Alateen Sponsors

A recommendation submitted by the Alateen Advisory Committee was reviewed. The Group Services Committee subsequently recommended to the Policy Committee that a minimum age for Alateen sponsors be established and that an Alateen sponsor be required to have had two years in the Al-Anon program beyond participation in Alateen. The committee also

recommended that this change be noted throughout Conference Approved Literature where there are references to qualifications for Alateen sponsors. The Policy Committee will review these recommendations and if a change to the *Service Manual* is proposed, it will be brought to the 2000 Conference for consideration.

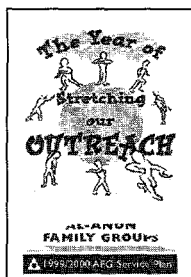
### Group Records

The subject of group records was discussed during the conference call meeting and on the Conference floor during the Open Forum. In querying new groups that had received the New Group Binder, their main request was for inclusion of contact information on the area's trusted servants. It was agreed that a copy of the form found in the binder will be included when a delegate is notified about new groups, along with a letter for the area to complete and send to the new groups. In addition, the next printing of the page titled "Names and

Addresses You Need To Know" will indicate that this information will be forthcoming from the area.

There were many recommendations for change discussed at the meeting, including revisions to the binder sheet, revisions to the group registration/update sheet, and standardizing all forms. Another suggestion was to investigate having groups provide information to one source only. The committee will investigate these ideas during the next year.

Sandra F.,  
*Director, Group Services*



### **1999-2000 AFG Service Plan**

The Service Plan is designed to help implement the Five Year Plan within AFG areas and has been a function of the Long Range Study Panel (LRSP). At the World Service Conference (WSC) in 1998, the LRSP reported that its function was "brainstorming and visioning," rather than turning out "products." The Service Plan was thus delegated to the Group Services Department, since it is a service tool for mem-

bers and groups. The timetable for launching the Service Plan was also changed from the beginning of the year to coincide with the WSC.

In keeping with Goal Five of the Long Range Plan, the theme of the 1999 Service Plan was chosen to encompass outreach to the public. Copies of the plan, entitled "Stretch your Outreach," were energetically distributed, with musical accompaniment.

Mary A-T.,  
*Chairperson, Trustee*

Susan A.,  
*Associate Director,  
Membership Outreach, Conference*

## MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH

### **Admissions/Handbook Committee**

The committee viewed a copy of the Finnish translation of *The Joy of Service* leaflet that was sent to WSO.

For the past year-and-a-half, the committee has been working on improving the clarity and readability of the Handbook. This project will probably never end, but the committee feels that this is important in assisting the newcomer to service. In the first phase of the project,

some housekeeping revisions, simplified areas of text, and definition revisions were made. We are trying to remain mindful of the impact our revisions might have on GSOs that will eventually translate the material.

Several motions were presented to the WSC regarding proposed revisions. The motions are included in the section titled Conference Motions.

### International Coordination Committee

The presentation by the International Coordination Committee (ICC) focused on the value of Conference Approved Literature sent to Russia through the "Adopt A Russian Group" program. Members in Russia have written many letters to express how much our literature means to them. Excerpts from their letters were shared with Conference members:

- The program "Adopt a Russian Group" had a major role in distributing Al-Anon ideas among Russian-speaking citizens of the former Soviet Union, whose relatives and friends suffer from alcoholism.
- Though we live in different countries on different continents, in spite of having diverse mentality and way of thinking, we have something in common: we deal with this horrible disease, alcoholism, and thanks to your support and help (I mean books we get and encouragement from your letters), we know the way to a new and better life.
- Alcoholism is a huge problem for Russia. The Al-Anon program teaches us to understand

*this problem; it teaches us to find a Higher Power, and with its help and the help of other members, it teaches us about recovery.*

- *We would like very much that your services will continue to function, and our connection will become stronger. Such meetings will give us a fresh burst of energy to make each day happy on our planet.*
- *These wonderful books teach us a new way of living and enjoying life no matter whether the alcoholic is drinking or not. Thank you for your help, encouragement, love, and support. Thanks to the program, our spiritual awakening is still going on, our faith is consolidating, and we are recovering.*

Since it is impossible for the Russians to reprint literature at this time, the International Coordination Committee has extended the program for another two years. The program encourages members to buy Russian literature and send it to one of the 106 groups who have no other source of literature. Additional information is available by contacting Membership Outreach

Mary C.,  
Chairperson, Trustee

Peggy S.,  
Assistant Chairperson, Trustee

Marsha W.,  
Associate Director, Membership  
Outreach, International

### 50th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee

Conference members were reminded that the anniversary celebrations have a twofold purpose: (1) to involve as many members as possible and (2) to alert the public that the Al-Anon program has a 50-year history of helping families and friends of alcoholics.

Great creativity can be found within the fellowship, and the plan to celebrate our 50th anniversary calls for members to maximize their creative energies. A written plan, entitled "Framework for Our Celebration," was distributed in English, Spanish, and French to disseminate activities envisioned for WSO, delegates, and members.

To highlight the plan's main purpose—which is involving as many members worldwide as possible—the committee set up an actual frame and asked everyone to put themselves in the picture. The frame leaves room for members to use their ideas and bring the celebration to all activities at regional, area, and local levels that take place during 2001.

Delegates were asked to choose two events (prioritizing the most important one) that they would like to see listed on an Al-Anon calen-

dar that will be produced for 2001. The calendar with Al-Anon's history will be available at next year's Conference. In our anniversary year, a letter-writing campaign will be initiated to thank the members of the press around the world for their help in carrying the Al-Anon message of hope over the years. Later this year, in a mailing to groups, members will be asked to sign pages for a Gratitude Book.

The purpose of the Gratitude Book is to afford every Al-Anon and Alateen member the opportunity to express their appreciation for the fellowship. The sheet, which will be mailed with *Inside Al-Anon Xtra* later this year, is designed to generate what is hoped to be a ground swell of participation. In addition, for a specified time period, when members visit WSO, they will actually be able to locate their inscriptions in the Gratitude Book. If all goes as planned, there could be as many as 400 binders representing worldwide appreciation for Al-Anon/Alateen on display at the 50th Anniversary press conference.



Mary Ann K.,  
Chairperson  
Director, Membership Outreach

Margaret G.,  
Board Liaison, Trustee

## Board and Committee Sessions

Pat S.,

*Conference Chairperson, Executive  
Committee Member*

Susan A.,

*Associate Director,  
Membership Outreach, Conference*

Ric B.,

*Al-Anon Convention Chairperson,  
Executive Director*

Susan A.,

*Coordinator, Associate Director,  
Membership Outreach, Conference*

Marsha W.,

*Co-Coordinator, Associate Director,  
Membership Outreach, International*

### 2000 Conference Site Report

Immediately after the close of the 1998 World Service Conference, the search began to find a site for the 2000 Conference. A dozen hotels in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia sent proposals, and WSO staff visited six of them. The main factors used to make a decision included availability of meeting room space, good-tasting food, and cost. Conference members who found rooming together a positive experience are encouraged to do so again in 2000.

Our 2000 World Service Conference will convene at the Holiday Inn Executive Center (the site of the 1998 Conference) from Wednesday, April 26 through Sunday, April 30. Religious holidays, hotel availability, and the need for time to prepare the financial report necessitated the choice of these dates. On Monday, May 1, Conference members may visit the WSO following the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

### 2000 AA International Convention

Conference members watched a video of Minneapolis/St. Paul in anticipation of AA's 2000 International Convention with Al-Anon participation, planned for June 29 - July 2, 2000.

"Hope@Al-Anon.Alateen.Everywhere," the Al-Anon theme, signifies the hope that can be found by those who attend Al-Anon meetings around the world. Workshop speakers will be chosen by random selection of names from lists of registered participants, so early registration is important for anyone who wishes to participate as a workshop speaker.

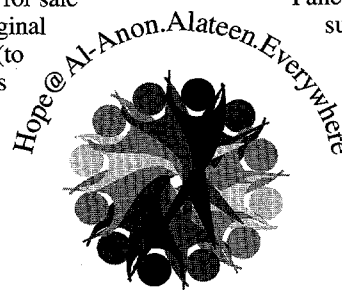
Two items to be considered for sale at the convention are the original *Al-Anon Family Groups* book (to be published with annotations and footnotes per a 1998 Conference motion), and the 50th Anniversary Calendar. Daytime Al-Anon and Alateen workshops will be held, and participants from countries outside the US and Canada may attend a reception designed to encour-

age service. No other Al-Anon gatherings are planned, so as to parallel AA's participation at Al-Anon's 1998 Convention in Salt Lake.

Al-Anon members may attend all AA events, including a Thursday night block party and big meetings Friday night, Saturday night, and Sunday morning. Registration forms will be mailed to Al-Anon groups in September 1999. Housing forms will be mailed with badges upon registration. Updated information can be found on AA's website: [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org).

To conclude the presentation, Cheryl C., Panel 37, MN (N) and delegates from surrounding areas shared some Minnesota local color in a skit entitled "Minnesota: What the Historical Society and the Convention Bureau Don't Tell You."

At dinner that evening, Conference members received postcards from the Minnesota (North) and (South) assembly areas, inviting them to Minneapolis.



June 30 - July 2, 2000  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Ann H.,

*Chairperson, Trustee*

Mary Ann K.,

*Director, Membership Outreach*

### Regional Service Seminar (RSS) Committee

The committee set a firm deadline of January 31, 2000 for all bids to be submitted for RSSs scheduled for 2001. This move will give those presenting a bid additional time to get more accurate information to complete the bid and make certain it has the delegate's signature. With the change, the committee stressed that any bids arriving after January 31 will not be considered. At the RSS breakout sessions in the past, delegates made their first

and second choice of a site. This year, delegates were asked to prioritize each area's bids according to criteria agreed upon by the region.

The regional trustees (RTs) from Canada East and Canada West are filling in for Canada Central until next year when an RT from Canada Central will be chosen.

Participation at AA's International Convention creates an increase in staff travel and assignments for Membership Outreach. In

order to equalize this for the year 2000, responsibilities are being shared with other departments. Preliminary and on-site duties will be handled by the WSO staff as follows:

**US Northeast**

Associate Director of Public Outreach

**US South Central**

Director of Fellowship Communication

**Canada West**

Director of Group Services

Membership Outreach staff will continue to handle site selections, contracts, development of flyers, forms, and group mailings for all these seminars. The three RTs will be involved in all phases of the RSS. The AIS/LDC Workshop for 2000 will be held in Canada West.



*The new general purpose RSS logo.*

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### Inventory of our Service Structure Ad hoc Report

Last year at this time, this ad hoc committee began the process of developing an inventory to determine if our service structure actually works. We wanted to know if the dissemination of materials between the various links of service was useful and effective in terms of communication, resources and information, and assistance and support. A survey was mailed to area delegates and chairpersons, as well as a sampling of area coordinators, district representatives (DRs), and group representatives (GRs).

The handouts from this committee contained a letter from the Chairperson of the Board, a sample survey, and a summary of the survey results. Most responses were positive. The *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* was used successfully by most in the survey, and all seemed to know how to contact the appropriate

links of service. The areas of concern were: there was a low percentage of returns (8%) from GRs; many felt there were too few volunteers; and each group of trusted servants felt supported except the area coordinators.

The WSO has begun to look at the fact that area coordinators do not feel supported. Delegates were encouraged to go back to their areas and look at the need to provide ways to recruit and support volunteers as well as support area coordinators.

Although most responses were positive, the committee cautioned against assuming that more can't be done. We cannot be complacent. The links of service seem to be working well, but we need to find ways to develop innovative ideas and to nurture the links to keep them strong.

Marion W.,  
Chairperson, Executive Committee  
Member

### Long Range Study Panel (LRSP)

The LRSP has been working to act as described on Page 172, Concept IX, in the *Service Manual*, which reads as follows: "We look at past and present experience to see what we think it means."

#### Study of Trends.

In 1998, the panel fulfilled the Board's mandate to study trends in finances, fellowship growth, and literature sales. An example of comparative trends is LDC growth in relation to a decline in the sale of literature. Al-Anon numbers are decreasing, yet it appears we are reaching out to more diverse populations. The demands for more specialized materials (and for quicker, more electronically appropriate communications) are greater, but we have fewer resources. Results of our study may be

summarized as follows:

Reduced contributions, membership, and literature sales  
+ Increased requests and needs for resources  
= Diluted communications

The panel recommended strengthening communication links within the service structure, being pro-active in support of public relations to the community as a whole, and carrying the message to those who are suffering the effects of alcoholism.

#### Five Year Plan.

The evaluation of the *Five Year Plan* was concluded in 1998, and will be called the *Long Range Plan* henceforth. An inventory by the Board on the goals of the plan reflected only

Nancy B.,  
Chairperson, Trustee

Phyllis M.,  
Director, Public Outreach

positive feedback, and the goals were perceived as ongoing. The panel made the following decisions about the plan:

- To title the 1999 report, "Al-Anon in a Changing World: 1998 Goals and Objectives Update."
- To review and evaluate the new structure as it relates to the organization of the office by interviewing the departments and conducting an office survey. This will be planned at the July meeting of the LRSP.

The Board of Trustees accepted the following recommendations made by the panel in 1998 that:

- The LRSP relinquish the annual implementation, monitoring, and reporting of FFGs.

- WSO staff and volunteers continue to use the eleven goals of the Long Range Plan as a springboard for annual planning.

- The Board of Trustees develop a planning process that would (1) create an annual focus for WSO and (2) be reflected in the Service Plan.

We are excited about consolidating various activities, such as the Service Plan, WSO's annual focus, and others, into one. As we have all learned, inventory is an ongoing process. Not only are we continually learning how to answer the questions, but also to ask better questions. Areas are encouraged to work with the LRSP as it continues to envision carrying the message into the future.

### Fellowship Focus Groups (FFGs).

Eight FFGs from the US and Canada met to discuss Goal Five: To establish the name "Al-Anon" as the best-known service/resource for relatives and friends of alcoholics. They reported the following:

**Arkansas** proposed that we restore and enhance the special relationship between Al-Anon and AA for the enrichment of both programs and that we reach out locally and nationally through the use of technology.

**BC/Yukon** emerged with the recommendations to utilize television, the Internet, newspapers, posters, and pamphlets; to provide speakers for employee assistance groups; cooperate with social services, such as alcohol/drug abuse centers, crisis centers, and mental health clinics; to stress the importance of sponsorship in Al-Anon/Alateen; to cooperate with Alcoholics Anonymous; to update all information services to ensure accuracy of contact data; and to encourage members to take Twelfth Step telephone calls.

**Florida (N)** suggested advertising on exteriors of buses and subways; obtaining celebrity endorsements; endorsing National Al-Anon Awareness Week at the same time as our 50th Anniversary celebration; and placing PSAs on talk shows (such as *Rosie* or *Oprah*), news shows (like *20/20*, *60 Minutes*, and *Dateline*), and public television stations.

**Maine** suggested filling all district positions for better communication with area coordinators, holding a workshop with the theme "Benefits of Service," and making the distinction that "anonymous" is not synonymous with "secretive."

**Minnesota (N)** felt it would be good to create "take one" zippered plastic bags containing pamphlets and meetings lists for display on public bulletin boards; get the 1-888 number into local telephone books; and maintain current meeting lists.

**Montana** resolved that AA is our best PI resource, so our delegates need to work with theirs. For example, staying informed about the AA delegate's travel in order to encourage joint AA/Al-Anon functions and providing Al-Anon meeting schedules to our AA friends. Whenever cooperation is achieved (or even attempted), it would be helpful to write a note of thanks to encourage future efforts.

**Ontario (S)** held brainstorming sessions at their area assembly. Members shared that more cooperation from AA is desired. It was also suggested that purchasing air time would increase visibility of our PSAs and that the Internet could greatly increase awareness. We need to consider posting meeting times on the web, as well as selected CAL—especially sharings from *The Forum*.

**Quebec (W)** had one three-hour meeting, which began with a review of the Al-Anon web site to see what information is already available. Because the Internet is accessed daily by most teenagers, it was thought that Al-Anon web sites could be more modern in reaching out to youth. With regard to PSAs, the time slots seem always too late at night. It was also felt that we could use our resources better: streamlining CAL so it's less repetitive, and stressing in groups that the *Service Manual* is beneficial.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Policy Committee**

Delegates were invited to observe a meeting of the Policy Committee, which is our largest group conscience outside the Conference itself. After taking roll call and hearing the Secretary's report, committee members weighed the matter of financial cooperation between AA and Al-Anon regarding events.

The question raised was whether Al-Anon should contribute to AA in the same manner as discussed on page 65 in the Policy Digest of the *Service Manual*. All members need to know that financial cooperation is encouraged. For example, page 65 discusses distribution of proceeds for Al-Anon participation at AA conventions.

Committee members stated that there is no need to change the Policy Digest, but that members do need to know that financial cooperation with AA is acceptable. Thus, it was agreed by consensus that a statement on the matter might be presented in a guideline, and that no further clarification was necessary in the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

The meeting was followed by a full meeting of the Conference to consider four motions for changes to the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* presented by the Policy Committee. All

were clarifications and not changes in policy.

The first motion was a proposal to add wording to the Policy Digest section, page 62, "Registration of Groups," to provide additional explanation of special focus groups. After discussion of the pros and cons of the proposed wording, the motion was denied. Neither the proposed motion nor its defeat result in any change in existing policy.

The second Policy motion was to add text to the "Choosing a Group's Name" section of the Policy Digest, page 63, to clarify that the use of initials in group names is discouraged. The motion carried.

The next motion was an amendment to page 69, "Finances," Direct Contributions, clarifying that the individual limit listed is in regard to contributions to the WSO. This motion also carried.

The final Policy motion was a proposed change to the section on "Other Publications," Other Literature at Meetings, page 79. The new wording emphasizes that all AA literature is not Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature, and provides cross references to pertinent pamphlets. After discussion and amendments to the original proposal, this motion carried.

For exact wording of the motions, see the Motions section.

Margaret M.,  
*Chairperson, Trustee*

Ric B.,  
*Secretary, Executive Director*

### **Internet Ad hoc Committee**

In the last year, the Internet Ad hoc Committee has been actively looking and reviewing a number of aspects of Al-Anon on-line. The guideline introduced at last year's World Service Conference (WSC) has been printed as a Fact Sheet for Al-Anon On-Line Meetings (S-60) and is now available to the fellowship through our literature order form. It's an "attraction piece" and is included in the catalog.

The committee started as an ad hoc committee of the Executive Committee. When the worldwide web page and e-mail capabilities were introduced at the WSO, issues investigated by the Internet Ad hoc Committee were reported to the Policy Committee for action. In view of this, the Executive Committee ended its parenthood, and the Policy Committee took the responsibility of providing guidance to the Internet Ad hoc Committee. The current charge is to work on guidelines for on-line Al-Anon information services and area web sites, and to consider full registration of on-line meetings.

The committee recommended, and the Policy Committee approved, extending the

three-year trial period for listing on-line meetings, as additional issues emerged in discussions pertaining to full registration. These include Alateen safety on-line and foreign language groups whose members live mainly outside of North America. The committee is also discussing the need for a permanent Internet or technology committee. It is not yet clear if this is necessary.

In the coming year, the committee will be working on guidelines for on-line Al-Anon information services based on those being used by a proposed AIS on-line and how to register on-line meetings as groups. Full registration poses several questions:

1. Where do these meetings fit into the service structure?
2. What can WSO do to make Alateens aware of safety issues on the Internet?
3. What are the implications of meetings whose members speak other languages and live outside of the US and Canada being registered with the WSO and approved as a GSO?

Larry A.,  
*Chairperson, Trustee*

With all these questions yet to be answered, the Internet Ad hoc Committee has a full menu

of projects for at least the coming year and the new millennium.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

Catherine J.,  
*Chairperson, Trustee*

Phyllis M.,  
*Director, Public Outreach*

Carole P.,  
*Public Outreach Service Manager  
for Canada*

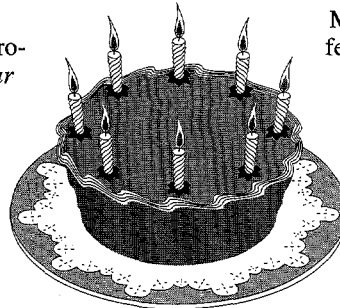
### National Public Information Canada (NPIC)

The committee studied benefits of the NPIC office remaining in Ottawa, which is Canada's capital. It is also a bilingual city and its operational costs are reasonable. A feasibility study to relocate the office to a business area is underway.

The new NPIC pamphlet was produced this year, entitled *Your Canadian Al-Anon/Alateen Connection (S-61c)*. A 20th anniversary theme for NPIC's Conference dinner/presentation was selected. The second national

release of the *Tornado* radio and TV PSAs was completed. Teletoon, Canada's national children's television station, provided a report of *Tornado* airplays for Fall 1998 and January 1999.

Mailings and follow-up to professionals included military resource centers and employee assistance programs across Canada. Obtaining a list of military chaplains is underway in an effort to coordinate with the military outreach project in the US.



Marge S.,  
*Chairperson, Trustee*

Margaret G.,  
*Outreach to Professionals Advisory  
Committee Chairperson, Trustee*

Phyllis M.,  
*Director, Public Outreach*

Claire R.,  
*Associate Director, Public Outreach*

### Public Outreach Committee

The 1999 Al-Anon/Alateen Membership Survey and Al-Anon Membership Assessment were mailed to area delegates. Besides verifying the active status of groups in their respective areas, delegates were invited to enclose a letter encouraging groups to complete their surveys and return them to the WSO by May 1, 1999.

Because of the confidentiality afforded to family members, it was the committee's consensus to focus the military outreach project on chaplains for this year. Mailing lists are being sought for military chaplains in the US and Canada.

To attract both EAP and human resource professionals, the text and title of the newly developed EAP service tool were created. The pamphlet, entitled *Help For Employees Troubled By Someone Else's Drinking*, (S-63) was finalized and has received approval for production.

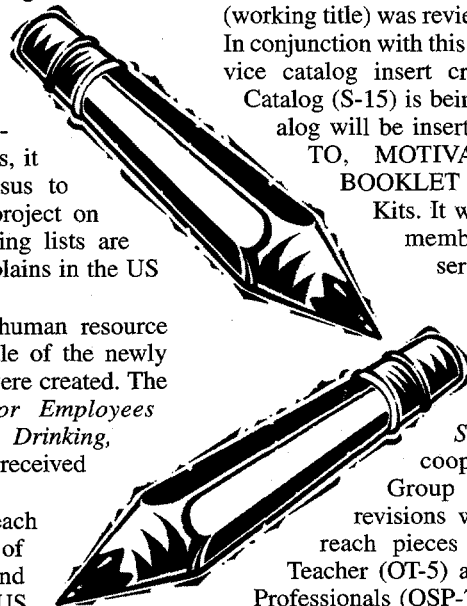
The 1999 newspaper outreach project is underway. The first of four articles in English and French was developed for the US and Canada. The purpose of this project is to increase the number

of feature articles appearing in newspapers. The project also includes release of articles by satellite and on the Internet, as well as via more standard methods, such as fax and mail.

A second, more extensive draft of the HOW TO, MOTIVATIONAL SERVICE BOOKLET (working title) was reviewed by the committee. In conjunction with this booklet, a separate service catalog insert created from the CAL

Catalog (S-15) is being developed. This catalog will be inserted into the new HOW TO, MOTIVATIONAL SERVICE BOOKLET and Public Outreach Kits. It will also be available to members inquiring about service materials.

The committee reviewed and approved modifications to the pamphlet *Living In A Shelter* (P-82). Working cooperatively with the Group Services Committee, revisions were made to the outreach pieces *Open Letter To My Teacher* (OT-5) and *Student Assistance Professionals* (OSP-7). The committee recommended reprinting the remaining five open letters using the existing text.





### Public Service Announcement (PSA) Presentation

We have had record PSA sales with the "Tornado" campaign, and the areas increased their distribution to open stations over last year by 12%. During an 18-week comparative time-frame, "Tornado" outplayed our last new PSA by 1600 airplays:

- 64% of all the airplays occurred between six o'clock in the morning and midnight.
- The PSA aired a total of 9,264 times.

Since 1996, TV stations that aired our PSAs chose the Alateen PSA 57% of the time. Using our baseline figure for equivalent advertising costs of \$581, the return on our "Tornado" TV investment (as of February 28, 1999 for one distribution) is \$6.7 million, representing 11,520 airplays. Entering into the second distribution, the cumulative total was 12,176 airplays, equaling \$7.5 million in airtime.

Although we do not have the same technology available to us for television tracking in Canada, our NPIC Service Manager for Canada has developed a partial tracking system and tracked 364 airplays between September 1998 and January 1999. The Canadian dollar advertising value per airplay is rated at 228 dollars, or 83,100 dollars in total. Two-thirds of the "Eyes and Ears" coupons received were sent by Canadian members. The proximity of many of the major cities in Canada to the US border provides the opportunity for Canadians to see US and Canadian television. Because of

this proximity, we have reason to believe the actual number of PSAs seen in Canada is much higher.

The WSO Public Outreach Department did not do this alone. We had a strong connection to the fellowship, a connection that began here at the Conference. Congratulations were reiterated, as the partnership with the areas helped carry the message of Al-Anon and Alateen into millions of homes throughout North America. The success of "Tornado" is truly a tribute to the delegates and the hard work of their area coordinators.

Thanks also went to the many members who purchased PSAs, delivered them to stations, reminded the public service directors to play them, wrote letters of thanks, and disseminated "Tornado" posters.

The new PSA theme "Why Be Alone?" was introduced with ribbons passed from one delegate to another. Attendees were asked to see this as Al-Anon's connection to the still-suffering family or friend. At this point, the new "Why Be Alone?" PSAs were shown, and the two companion posters unveiled. Informational packets were then disseminated, and attendees were reminded that VHS video viewing tapes will be sent directly to their PI Coordinators in the July bi-annual mailing.

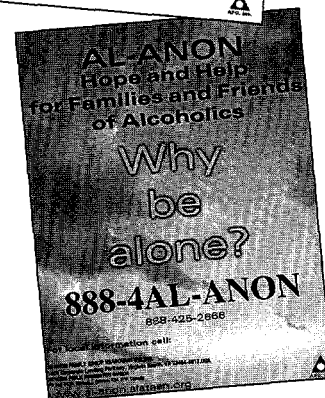
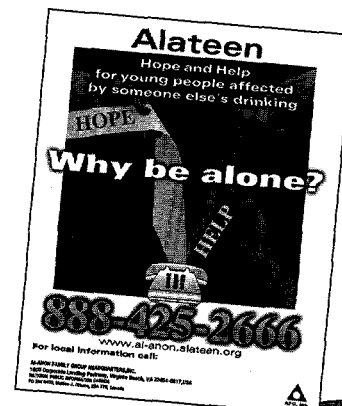
Special thanks went to the Membership Outreach staff, who provided translations that enabled us to present this campaign in three languages, and to Lise M. (PQ [W]) for providing the talent for the French voice-over.

Phyllis M.,

Director, Public Outreach

Claire R.,

Associate Director, Public Outreach



### WorldWide Web Site

The web site continues to provide many exciting and challenging projects. In 1998-99, an on-line version of our professional newsletter, *Al-Anon Speaks Out*, was added and the capacity for e-mail was activated. We included the 15-second "Tornado" PSA and created auto-responders for the literature, *Forum*, e-mail, and professional postcard pages. The literature catalog was enhanced and *Getting in Touch* was updated.

The Executive Director has discussed a plan with the Board in which a member site would be created at some point between late 1999 and early 2000. For the past three years, WSO has been primarily dependent on an outside vendor to assist us with design and updates. Now, with some experience, we are beginning to process routine updates in-house. Since January 1999, the monthly *Forum* sharings, calendar of conferences and conventions, and two *Getting In Touch* printings are being posted on the web

site by WSO. The Conference attendees were then shown three projects, live and on-line:

- Enhancements to the Spanish site and the debut of the French section
- An introduction to the re-designed web page
- International templates from a test site

Many ideas have been inserted into the new design and international template, among them: location of buttons, reducing the amount of text to improve site navigation.

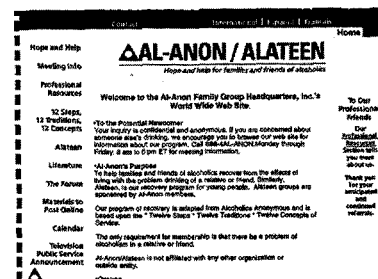
In addition to the re-design suggestions, there was interest at the 1997 IAGSM in developing templates that could be used by general service offices (GSOs). This meant the graphic re-design had to be clean and simple to meet the criteria of being easily adaptable internationally to other languages. Instructions called "source codes" would be imbedded in each template to help GSOs develop their own pages.

Phyllis M.,

Director, Public Outreach

Claire R.,

Associate Director, Public Outreach



Prototype Web site design.

Ten templates will be created for the international section representing universal pages (e.g., The Preamble, How to Contact Us, Are You Troubled by Someone's Drinking, *Facts About Alateen*, Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service).

The resulting format is current, yet does not detract from our primary message and intent of reaching out to newcomers and professionals. The Conference was advised that the web site will be changed and refreshed on a consistent basis to retain interest.

## AGENDA ITEMS

The Conference has developed a way to prioritize the many questions Conference members bring from the fellowship. At the outset of the Conference, members are given a list of all questions submitted. They are asked to review the entire list, and vote for three items they consider most important. The four questions receiving the most votes are then brought to the floor for open discussion, the remaining questions are discussed during workshop sessions and those questions receiving fewer than five votes are answered in the Ask-It-Basket. This year, the items chosen for open discussion were as follows:

### Open Discussions

**Open Discussion 1: This topic dealt with the concern that literature created for "special focus groups" dilutes the Al-Anon message.**

The first members to speak disagreed with the implications of the question as written. It was emphasized by several speakers that the WSO does not write literature, rather that *we*, in the fellowship, do. It is the World Service Conference, not WSO, that decides what literature to create. As an organization ages and grows, the material it writes about itself also changes. In Al-Anon, our literature reflects emerging member needs, as determined through the Conference Approval process, which insures group conscience is followed. Another members stated that some of us are resistant to change. Another shared that she tries "to speak without offending, and to listen without being offended" to others' viewpoints. Several members said that outreach leaflets were important to them personally and to their family members, and that we must not confuse "dilution" with "reaching out." It was felt that we need to be welcoming always, no matter what particular segment of the general population a person may represent. Members shared that their first identification might have come in the security of an adult child, gay/lesbian, or men's group where Al-Anon is spoken.

**Open Discussion 2: This question addressed the fact that most of the WSO's income comes from literature sales rather than contributions, and how we can increase members' donations.**

On this question, there was strong sentiment to accept that the reliance on literature revenue is nothing new—it has been true historically. Many expressed the need to start thinking of "literature sales" as "contributions" as stated in

Concept Twelve, Warranty One (see page 195 *1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*). A concern was expressed that selling literature outside the fellowship is accepting outside donations. It was pointed out that literature is a way to carry the message; we would not give away outside the fellowship what our members have to pay for.

Consensus was strong that education is necessary to increase revenues of any kind. The fellowship is generally not aware of what services the WSO provides. It is important to give complete financial picture to the fellowship and to educate members as to where the money goes. Encouraging putting change in the basket with a dollar bill is one way to break the "buck barrier." We might consider comparing the value of Al-Anon to other expenses (such as the value of one visit to the hairdresser or movie versus the value of an Al-Anon meeting).

**Open Discussion 3: This discussion encompassed several questions regarding keeping members involved in service and rotation of service positions.**

Members shared on the importance of supporting and encouraging others to get involved, giving a sponsee a nudge, encouraging others to come along to service functions, letting them know they CAN do it. Attitudes are catching; ask yourself, "Is my attitude worth catching?" It is important to learn to delegate, to show people that you don't have to do it alone. Enthusiasm is very important. Members may associate service with prior experience and need to be reacquainted with Al-Anon love, encouragement, and our commitment to not doing things alone. The thrust of Al-Anon service is having fun. We need to convey that

fun is possible because, in Al-Anon, we divide tasks in order to Keep It Simple so no one burns out—and everyone benefits.

#### **Open Discussion 4: How can we improve the updating of group records?**

Consensus was clear that we've had problems ever since we began to keep group records. Some have seen improvements recently; others still experience problems with WSO records not matching area records. Sometimes confusion is caused by too many people submitting the same information or conflicting information. Dating any changes submitted

would help with this. This way, the data entry person can readily discern when one change takes priority over another.

Group printouts are sent twice a year to either the area delegate or the area Group Records Coordinator. They are then asked to return corrected printouts to the Group Records Department. Changes are input as quickly as possible. One suggestion was that there should be a single point of contact, perhaps at the area level. WSO's efforts to correct the problems are ongoing. New software in the future will be available to areas to submit records on disk.

### **Agenda Items Workshops:**

The items that found their way into small group discussions were these:

**The use of AA's Big Book** was discussed, comparing the early days when very little Al-Anon literature was available, to today, when there is an abundance of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) available. It is in keeping with our Traditions to use only CAL in Al-Anon meetings, to keep the focus on the Al-Anon message, and not to dilute it. Al-Anon is—and will remain—a separate entity. Members are free to use the "big book" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*) or whatever they find helpful for their personal recovery outside of meetings. The 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) addresses this issue on page 79 under "Other Literature at Meetings" and under "Reading Matter Outside of CAL."

**Liability insurance for individual group meetings is now often requested—how do we get it?** At the present time, liability insurance is being secured in various ways — for area events only; or for events plus meeting places. Many facilities already carry insurance that covers the group. If not, group may ask to purchase a rider on the facility's policy. WSO is a clearing house, and cannot legally oversee or direct matters such as these. Some groups may be purchasing their own insurance policies.

**On the matter of cooperation with AA,** Tradition Six reminds us to always cooperate with AA. Communication, participation, and cooperation are keys to nurturing a relationship with AA. Exchanging calendars and participating at conventions and workshops are suggestions for cooperation. A commitment to unity and solidarity is wonderfully evident when our respective organizations work together at the delegate level. WSO communicates and cooperates with AA in many ways, including joint public information meetings and International Conventions. This cooperation can take place at area, district, and group levels.

**Regarding newcomers,** members discussed

what we can do to help and retain members. Consensus was that we need to welcome newcomers by sitting with them, calling them, assigning temporary sponsors, encouraging them to attend, and helping when a child is in tow. To retain members, newcomers, or long-timers, we need to affirm how much they are valued and needed; give them jobs; and be sure to appreciate their participation.

**On behavior during meetings,** it was felt that crosstalk is defined as more than one voice talking at the same time, and that it must be defined within each group.

**As for efforts to cut Conference costs,** consensus was that, if we can't afford something (such as the trip to Stepping Stones), skip it—or ask members to pay as an option. In terms of hotel arrangements, some delegates prefer single rooms; it could be valuable for second year delegates to room with their Conference sponsors.

**On the questions of Internet and on-line meetings,** members felt these should be listed as on-line meetings, but not registered as groups. For people who cannot attend meetings, on-line is an opportunity; however, human warmth cannot be replaced by electronic meetings. Personal connection, privacy, anonymity, and isolation could be potential problems. Al-Anon is in a changing world and we need to continue to explore the opportunities for growth. Linking from around the world to the WSO and to area and district web pages could carry the message to many more people than we do now. As we explore and offer on-line opportunities, we need to guard the safety of members, especially Alateens. Ref.: Fact Sheet for Al-Anon On-Line Meetings (S-60).

**With regard to representation of on-line meetings,** every member in the United States and Canada is represented by a delegate from the geographic area in which they live; overseas members are represented by a delegate to

their respective structures. This way, every Al-Anon member has a voice.

**The question of area boundaries** arose, with the question of our guideline that a state may split only once. It does not seem fair for larger, more populated areas to have more votes than smaller, less populated areas. However, travel distances do keep some groups from participating, and sometimes, members go to a neighboring state because that assembly is closer. There could be economic reasons for redefining an area as well. Our divisions of areas and regions are not the same as AA's, which was another part of the question.

**On the use of the Lord's Prayer**, members felt it is up to the group to make sure group conscience is followed. Reference was made to page 55 of the *1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), where it states that each group closes in the manner that is agreeable to the group conscience. Lois W. said, "It doesn't matter what prayer we close with, but we close with a spiritual moment."

**Dual membership continues to raise questions regarding service.** Some workshop members felt that no Step, Tradition, or Concept would be broken by not letting AA members serve above the group level. Al-Anon has never cooperated with any other Twelve Step programs other than AA. Warranty Five says that no member can be expelled from the fellowship; membership is always the choice of the individual. Each group conducts its internal affairs as it wishes, only abstaining from acts that might injure Al-Anon or AA as a whole. The *1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* does not say AA members cannot participate on Al-Anon convention committees.

**On the question of how to best incorporate Alateens into Al-Anon meetings**, members felt that our welcomes are important at meetings, even though some adults tend to hold back when young people are in the room. The Conference and WSO are aware that Alateens are our future. It is up to individual Alateen groups to determine the age group they serve.

**On the quantity of CAL that is in print and high costs**, members emphasized that there is a Conference Approved Literature (CAL) process (ref.: page 193 of the *1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*). At present, group contributions pay for only a portion of the WSO expenses; the balance is financed by the sale of CAL. CAL prices are far less than those of most other publishers. Many people think we are getting into new books because of the money situation, yet it is the Conference who decides on new literature. Contributions at the group level do need to be

increased so that groups can afford to buy books. Yet people are often too busy to read the new literature—some even buy the new books, but don't use them.

**As for how best to preserve our historical past**, consensus was that we need to remember where we came from by getting back to basics in sponsoring, using the Steps, Traditions, and passing the program along to newcomers. It is helpful to remember past delegates when sending mailings and to stay in touch with them, even providing transportation should that become necessary. Use archive displays and talk about our history.

**With regard the safety of Alateen meetings physically, emotionally, and spiritually**, it is important to follow Al-Anon principles—the Traditions and Concepts of Service—and to use CAL. Alateen sponsors must be chosen carefully, and need to be aware of pertinent laws and guidelines. Courts and professionals need to be educated, as they sometimes send teens to the wrong type of meeting. Remember there is safety in numbers. Two adults in a meeting provides safety for both teens and adults. It is the Alateen group's responsibility to stop unacceptable behavior. The chairperson should try to keep the meeting on track, but it is everyone's responsibility to help.

**The question of our dependence on literature sales** was addressed in a workshop, and this discussion included the suggestions for how to sell more literature, including literature as gifts, maintaining a group library, extending credit to financially-strapped members, and educating people about it. The idea of subsidizing one book in perpetuity (to serve as Al-Anon's "big book") was not viewed favorably, as this is AA terminology. If group and personal contributions would increase, we would not have to rely so heavily on the sale of literature. However, in the entire history of Al-Anon, this has not yet happened.

**There was some objection to the new text line that appears now in all CAL**, regarding the fact that WSO is supported by members' contributions and sale of literature. This is not a policy change, and did not need to go to the WSC. WSO has always been supported by sale of literature. The Policy Committee felt this is not contrary to Tradition Seven (ref.: Page 195 of the *1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*).

**As for how we might improve communications at all levels of service**, it was suggested that trusted servants start training their replacements early—little by little, One Day at a Time. Use all tools of communication: e-mail, mail, faxes, phone, conference calls. Work smarter not harder and have fun.

## DIRECTOR'S PRESENTATION

Each year since the implementation of the new structure, the directors select an issue or topic which their day-to-day activities working with the fellowship leads them to believe is important enough to warrant the focus of the entire Conference. Not only is there time allotted at Conference, but follow-up activities are often suggested. This year, the directors chose to spotlight Alateen based upon the issues and concerns gleaned from the letters, surveys, calls, and actions of members.

The directors dramatized a hypothetical conversation between members who had just heard that "the last Conference voted to do away with Alateen." During the portrayal, the following points were made:

- Lack of sponsors is a worldwide problem.
- AA members are often more generous sponsoring Alateen than Al-Anon members.
- Sponsors have problems understanding young people today. There are possible legal problems around abuse issues.
- Alateen literature (as reflected in sales) is used minimally.

With all these problems, one resounding question emerged — namely, how can we, as Al-Anon members, let Alateen go, when there are 3,000 functioning groups worldwide and Alateen is a part of Al-Anon? The results of a survey sent to delegates prior to the Conference were reviewed. One of the major concerns was the longtime dilemma of how to recruit and help Alateen sponsors.

The directors expressed concern about responses that indicate a loss of Al-Anon commitment to Alateen. We know from experience that people do not recover in isolation, and that no service work is effective if done alone. Perhaps our Alateen groups and sponsors exist in isolation or members perceive that sponsoring will be an isolating experience. As a possible remedy, the directors then presented a practical approach. It was suggested that the following general questions be sent to each and every Al-Anon group:

1. Would your group consider forming an Alateen group?
2. Would your group consider supporting an existing Alateen group?

Drafts were circulated of a more detailed group inventory of Al-Anon's commitment to Alateen, accompanied by a draft commitment sheet for each group to sign indicating their willingness to participate. If this project proceeds, the WSO will make a commitment to send complimentary material to all groups who agree to this kind of involvement.

Delegates were asked to review these drafts, give their comments, and send their feedback to WSO prior to a final group-wide mailing later in the year.

Members were then asked to discuss whether their groups would consider forming new Alateen groups, and if not, how they might support existing groups. Delegates divided into small groups with the task of addressing the following questions:

1. How do you feel about this proposal?
2. How could this be implemented?
3. Is the group inventory process likely to work?

→ Group discussions then ensued. Consensus was that Operation Alateen as proposed is a good plan and that a group inventory on Alateen is a good idea and will go to area assemblies for distribution. Delegates need to ask group representatives (GRs) to be accountable; district representatives (DRs) could contact those not at the assembly. Other suggestions were that:

1. A question be added: if your group is already supporting an Alateen meeting, are you supporting the group adequately?
2. We need to remember that Alateen members are members of Al-Anon—just younger members.
3. We clarify our commitment to Alateen.
4. We make the groups accountable by providing what they need, but letting them "own" it.
5. Share meals more often with Alateens. The message that we care is often best expressed by sending food!
6. If half the respondents to the survey were not interested in Alateen, we need to consider whether we will have sufficient follow-through or if we should consider the possibility of setting up a structure like we did the fellowship focus groups (FFGs) in order to foster true enthusiasm and participation.
7. Often we have the sponsors, but we can't get the kids. Anonymity is a problem in the schools, and if sponsors continue to show up only to find no Alateens, their willingness soon dwindles.
8. Alateen groups need to be self-supporting. There is a fine line between offering support and violating Tradition Seven.
9. We might want to survey our Alateens, as they may have the best ideas.
10. We consider more inward questions, such as: where is my child, my niece, my little brother?

## "OPERATION ALATEEN"

11. We find a way to provide financial help to Alateen sponsors, as they often end up footing the bill to attend assemblies with the group's GR.
12. We start this process by asking groups to consider whether or not they think Alateen is important. Are their kids at risk?
13. Alateen groups should be self-supporting, have a GR, a treasurer, etc., and should follow same format as regular Al-Anon.
14. Groups (from AA and Al-Anon) could share the opening and/or the closing.
15. We need to address the fact that an astonishing 12% responding to the survey thought Alateen should be discontinued.

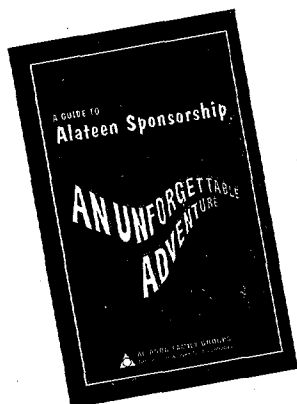
16. We need to encourage Alateens to attend Al-Anon meetings.

17. We need to insert a section in the plan for groups to write specific requests of WSO and areas.

Executive Director Ric B. concluded the workshop saying "We know you hear us and our hope that once an Al-Anon group is firmly established, it would give serious thought to creating a group for Alateens, as suggested on page 49 of the Al-Anon/Alateen Groups at Work section in the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual. We want to hear from the grassroots. Our goal is to get a conversation about Alateen started in your area."

## ALATEEN SPONSORSHIP

Evalynn B.,  
Associate Director,  
Group Services, Alateen



Sponsoring an Alateen group requires commitment, experience in working the Steps and Traditions, knowledge of the principles of the Al-Anon program, and self-awareness. The most common element that keeps Al-Anon members from becoming Alateen sponsors or involving themselves with Alateen is fear — fear of not knowing enough, fear of young people, fear of the time involved, fear of doing it alone.

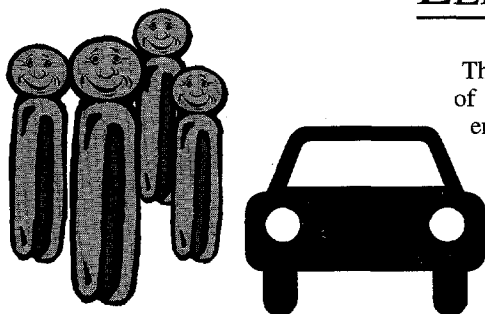
A pilot project for sponsor development was presented. The goal of the project is to ease the fear and raise the level of comfort when there is limited knowledge of basic Alateen information. The project is designed to involve all members of the fellowship. Questions regarding all phases of the sponsor experience were addressed with references to our literature in eight parts:

1. An Introduction to Alateen
2. Can I Do This?
3. Nuts & Bolts
4. Up & Running
5. Experience, Strength & Hope
6. Parents, Alateen & You
7. Legal Responsibility
8. Taking Care of Yourself

The project is also intended to involve Al-Anon members who may be unable to sponsor Alateen, but can still offer service to Alateen and Alateen sponsors. One goal of the project is to show Al-Anon members the importance of supporting our Alateen sponsors in order to develop healthy, growing Alateen groups.

The presentation revealed that sponsor preparedness is not about knowing the rules. It is about knowing when to use the tools of Al-Anon recovery; it is about being comfortable in setting boundaries with Alateens, Al-Anons, and parents; it is about having the courage to ask for help. It underscored the program principle, "You Don't Have To Do It Alone."

## LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP



This workshop was designed by members of the Conference Committee to create enthusiasm for service, find new ways to do service, develop leadership skills, and allow delegates to be creative and innovative in the process. Delegates participated in a game using a milk carton car, 36 clothespin people, a gameboard, and a single dice.

In service, many have heard the

saying, "Get in the car." Thus, each team began the game with an "Alamobile" and a driver in the car. The team was instructed to never lose their driver and to try and acquire as many service members as possible. With each participant, the dice was thrown, and the Alamobile moved the appropriate number of squares in any direction. When the Alamobile landed on a square, the moderator told the team what they needed to do to gain new service people to put

into their Alamobile — or, how many to remove until they solved the service “problem.” The dice was rolled again, and the Alamobile was moved the appropriate number of squares. A team could land on a number more than once, but could not gain people (or lose them) on that number more than once. A

team recorder kept track of responses and transferred them onto reportback sheets at the end of the game.

Clearly, the objective of these antics was to get as many clothespin people in the Alamobile or into service as possible. It was a fun—and vivid—portrayal of what it takes to involve people in service.

## WSO's TRIAL STRUCTURE

### Business Services

Richard Keilly (non-member), Director of Business Services, reviewed the Business Services structure, explaining that it encompasses the following areas:

- Customer Service
- Publications
- Warehouse/Shipping

- Office Management
- Accounting
- Technology
- Human Resources

Eliminating duplications in the data base is continuing to receive attention. Improvements in the shipping department have reduced complaints.

Richard Keilly,  
*Director*

### Fellowship Communication

This presentation focused on the trial structure—how it is different from the old structure and the impact on the committees. Using visual aids, it was shown how the “two houses” of Literature and *The Forum* in the old structure have been merged into a single house of Fellowship Communication. Another illustration showed how communications flow through the staff, volunteer committees, area coordinators, delegates, groups, and members. With the synergistic flow in and out, it is easy to see how vital our links of service actually are—and how they interrelate.

Conference members then received infor-

mation showing how the areas have organized their Literature and Forum Coordinators. Most areas have Literature Coordinators, and in most (forty-one) areas, the alternate delegate serves as Forum Coordinator. In ten areas, the Literature Coordinator is also Forum Coordinator, and fifteen areas have a separate Forum Coordinator position.

Now may be the time to assess area structures to decide if they want to implement any changes. An important question posed is whether there might be a way a committee could assist coordinators to carry the message through literature and *The Forum* more effectively.

Caryn J.,  
*Director*

Mary Lou M.,  
*Associate Director, Literature*

### Group Services

Through the use of colorful poster boards, Conference members were introduced to the department and its staff. This was followed by illustrations and explanations of the following:

- So, What's New?
- Committees, Then and Now
- WSO Departments Then and Now
- The Benefits and the Kinks
- Can It Work in the Areas?

The session concluded with questions and answers, along with sharing of area experiences.

Sandra F.,  
*Director*

Evalynn N.,  
*Associate Director, Alateen*



## Workshops

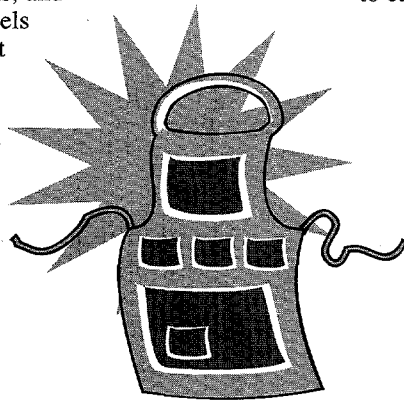
Mary Ann K.,  
*Director*

Susan A.,  
*Associate Director, Conference*

Marsha W.,  
*Associate Director, International*

### Membership Outreach

This department focused on how members can have their voices heard. A few participatory games pointed out how many ways there are for members to express themselves. Speaking is not the only way to participate. Members can write letters, complete surveys, fill out evaluations, and share one-on-one at all levels of service. When we don't send in a form, fill out a questionnaire, write a letter, or call with a concern, we allow those who do speak up to have only their voices heard.



Each delegate was given a hand-made apron — a symbol of service, made with five pockets, labeled with the initials of the five departments. The suggestion was made to delegates that they wear the aprons when giving their WSC reports and to use the apron pockets to carry their various handouts.

The "Adopt a Group in Russia" project, which will continue to supply CAL to the 106 groups in the former Soviet Union, was highlighted, along with samples of the "adoption papers" and accompanying maps.

Phyllis M.,  
*Director*

Claire R.,  
*Associate Director*

### Public Outreach

The Outreach to Professionals Advisory and Public Outreach Committees are working well together and have enhanced the ability of the department to connect with newcomers and professionals. The presentation focused on the department's bi-annual mailings and coordination within the areas:

#### Bi-Annual Project Mailing.

This is our most direct communication with local committees, and results indicate that area coordinators are working effectively to move the information to groups. A survey directed to Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, Institutions and combined coordinators titled "Great Expectations" asked coordinators if they understood the time-sensitive nature of the mailings and for their input as to what help they might need from the WSO Public Outreach team. Early survey reports indicate that the bi-annuals are disseminated at assemblies and by direct mail within the areas. The assembly distribution saves money; however, we are attempting to determine which form of transmittal most successfully gets the information to the greatest number of groups in an area. Some areas indicate that the projected

average time for the bi-annual to arrive at the groups is 11 weeks, or over two months. For time-sensitive projects, this is problematic. (Assembly attendance in an area may also influence this outcome.)

#### Area Budgets for Public Outreach.

Earlier surveys indicated that the majority of coordinators were operating on budgets between \$100 and \$300. Results from our "Great Expectations" survey revealed that the budget in some areas is \$100 per bi-annual mailing. The area cost to disseminate the bi-annual varied and was dramatically reduced when disseminated at the assembly. Consolidation by combining CPC, PI and Institutions Coordinators into one area position theoretically reduces outreach by two-thirds. If this consolidation is attempted with the motive that it is easier to find one person than it is to find three, our ability to carry the message may be seriously impaired. The Public Outreach team stressed the need for areas to consolidate using a team or committee approach when three coordinators are replaced by one person. This will ensure the success of the consolidation as the team or committee does the service of Public Outreach.



## SHARINGS FROM PANEL 37 DELEGATES

Service is our main vehicle for carrying the message into schools, prisons, professional circles, and individual families all over the world. This year's Conference clarified that the message of Al-Anon (and its gentle voice of encouragement) is only heard because their trusted servants are willing to carry the message.

Each year, the outgoing delegates are invited to give a three-minute talk on the theme of the Conference. These brief sharings are always full of experience, strength, hope, wisdom, and humor.

### **Bernice L., Manitoba**

Our theme for this Conference comes from the Twelfth Step. I came to Al-Anon twenty years ago through the grace of God. I had never sought help for myself but decided to attend an AA roundup where several of the speakers were from Al-Anon. I was overwhelmed. By their carrying the message that weekend, I found help and ultimately a new way of living.

Believe me, my recovery was slow. It was not just the members of my group who helped me recover, it was getting the courage to go outside of my group. Today service takes my time and effort, but it has brought the joy of giving and receiving. Years ago, I went to an assembly out of town. The first thing I did was call home to see if my family had found the meals I'd left for them. With a room full of Al-Anons laughing (lovingly) at me, I received a lesson (one of many) about letting go.

Later, I became an Alateen Coordinator. Another member, who had three daughters, started an Alateen group in her home. She did not register the group, and I was upset. This was not right! Fortunately my sponsor, who had introduced me to service, suggested "Live and Let Live." Sure enough, the Higher Power took care of the situation. Thank goodness for sponsors.

The Twelfth Step is a step of gratitude for me. I am so grateful to have had the wonderful experience of attending three WSCs, meeting Al-Anon members from all over the world, and for the sharing that has taken place. When I leave here, I will gladly carry the message in gratitude for all the gifts I have received. ♥

### **Bonnie M-C., Texas (E)**

As I watched *The Story of Bill and Lois* recently, I could not help but think of the drunks in my own life. The pain came flooding back to me in waves as I recounted each one. I began to think about our Conference theme of carrying the message wondering if I had lost sight of that in all my service work. I know that as a delegate, I am a trusted servant and an instrument for my Higher Power. I do not try to think if the things I do will help me but if they will help Al-Anon, and I must constantly guard this.

If carrying the message means taking my Al-Anon program wherever I go, then yes, I try very hard to do that. It means so much to me to attend other district meetings and listen as they discuss the Al-Anon ideas, topics of interest for the day, or just share the problems they have in their meetings. But if carrying the message means reaching out to others at meetings, hospitals, institutions, or rehab centers, I seem to only do this when specifically asked. I guard myself under the guise of taking care of myself.

Considering this topic led me to contemplate the primary purpose of being a delegate. To me it is to continually reach out to those in our program who ask for help and to reach out to members who can share their experience, strength, and hope.

We who are here today sometimes forget our primary purpose in Al-Anon. Is it to do everything ourselves, or to trust other trusted servants and ask for help? I have seen it not only in myself for the

last three years but in other delegates, trustees, and yes, even at the highest structures in our WSO. What that says to me is that we must always work to put principles above personalities, even if they are our own. I have seen even the most obscure minority idea become something all of us learn from, whether it becomes a passed motion, a failed motion, or an idea we had not considered. Before I became a delegate I could not have seen how an idea on the far right of my thinking could possibly have a purpose for the whole fellowship. The openness we are able to share here reminds me that I am not the queen of Al-Anon, or my area, or of Texas.

In my daily life I carry the message of Al-Anon because of the spiritual awakening I received as a result of working the Twelve Steps. To carry the message acknowledges my spiritual awakening. I have committed myself to sharing the gifts I have received and recognize that living spiritually is an ongoing process. The days in my life I do not consciously remember to take my Higher Power with me are when I have bad days. I try to remember what a special gift I have been given by longtimers and my wonderful sponsor. Gratitude makes me appreciate the gifts I have found, and I become willing to give them away to people I meet.

Service has advanced my recovery. So much of my time and energy is focused outwardly, trying to help others, that my work on my own character defects is always getting a workout. Remembering to put principles above personalities helps me see the good that is in everyone. We are all equals in Al-Anon. The service work I do is like a pebble in a pond: there are many ripples, but only my Higher Power can count their number.

My life before Al-Anon was isolated, but through service, I find I am always receiving the gifts of Al-Anon and always giving them away. Step Twelve invites us to stay on our paths to recovery. The more we give, the more we receive. Carrying the message of Al-Anon renews my spirit on a daily basis. The best part of carrying the message is learning to stick with commitments and making healthy choices for myself each day. ♥

### **Brigida C., Hawaii**

I heard about Al-Anon from a former co-worker in whom I confided about my spouse's problem and how it was affecting me. I don't remember how many times I shared before she mentioned that she didn't go to Al-Anon but knew someone who was attending. I didn't rush into a meeting the day I heard about Al-Anon. Like so many, I waited until I was in tremendous pain. I found my way to a meeting in May of 1989. It must have been the right time because I stayed.

I came mainly to learn how to cope with the alcoholic, since I didn't have the courage to leave him. I got what I came for, and more, learning so much about myself, gaining confidence and growing spiritually, emotionally, and even physically. I attended meetings regularly—sharing and listening, reading CAL, having a sponsor. I learned and applied the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and

## From the Heart

Twelve Concepts of Service to the best of my ability.

I started doing service early on (I didn't know that at the time) by volunteering to read the opening and closing no matter how nervous I was, then to be the chair for the month, then treasurer, then GR, which I became not knowing what I was supposed to do. Like all the different service positions, it was on-the-job training! After my term as GR expired, I was elected area treasurer, which I enjoyed since accounting is what I do for a living. Then I became area delegate three years ago by being the only person who remained standing after the question, "Who is willing?"

What a journey these three years have been. Service kept me in Al-Anon and gave me so much growth. I am still growing. What an honor, what a privilege to be the link between WSO and my area. Sometimes I feel like I'm not doing enough, and sometimes I get frustrated when I ask for feedback and only one district responds. I get to practice acceptance and Al-Anon love.

I've met a lot of genuinely nice people in the program throughout my state, the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, and other countries—and I've been to places that I would have otherwise visited only in my wildest dreams. I've heard the message of hope, and I promise to carry that message by attending meetings regularly and doing Al-Anon service. Thank you Hawaii Al-Anon for giving me this opportunity and for your support. Mahalo! ♥

### Cathy C., California (N)

In California (North), we are carrying the message of hope and recovery to many different communities and cultures. We are doing this because only 53% of our general population is Caucasian—the rest is "other" ethnic groups. As an area, we have agreed that our fellowship has a lot of opportunity to reach other cultures and communities, and that is what are trying to do.

We started in 1988 by creating a Spanish Coordinator position. In 1994, the Spanish community established its own information service, which included a liaison to our area world service committee, and we changed the title of our coordinator position to improve outreach to cultures other than Hispanic. This year, our area voted to include agenda items to ensure discussion of outreach to other cultures and communities in each of our 27 districts. In this way, each district can address how best to introduce Al-Anon for its own specific populations. A second change from our area was that our members visit meetings where a different language is spoken, and that a bilingual member help translate service messages and information from the DR.

We are also finding that that newcomers from other cultures hear the Lord's Prayer as Christian and think we are trying to convert them. You and I know this is not the intent, but that's what they hear. More of our groups are now closing with the Serenity Prayer.

Our action item was Diversity Day, which we held in April 1998 and April 1999. The initial question was, "How do we reach out to other cultures and communities?" The real question was, "Can I step out of my comfort zone, overcome my fears and anxieties, and extend my hand to help those from other cultures and communities?" We learned that meetings in one's native tongue are vital, as it is the language of the heart; that it is important to welcome non-English-speaking members personally, to honor and accept their differences, to be patient, and to love them unconditionally; and that the keys to success with any member who is "different" in some way (whether by culture, sexual orientation, physical disability, or anything else) is the extent to which the group is willing to support that member.

One example unfolded in Fremont, where there is a huge community of people from India. One of our members, who was born in India and speaks both Hindi and Punjabi, was willing to start a meet-

ing. Our group conscience was to make a one-year commitment to support the Indian meeting. Our groups convene at the same time and share the same facility, literature, and refreshments.

In order to attract new members, we distributed meeting flyers to the public libraries, the Indian grocery stores, and temples. An Indian television station aired our PSA in California and three neighboring states. We also went to the battered women's shelter and provided meeting flyers, district meeting lists, and Al-Anon literature. Members volunteered to drive women to and from the shelter. Some women from the shelter are from countries other than India, such as Iran, so we found a member who speaks Farsi. This is just one example of the outreach model we have underway.

In this example, the keys to success were our bilingual members and their home groups. Through them, we have found that outreach to other cultures and communities is not difficult—it just takes a little longer. As we in California North carry the message of hope and recovery to other communities, we remember that Al-Anon literature is available in 30 languages. We have lots of room to grow! ♥

### Cheryl C., Minnesota (S)

A lifetime of living with the effects of alcoholism left me a "jack of all trades" in dealing with the problems of others, but a "master of none" concerning my own well-being. I had advice for everyone else (whether they asked for it or not) and offered solutions for their every problem, but my days were filled with soul-numbing fear and dread. Al-Anon carried a message to me—a message that was carried with bright, sparkling eyes, laughter, and love. A simple message of hope broke through years of fear and isolation. Hope is our most precious message, as well as our primary purpose.

Early in recovery, I was excited to carry the message to others as suggested in Step Twelve. An airdrop of leaflets was my first plan. I settled for sneaking AA literature into my husband's bureau drawer and telling other people how to improve their lives using "my" program. This message had little appeal.

Then I heard a member suggest carrying the message "inside, rather than on a platter." So I tried to Let It Begin With Me. With this approach I have carried many messages in my years of meetings and service. Through the years I have learned (over and over again) that hope is not found in condemnation or control or judgment or criticism. These are tools of fear that only build trouble or feed sick spirits.

Carrying the message within our service structure has offered special challenges. Sometimes we are met with an attitude of "Shoot! The messenger!" or even "Shoot the messenger!" How I carry the message is as important as the message itself. The understanding, love and peace of my world service experience is a message I will carry with bright sparkling eyes, laughter, and love. ♥

### Deb R., Pennsylvania

Over the last few months, I gave a lot of thought to our Conference theme and even sat down on a few occasions to jot down some ideas, but nothing seemed to "carry the message" I wanted to deliver. The problem was my thinking that I alone needed to cover the topic thoroughly, address the problem, and come up with a solution in three minutes or less! I was trying to carry the message alone.

Carrying the message is never a sole effort. It takes all of us. Every member of this Conference, whether delivering a talk, sharing ideas or area concerns, or presenting information, has an important part in the overall message. Mine is but a small part of it.

I was reminded of the slogan "Together We Can Make It." I have often used our slogans and Steps to work through problems and "First Things First" came to mind. I gave thought to the fact that, in order to carry a message, I must first have a message. I remembered

my enthusiasm in the early days. I was anxious to tell anyone about how wonderful Al-Anon was for them! I diligently applied the Steps and slogans to other people's problems. Fortunately, I put away my soapbox after a time and began to look at my own situation. Minding my own business and focusing on myself became a way of life so much so that I failed to carry the message when I could have done so.

What message do I carry? I am fortunate that I began my recovery in a group where our primary purpose was never forgotten. Traditions were followed and service was not just suggested—it was expected and respected. The message that was carried to me was the simple, undiluted message that Al-Anon works. There is a great temptation at times to adapt our program to make it seem more appealing. I hope I always remember that Al-Anon, in its simplicity, is able to bridge differences and unite us in our common problem.

To whom do we carry the message? First to those who need to be aware of our fellowship. Their need is so great and our resources so limited that I, like many others, feel quite overwhelmed by the prospect. I feel frustrated at times by public outreach efforts. So often the work is being done by so few. Then I remember "Let It Begin With Me." I can't do it all, but I can make a difference. Without a great deal of effort, I can take back issues of the *Forum* and leave them in offices. I can take time to send a new meeting schedule to a professional in my community.

There are others who need our message as well. Our longtimers need to know that they are valued. Our trusted servants need to know that they are appreciated. Our staff needs to hear not only the problems, but also the successes, not only what went wrong, but also what went right. We can send a huge message of support and encouragement by contributing financially, letting Al-Anon know that what they are doing merits our support.

I can do none of this alone, but I can do my part. I have often wished for a magic wand that I could wave to bring excitement and enthusiasm in our fellowship for carrying the message. My Higher Power, in His great wisdom, has not given me a magic wand. Instead, I have been given an opportunity to participate in discussions, to address the problems, to look for solutions, and quite possibly, to be part of a greater renewal than a magic wand could ever produce. ♥

### **Dee R., Florida (N)**

I was in the program a few months when I heard that our group needed a group representative. Of course I volunteered, but so did someone else, and they elected her. I was disappointed and thought no one liked me. After all, I had always been in charge. I had a million projects going, and I was running them all. The solution was simple. I would just have to let them know who I was and what I could do. My sponsor said that I would have to make some decisions about my outside commitments and that my Higher Power would grant my heart's desire when He was ready. This was the beginning of a continual growth experience. I began to see that "doing" in the world and "serving" in Al-Anon were two different things, and I became willing to carry the Al-Anon message.

A year later, I was elected group representative and attended my first assembly. I had found my place in the world! I was busy telling my program friends how I would fix the assembly to make it more organized and effective; I also told them I would be a delegate someday. They just told me to keep coming back, and I did.

I wanted to be a district representative eventually. No problem—I let go of all of my outside commitments and stood for the position. Someone else was elected, and I was elected alternate. More waiting. However, that year I was asked to chair our third area convention and to be an area coordinator. This gave me even more oppor-

tunities to carry the recovery in service message of this wonderful lifetime fellowship.

Little did I know that carrying the message and doing service work would be the beginning of a changed attitude and life. I had done a couple of Fourth Steps, not too intense, but I had no idea of what was to come. All of my insecurities began to surface. I worried that I would not feel accepted. I worried that I would be kicked out of the program. I hid in my room at the hotel where our meetings were held. These three years were the turning point in my life. Eventually I found the self-confidence I needed and realized I had real friends with whom I shared a common purpose.

In the third year of being chairman, I lost my husband, Rog, to cancer. I remember that the memorial service was on a Tuesday and that the area world service committee meeting was the following weekend. I needed to be there, not because I was the only one that could chair the meeting, but because I needed the strength and hugs of all of the people I had come to love so much. I was overwhelmed by their unconditional love and trust. It was at this time that I learned that no one of us is in charge. God is, and continues to be, my ultimate authority.

My service sponsor encouraged me to ask my Higher Power what He would have me do in service and to seek His continued guidance. I learned the value of leadership. I learned the value of other members, the voice of the minority, the voice of the fellowship. I carried the message and incorporated the Twelve Concepts into my service and personal life.

Over the next three years, I thought of nothing but being delegate to the point where I felt guilty. I was confused about the voice I was hearing in my head. I learned later that it was indeed my Higher Power preparing me to carry the Al-Anon message for a lifetime. I remember asking Him if I was really supposed to do this, if this was His will for my life. I asked Him to help me feel His presence and peace in making the decision. Today I can say that He gave me the desire of my heart. He and this wonderful fellowship knew I was going to carry the Al-Anon message as my area's delegate.

In closing, I need to remember there has been both joy and pain in carrying the message. Today I have a purpose in my life. My son and I share honestly. My friends and co-workers trust and respect me. Most of all I know that I am lovable, and I know that God loves me just the way I am. Today I try to remember to dance like nobody's watching and love like it's never going to hurt. ♥

### **Dorena S., Illinois (N)**

My first attempt at Al-Anon did not work. The friend who suggested I go to a meeting had a husband who was drinking, drugging, and jobless. My situation was different—or so I thought at the time. I had the American dream. I lived in a prestigious neighborhood, had a large two-story home, a beautiful baby girl, three lovely stepchildren, and a hard-working husband. I did not realize that my husband's drinking was causing problems until a drinking episode got us to a marriage counselor. The counselor disregarded the drinking telling us we each needed to give 80% to the marriage, and it would improve. It didn't.

I couldn't figure out what I was doing wrong. I had gone through my own personal therapy, returned to school, and earned a Masters degree in social work. I thought I knew the answers or would be able to find the right answers but to no avail. Then, in 1980, a friend attended an alcoholism workshop and talked to a recovering alcoholic about my husband. I ended up talking to this complete stranger by phone and wondered why he knew my husband so well when he had never met him. I was told to go to Al-Anon. This was not easy. My husband was a professional, and I thought I might jeopardize his career. I went anyway.

## *From the Heart*

Upon returning to Al-Anon, I realized I was a person who thought I could cure and rescue, but had gone insane in the process. I struggled, cried, got mad, and slammed doors believing this was all caused by someone else. It was. It was caused by someone else's drinking. Al-Anon gave me all that I had lacked. I made an immediate connection with the program and people. They told me how Al-Anon had helped them to understand their situation and that their husbands eventually had quit drinking. This gave me hope. The one piece missing was the spiritual awakening. Al-Anon saved my life, but it did not save my marriage. It did, however, give me courage to make decisions.

When I no longer lived with active alcoholism, I asked myself if I still needed Al-Anon. I got my answer when my Higher Power and an Al-Anon friend got me to an assembly. I was a district representative at the time. The area chair had to step down, and some of the members encouraged me to run for the position. I had served on an RSS committee and had gained some confidence. I never dreamed I would be elected. The area panel made me feel accepted, needed, and that I had something to contribute. I was able to see how the principles of the program work at the service level, and I got into high gear. Concept Four became my favorite as I saw the participation and harmony working.

In June of 1996, when serving as alternate delegate, I stopped by the new headquarters in Virginia Beach with the friend who had invited me to my first meeting. I never dreamed I would be elected delegate that fall or that I would attend my first Conference the following spring. My Higher Power had to be working in my life for all this to have happened. Al-Anon's message is love and growth. At least, that is the way it has worked in my life—One Day at a Time. ♥

### **Geri H., Michigan**

When I think about our theme for this Conference, I think about the Twelfth Step: "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

Al-Anon had taught me about unconditional love by the time I finished my first attempt at working the Steps. At an open talk one evening, I remember saying, "You will never get me to stand up in front of all these people and share my story!" Within a couple of years, I was standing up in front of that same group telling my story and I heard myself say, "There is nothing that I could do for Al-Anon that would ever be enough to show my gratitude for the changes this program has brought into my life." The path that I have been on from that day to this has been inspiring.

There is virtually no part of my life—or of me—that is the same as when I started this program fifteen years ago. For this I am eternally grateful to Al-Anon. I have found a God of my understanding and a path of recovery for which I am blessed. The only way that I know to try to repay Al-Anon is to carry the message to others and practice the principles in all my affairs.

I have held many service positions during my Al-Anon years. My first position was as intergroup information service representative. Twelve years later, I became the delegate for Michigan, having held many other positions along the way. These activities helped to turn my life around and heaped many blessings on me and my family. The slogan "Let It Begin With Me" is my guideline, and I find it hard to say no when I am asked to speak or to carry the message.

Recently I learned a lesson in carrying the message through service. I was convinced we were holding too many Saturday programs, and that if we combined three of those events, we would improve turnout. I had my work cut out for me! I had to convince the area world service committee that it was a good idea (and, of course,

there were several people there who really didn't like change much). I kept talking about having an area regional service seminar (RSS), but we had very few district representatives who even knew what an RSS was. I found some supporters, and we just kept talking to others. We came up with ideas and threw a proposal together. It came time for the vote, and it was close but we won! My idea was going to become a reality! Of course I had very definite opinions on how the project should be carried out.

Then came my lessons in humility. First I discovered that another DR had thought of the same thing several years earlier (not my idea?). Second they had the nerve to change my format (not my plan?). Then they decided to call it Fall Rally—not my tag line! I went to the committee, trying to emphasize my ideas, of course. At one meeting, my service sponsor actually tried to kick me off the committee!

They didn't want to do it my way! I was learning to Let Go And Let God all over again. Principles Above Personalities all over again. How Important Is It? all over again. So I began to Let Go and Let God control the committee work on the Fall Rally. I stayed out of the way, and everything turned out great.

Service has taught me that this is a "we program" and that anything we start, God finishes, if we let Him. In Al-Anon, it seems like things always end up exactly the way they are supposed to. That's why I love this program! ♥

### **Janine L. (presented by Anne H.), Rhode Island**

Thirteen years ago, I heard a woman speak about Al-Anon. Her message was hope—that I was not responsible for the drinking and that with the help of Al-Anon, I could begin to focus on my health and recovery. Desperate, lonely, and ashamed, I was willing to try anything. And so my journey to wellness began.

I became involved in service at the suggestion of my sponsor. It has become a vital part of my recovery. I wanted to give back what I had recovered and part of that was myself. I began making commitments to other groups, especially institutions. I started attending Step meetings, workshops, and conventions. One of my greatest joys was beginners meetings, because I remembered how I felt as a beginner. Someone was there for me with love, hugs, encouragement, and most of all, hope. Carrying the message has been one of the greatest rewards Al-Anon has given me. I was able to do this by first discovering who I was and through the Steps, I began to learn who I really was.

As I began taking different service positions, I began to see that Al-Anon was more than just attending meetings. I remember attending a convention in Massachusetts, listening to the delegate give a brief report on the World Service Conference (WSC), and whispering to my sponsor, "I wonder if someday that will be me." Three years later, I was standing at an assembly giving my report on WSC.

Being a delegate has had its ups and downs. Our area has not been very strong in filling positions, and there were some conflicts. I would read the Twelve Concepts of Service and ask my Higher Power for guidance. When I felt defeated I would often receive a call from Mary, trustee-at-large, who would say, "If you accomplish one goal during your term as delegate, then your job was well done." Today I know that I do not have to do it alone, all I have to do is ask for help. Words of encouragement that were given to me are what I try to pass along today.

At our area meeting we voted for a weekend conference to be held in the year 2000. We also have a new Alateen Coordinator and assistant whose goals are to strengthen Alateen groups and have Alateen sponsor meetings, two things that have never been done in our area before. When someone came forward for the PI Coordinator position, I was filled with joy. This person has been instrumental in get-

ting our PSA on six radio stations and two television stations. She also did a television interview that has been running once a week for several months.

This is the way it works, thanks to all of you and your Al-Anon love. ♥

## Keo O., Kansas

I was introduced to Al-Anon by two Al-Anon members at an open AA meeting. As I continued attending meetings, they asked me to lead meetings and also to visit a newcomer with them. Later, when the assembly was in a nearby town, they asked me to go along. These examples of service, along with helping me change my attitude, set the stage for my service in Al-Anon. They demonstrated what it means to carry the message—our primary purpose.

Today I feel both spiritually and morally bound to continue carrying the Al-Anon message because the Al-Anon way of living is how I choose to meet situations most of the time. Our literature is one way to carry the message. I noticed that in our earlier literature, carrying the message is not even a topic. In later books, however, many pages refer to this topic. It is even in the literature of Alateen.

How do I carry the Al-Anon message today? I take turns at leading beginners and regular meetings, I help with a meeting at the jail, I listen to a neighbor, I contribute financially at all levels. As a delegate, I carry the message by attending various district meetings and leading Concept workshops, carrying the seed to the ground for planting and sometimes even placing it in the ground. I realize today that I can't pull on the plant to make it grow, the same as I can't make a person continue to come to meetings or take part in them.

My Higher Power countered my powerlessness with a message of hope while I was attending the first World Service Conference in Virginia Beach. I was walking along the shore under a cloud-covered sky. Some light rays came through, and I thought of all the Al-Anons in Kansas. As I continued to gaze at the sky, more rays of light came through the clouds, and I thought of how worldwide Al-Anon shines on so many troubled lives in all parts of the world. I looked at the ocean of waves and thought of the spiritual power underlying all of Al-Anon.

We are blessed to be a blessing. We have been blessed to be a part of Al-Anon. Now we can be a blessing by carrying the message of hope through Al-Anon. ♥

## LaVaughn R., New York (N)

I am here to tell you that I fretted and fussed for hours, days, weeks, and months about what I would be saying today, no doubt giving Susan A. the proverbial heebie-jeebies with my problematic procrastination. I wanted to leave you with something both pithy and profound, something that would rank with the eternal verities, but I've been around the program long enough to eventually notice when my rampant perfectionism is showing.

The slogan "Keep It Simple" finally came to my rescue, and I decided to share candidly how I carry the message. I generally do it with humor following the precept "to thine own self be true." Since I work in a jail and am in frequent contact with alcoholic inmates, I carry the message by leaving a supply of meeting schedules, pamphlets, and copies of *The Forum* in the reception area, where many potential Al-Anons enter. I recently placed the Tornado display in there, and the stack of brochures is depleting rapidly.

Because I work with mental health professionals, I make every effort to provide them with meeting schedules and assorted public outreach pamphlets. I've also been pleased to make them aware of Al-Anon's presence on the worldwide web. Social workers and psy-

chologists have found the article "Assessing Your Client's Progress" of great benefit, and I have printed portions of *Al-Anon Speaks Out* on many occasions.

Every article I've ever written for our area newsletter ends with the message that "Service Heals, Too!" which has become my personal mantra. Group representatives and district representatives have been witnesses to my growth and now know that if I can do it, they can do it, because You Don't Have To Be Perfect—Just Willing.

I've always had a special appreciation for a point made in our literature: that the word "enthusiasm" translates to mean "God within." When I remember to bring my light out from under the bushel and encourage others to share theirs, too, how our Higher Power shines forth as we carry the message! ♥

## Lee T., Maryland/DC

Today I can say I am blessed but it didn't seem that way twenty years ago when I came to my first meeting. There were no broken bones, but a broken spirit—no bruises you could see, thanks to make-up, but definitely a broken heart.

The Higher Power guided me to a sponsor who was active in service, and her best friend was a former delegate. Carrying the message at that time meant following them around and doing what I was told. Usually this meant acting in a skit, playing the role of newcomer, at a school or probation seminar. There I would tell them how I plotted my husband's death.

There were times when I rebelled and said I didn't want to do service, and my sponsor would tell me, "Practice saying no to the alcoholic, not to carrying the message." I realized as I shared at schools and colleges that I did have something worthwhile to offer. Self-esteem began to find a place within me. I got an emotional high seeing the recognition in their eyes when they identified with something I'd said. A good friend would call after I chaired, just to hear my excitement.

Nine years ago, I was in my office when an Al-Anon friend stopped by. While she was there, my sister came in and said, "You're always helping someone. Now your daughter is in trouble. She has been raped." My friend drove me to the hospital (I had enough sense to go with her, and not my sister). There are no coincidences. Al-Anon service takes many directions.

When I look back, I realize that some of the hardest times in my home were when I had an Al-Anon commitment that took me away from home. There are no coincidences. I went from someone who never drove at night—and avoided bridges and beltways—to a person who helped drive to Niagara Falls for a service seminar. I have now driven twice to this Conference by myself.

I believe that service helped restore me to sanity. Al-Anon has given me a Higher Power that I recognize, confidence in myself, a sense of humor (After all the chicken that was served my first Conference, I found myself telling Ric B. that I was going to go and pluck my legs). When I came to my first Conference as a delegate, I was overwhelmed and felt lost and homesick. But when I stepped into the Group Services Committee, it all fell into place. The importance of the worldwide connection was being pulled together in unity. I felt a passion I didn't know I still had.

With the help of my Higher Power, my primary purpose is to carry the Al-Anon message wherever I feel I can do it best. When I'm asked what I'm going to do next, I respond, "Wherever I can be of service." Why? Because you have given me a life that is filled with joy and sometimes tears. I am willing to share it wherever you want me. There are two things I will fight for, my God and Al-Anon.

God bless! ♥

**Lise M., Quebec (W)**

I was born in a family where alcohol was always present. My father, his father, and some of my uncles drank. Their behavior disturbed a great part of my childhood, my teenage years, and also my adult life.

In 1959, on a warm and colorful evening, I married the man I loved convinced he would never again touch another drop of alcohol. My day-by-day love, caring, and support would without a doubt produce a miracle. Boy, was I far from reality!

My husband kept on drinking despite my doing every possible thing to make him stop. Then in 1966, we were invited to the opening of a new AA group. We had never heard about AA before, but we accepted the invitation. My "yes" contained the hope that I would learn the way to make my husband stop drinking. I found something much more important, answers to most of my questions about alcoholism.

AA ended up bringing sobriety to my husband. I was so grateful I felt ready to tell the world about the miracles of AA. But my Higher Power directed my actions and attention somewhere else. A new friend told me how Al-Anon had changed her life. I asked her if I could read some of her literature, and she even invited me to accompany her to a meeting. That's how I came to Al-Anon. Every day thousands of members can carry the Al-Anon message all over the world just like that friend did.

A few weeks after my first meeting, four women (of whom I was one) opened an English-speaking group in our small Quebec town. Every week we met and worked the program the best we could. I knew right from my first months in Al-Anon that I had found my place. I began slowly but surely to regain faith in myself even though things didn't always go the way I wanted.

I attended French-speaking meetings and found out that in our French province, Al-Anon was well-represented by a large number of groups and by the quality and quantity of French literature.

Soon after I came to Al-Anon, I was constantly preoccupied by the fact that there were, like me, many people who could benefit from the Al-Anon program and wondered how I could do my part to help. My sponsor suggested that I could help others by doing little but important things like placing chairs, making coffee, welcoming members at the meeting. I did all these little actions and you know what? Members thanked me and said I was a responsible member. They made me feel important. What a great feeling, something I hadn't felt for a long time.

Later I began distributing literature in public places and driving members to meetings when they had no means of transportation. With my sponsor and other members, we held Al-Anon/Alateen information sessions in schools, libraries, health and medical centers. Through the years I have become more and more involved in service. I accepted the position of Public Information coordinator at the district level. The benefits I got from these involvements were always much more gratifying than what I could have imagined. My term as delegate will be over soon, but my commitment to Al-Anon will not. I will continue to carry the message any way my Higher Power wants.

Almost fifty years ago, Lois W. and Anne B. laid out a path for me and thousands of others. I need Al-Anon, and Al-Anon needs me to continue our co-founders' work. I will keep on doing my small part to help our fellowship grow by using the many tools suggested in our program. ♥

**Lyn D., Tennessee**

I am an enthusiastic and grateful member of this worldwide fellowship. I am a member in good standing of the Merry-Go-Round

Chattanooga group, and my area sends you the message of Tennessee love.

As I was praying about this talk, I thought back to many years ago when I had the privilege of frequent correspondence with our co-founders. In one letter I told Lois that my husband had been offered a job transfer across the country. Lois's reply to me was, "Oh Lyn, what an adventure you will have." I also remembered that story Lois told about a shoe flying across the room. If Lois had not reacted, I wonder what message we would be hearing today.

When I was new in Al-Anon I was incapable of carrying any message other than rage, but members just like you carried the message of acceptance to me. I was afraid to stay and afraid to drop out. For some reason I thought if I dropped out of Al-Anon "they" would kick "him" out of the other program. It kept me coming back week after week.

As I slowly progressed, I was able to hear and feel more. The messages of hope, courage, surrender, and love were beginning to live within me. My journey since has been filled with carrying the message, our primary purpose, in various ways: in the workplace, in my community, in my group, my district, and my area. As a delegate, I have carried the message from Tennessee to the World Service Conference and from the World Service Conference back to my area. Being a trusted servant has been an unforgettable opportunity for me.

At my first Conference the theme was communication. When I confessed how scared I was, you said it was okay to be scared, that I would learn to enjoy it. My second year the theme was inventory. Again the more I learned about it, the better I got. Today, as I attend my third and final Conference, I share this message. Now that I am finishing my term as delegate, I finally know how to be one!

I keep thinking back to Lois saying, "Oh Lyn, what an adventure you will have." I wish I could tell her now, "Oh Lois, what an adventure this has been." Thank you, thank you for this adventure. I love you. ♥

**Lynda E., Ohio**

I am truly grateful that our primary purpose is to carry the message. The first time I heard about Al-Anon was in 1981. There was a little nine-year-old neighbor girl who wanted to come over and play with my twin boys. During one of her visits, she explained her father was in AA, her mother was in Al-Anon, and she thought it could help me too.

Shortly after this, I saw a PSA on television. I called the number and got a contact name, which was the little girl's mother! I read some Al-Anon books and went to my first Al-Anon meeting where I was given a temporary sponsor who pointed me to service right from the beginning. She had me cleaning ashtrays, putting chairs back, and making coffee by the third meeting. Like many people, I got a little overly zealous about carrying the message, believing wholeheartedly that it could help everyone I knew. I don't think they appreciated my efforts.

I have always loved doing service. It makes me feel a part of a much bigger family than I had thought. It filled such a void in my life—a void I hadn't even recognized beforehand. If it had not been for the little neighbor and the others willing to carry the message, I might not be a member of this worldwide family today. That is why I have taken hold of so many opportunities over the years to return the favor—from staffing a health fair booth to being interviewed on television. In the process I have discovered that the best way for me personally to carry the message is to practice the Al-Anon principles in all my affairs. ♥



### **Mary T., Indiana**

There are many and varied ways of carrying the message. We can work through our AISs, leave literature at schools, doctors' offices, dental offices, putting books in libraries, and get our professional communities involved.

One of the best ways of carrying the message is by being a good example of what Al-Anon has done in our lives and being willing to do whatever it takes to get the word out and to do it with enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is one of the greatest assets we can have, to suit up and show up with a smile on our faces and do whatever it requires in a way that projects our attitude toward recovery in a positive way. We need to attract people and have them wanting what we have. If we always have a long face and nothing to smile about, we certainly are not carrying a message of hope. It's serious business, but we need to have fun along the way too.

It not only takes a lot of enthusiasm but dedication to all phases of the program in order to attract newcomers and share our experience, strength, and hope with them. I'm afraid if we don't take on the responsibility for carrying the message at all levels of service, we may end up with a very diluted program. I want it to be available for everyone who needs it.

Al-Anon became a way of life for me, and I don't want to lose it. It took a lot of hard work on a daily basis, but we had fun in the process. That is one of the best ways to attract people and have them wanting what we have. I know it isn't always easy to put our best foot forward, but when I make the effort, it always pays off, for me most of all.

I try to encourage everyone to go to our activities because attending always seems to increase their interest in taking part in more. This way they can really see the program in action and be more willing to pass it on and to go the extra mile to do so. Let's keep the enthusiasm flowing! Thanks. ♥

### **Ruth H., Ontario (S)**

It never occurred to me many 24-hours back when I was first introduced to service that my journey would lead to standing before you today representing Ontario (South). I can remember first looking at the links of service and finding them amazing. What did each position mean? What work was involved? How could someone become involved in all those areas?

I have been on a similarly amazing journey with my Higher Power growing more confident, more willing to share the message, to give love, and receive it. It was all you shared that helped me through one of the worst crises of my life. My marriage of twenty-five years had ended. I was devastated and powerless. I was district representative at the time, and I wanted to step down. But Al-Anon members wrapped me and my daughter in a blanket of love, sharing their strength and courage. They helped us move on.

Service gave me opportunities to share how program made all the difference. I became the Alateen Coordinator, which was a tremendous learning opportunity. Teens have an ability to share love. They give marvelous hugs and talk about their feelings, even emotional pain. They gave me one of the most special times of my life.

My amazing Higher Power has been with me every step of my journey and when the time came for me to grow some more in this fellowship, He gave me the courage to let my name stand for delegate (never thinking for one moment that I would be elected). Each time I go to my home group meeting, give a report, or speak in front of an Al-Anon group, I am sharing and passing on the message of hope that can be found in these rooms.

This is my last Conference, but I know my journey is not finished. There will be more surprises and positions to be filled. I thank all of

you here today for the opportunity to share the message of this beautiful fellowship through service. ♥

### **Sherri A., Texas (W)**

As I stand here today, it's hard to believe I'm in my tenth year as a member of this worldwide fellowship. In February 1989, I was full of despair, fear, and anger. My life was limited. Today I celebrate my life and its endless possibilities.

I walked into my first meeting looking for information. I felt comfortable for the first time in a long time, and I found something in the meeting necessary for recovery—hope. It was about a year later that I realized Al-Anon extended beyond that one meeting. There were other meetings in town and in the surrounding area. I also realized that our meeting place was available every week where the same people came and shared their experience, strength, and hope. Someone came early to turn on the lights and make coffee, and there was always literature available for sale. It became quite clear that all of this didn't just happen.

Eventually I realized that I was becoming a new person. My life was changing. And then the awareness—people just like me, all around the world—were also working this program of recovery. It was then that I made the commitment to carry the message. I became willing to do whatever I could to ensure that Al-Anon would continue to exist the way that Lois and Anne had intended. Little did I know that decision would change my life forever.

As we move toward the new millennium, Al-Anon's primary purpose is still the same: to help families of alcoholics. I have held several service positions within the fellowship, but none are more important than being a member who welcomes a newcomer and offers the hope of recovery. Thank you Al-Anon, for giving me that opportunity. ♥

### **Susan N., Delaware**

When I think of carrying the message, I think first of the part of the program that has been most difficult for me, which is carrying the message outside the fellowship. However, as I think more about the topic, I think about my journey as a group representative and as a delegate, where I was relaying information inside the fellowship.

As group representative, I attended district and area meetings and brought information back to my group. I also brought the concerns of my group to the district level. As a delegate, I report at the area assembly after this Conference, and I also report throughout the year, as I attend district meetings. This is easy to do in my small state with only a few districts, and the delegate reports at all district meetings. Generally there are questions raised that I can either answer on the spot or I can research and get back to the person with an answer.

This brings me to our primary purpose which, according to Tradition Five, is to help families of alcoholics. While communication within the fellowship is of great importance, I also need to focus on Step Twelve.

When I was new in the program, I heard that one way to carry the message was to share in meetings and that I could also carry the message by practicing these principles in my everyday life. For quite some time I operated along that principle, concentrating on reflecting Al-Anon in my behavior. I was quite relieved that I did not have to go out and actively "preach" the message because that implied to me that I would be trying to convert someone to a different way of thinking, and I certainly wasn't ready to do that.

I started my journey in carrying the message outside the program by becoming actively involved in our district's phone service. My contribution has been partly along technical lines, as I set up the voice mail and recorded messages. Then I started returning people's

## *From the Heart*

calls, finding it very rewarding—and not nearly as difficult as I had feared. At this point I was still not trying to influence anyone else's thinking—I was just responding to requests for information. The journey continues as my district gathers steam toward carrying the message outside the program. We are now targeting wellness centers in local high schools and trying (not very successfully at the moment) to get an Alateen meeting started. I think that may be my next involvement—not necessarily making the personal contacts, but more as a coordinator. However, my Higher Power has a way of ignoring my plans and implementing His own. The fact that I'm standing here today is proof of that! ♥

### **Wendy G., Kentucky**

I remember being awestruck by the eloquent sharings of the previous delegates, and I wondered how I could possibly compare in sharing with all of you today. Then came God's gentle reminder about the theme for this year's Conference, and I realized that, for me, carrying the message is when my heart speaks to yours.

Carrying the message when I was growing up meant yelling and hurting people as deeply as possible with words, that there always had to be a winner, and that the winner would never be you. The other message I learned was that things never were as they looked or felt, but if there was a smile (regardless of what I really thought or felt), things were fine.

When I came into Al-Anon, I was beaten emotionally. I was angry and frightened. In spite of how hard I had tried, how good I had looked, or how many feelings I had stuffed, I had grown up only to find alcoholism in my home once again. I will never really understand how the message was carried to me that first meeting, that I no longer had to fight the battles, that I was safe and welcome no matter what I did or felt.

The terror I felt as those days unfolded was beyond my wildest nightmare. I had never really learned to face what was real (let alone accept it). I had lived my life in a land called Denial—a land where all looked good and well to those around me, while I was slowly unraveling on the inside. Suddenly I was in a room full of people telling me I had no power at all. They were telling me I could control nothing—that that the alcoholic was a sick person doing terrible things, not a terrible person.

As my meetings continued and "One Day at a Time" turned into 11 years last January, I became more able to understand and hear the message that is carried by this fellowship and by people like you in rooms like these. The message I am able to hear in Al-Anon today is a message of hope, a message of courage and wisdom that I never thought I could have, a message that gives me the strength to handle the realities of my day.

Al-Anon is a new way of life. How many times I have heard that, and I am better able to see it today. I am overwhelmed with all that has been given to me without conditions or strings or having to prove to you that I am worthy of anything. You gave freely and quickly because often your eyes could read the words written on my heart, the words I could not speak.

It is the message of responsibility that I bring with me to this Conference—my last time. Thank you for teaching me the responsibility of serving in our fellowship. I have learned that I do not have the answers or know what is best for everyone else, that as we come together with open hearts and minds, our Higher Power will direct our decisions, and our choices will become clear. That does not mean they will be without pain or fear, but knowing that my Higher Power speaks to my heart through all of your words, I am reassured.

How can I ever give back all you have given to me? I have a life

with love and joy, sometimes sorrow and pain, and wonderful friends to walk with me through those times. I don't have to be so fearful of the next moment or so regretful over the past. And when I find those old feelings of hoping I look okay on the outside while I'm dying on the inside, you hold out your hands to remind me of all this program can do to help me. And when I can't believe, you believe for me.

Thank you again for allowing me to carry the tremendous message this program has given me to share. There is hope for me today. I love you. ♥

### **Willie W., California (S)**

Most of us come to Al-Anon badly distraught and full of despair. After we are here for awhile, we discover a sense of self and a purpose for being. Then we search our hearts for ways to give back. This may come in the way of personal sponsorship, helping down at your local information center, working with newcomers, even getting refreshments for the meeting. I found that my purpose and keenest sense of gratitude comes from carrying the message.

As an individual I get to carry the message by practicing these principles in all my affairs, whether I am at work, home, or in the community. You have taught me that when I am good example of Al-Anon, I am being the best person I can be.

As a group member I get to carry the message by being active. I also happen to think that my home group is the best in the world. I hope you feel the same about yours. I get to carry the message by participating in my group activities and business meetings. That means setting up chairs if necessary, helping with coffee, reaching out to newcomers, or holding one of the offices. I also feel responsible to assure that the Traditions are followed.

As group representative I got to carry the message to the district meeting. I got to attend the area assembly and committee meeting. I was very happy to report the information I received at those meetings back to my group. I would also carry issues with which our group needed additional experience, strength, and hope.

As an Alateen Coordinator, I got to carry the message by being a conduit for the area in reference to Alateen issues. I was able to share on behalf of Alateen at district and local meetings. I was able to carry the message to schools, groups, probation facilities, Alateen conferences, fund-raisers, and campouts.

As the Alateen sponsor at the 1995 AA International Convention, we were able to carry the message to more than 800 Alateens from all over the world. What a great experience. Though several of the kids spoke different languages, their problems, hearts, and situations were the same.

As a delegate I am able to carry the message from my area to the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon. I get to share my experience, strength, and hope with all of you at Conference. What makes this experience unique is that each year I am here, a third of you come and a third of you leave. I remember greeting some of you when you first arrived. I remember crying and feeling sad when some of you left.

Now it's my time to leave. I may leave with my body, but my heart and spirit and love will always be with you. Being with you has been one of the best experiences of my life. As I said before, I came here a scared little boy who felt he was a mistake who only knew how to make mistakes. However you showed me that my opinions do matter and for that, I will be forever grateful. I am sad, but I know that all good things must come to an end, and I must give someone else a chance to enjoy this wonderful experience. The friendships I have made here will last my lifetime. ♥



## OVERSEAS REPRESENTATIVES

Every year, all structures outside the US and Canada are invited to send a representative to the WSC (to have voice but not vote). Never before have four structures accepted! The Conference shared with, and learned from, these trusted servants from the UK and Eire, France, Italy, and Mexico.

### Annie M., France

I am a grateful Al-Anon member and I chair the Board of Trustees for Al-Anon France. I thank the Board with all my heart for having put their faith in me for this first participation of France in a World Service Conference. They are expecting a lot from it. And I thank the World Service Office for their belief that our participation can help overseas structures to grow.

My home group is in the Paris area—a very small but nice group that meets on Thursday evenings. I feel very honored to carry the message of love from them—and from all Al-Anon France—to the people of this Conference. Some French-speaking Belgians and friends asked me to add their greetings as well.

As the Conference nears its end, I can already report that I am deeply moved by the warm welcome I have received. I've learned so many useful things that it will take me time to put the puzzle together. All I know right now is that I am carrying treasure back to France.

Last Sunday when we visited Stepping Stones, I revisited a part of my own past. My husband and I were homeless back in the days when we had three small children. I tried to put myself in Lois' shoes, imagining the feelings I would have had seeing such a beautiful house. Thank you for giving the opportunity to visit this place all together on such a lovely day. I feel fine and at peace with myself today and have the privilege of sharing a few additional words with you concerning my personal story.

I came to Al-Anon 18 years ago, pushed by my husband Andre, who had just stopped drinking and found AA. It took us both some time to really step into the program, but it was a wonderful start for us and our four children. We had spent 19 years with alcohol, experiencing very few high points and a lot of very deep lows.

My story in service started with attending all possible events and participating in the creation of my region, Ile de France, and the formation of two groups. In 1996, I became a trustee. In 1997, when I took over the job of chairing the Board, Renee had just become our Executive Director. Maybe some of you remember her as a speaker in the "language of love" at the International Convention in Salt Lake City. By April 1997, there were six trustees only, our sole committee was for Conference, and the *Service Manual* was unknown to us.

We first studied the *Manual* and tried to find out how it applied to us. Maybe Marsha can remember all the awkward questions we asked at that time.

We started playing the flute and the dancers came. We opened the doors and windows opened. Great people stepped in to help us.

We got in touch with our neighbors—Belgium, Switzerland, UK, Spain, Italy, and Germany—and we learned a lot from them. I had the privilege of attending the German Conference in 1998 and the contact was great despite the very different language. Sheila and others were guests at our recent Conference. And it will continue so...

Today, just after our Conference, the picture is that we are now eleven trustees; we have four permanent committees and two special committees; and the *Service Manual* is thoroughly known to us. We urgently need a new location for our GSO (if you visited us in Paris now, you would immediately pass a special basket for us!). Also needed are committees for our newsletter and for the worldwide web. One



day at a time, we will play the flute again to find some more dancers.

I am proud to say that we are in a very positive expansion. After thirty-seven years since our founding in 1962, we number 200 groups, including Alateen and one just-born group for adult children. My hope is that when somebody from France next attends WSC, that person can report that we have expanded again. Not because Al-Anon is a statistical challenge, but because it would mean that the message has been carried to more of those who still suffer. Maybe at that time, we in Al-Anon France will be able to reward the WSC for all we got from it—to be able to personify that we do our best, you help us, our Higher Power will take care of us, and bless our worldwide unity.

### Mariella S., Italy

Dear friends, I am a relative of an alcoholic, and am now serving as second IAGSM delegate. Our Board of Trustees asked me to represent Italy at this Conference, and I am grateful to them for giving me this privilege.

First of all, I would like to thank WSO on behalf of our structure for inviting us to attend this World Service Conference. It is a great opportunity for sharing experience, strength, and hope. I extend to you all the greetings of the Italian Al-Anon Board of Trustees, GSO, and Committees. I hope our Higher Power and our open minds will guide this Conference for the benefit of Al-Anon as a whole.

I am happy to be here and confident that my Higher Power will enable me to learn and report back to the Fifth Meeting of Italian Delegates, which will start just when this Conference ends.

When I first came to Al-Anon, I was 22 years old. I could hardly eat. My physical condition was really bad. From a psychological point of view, the situation was not better. I remember I started crying when I finished working and kept crying until the following morning. I only felt serene when I thought of death. To me that was a comforting thing at that time. I began to learn about Al-Anon and I started recovering. It wasn't an easy task, though. My relative continued to drink for five more years but I kept coming back and attending meetings three times a week. I became involved in service when my relative was still actively drinking. I learned to apply detachment with love and put principles above personalities. It became clear to me that one of my responsibilities was to carry the message by being an active Al-Anon member. I learned the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service. I didn't stop being involved in service. I was group secretary, group representative, treasurer, district representative, and IAGSM delegate. I regularly attended public outreach meetings.

It's because of you I feel there's fellowship which allowed me to start to recover and become a serene person. I have gratitude for the Al-Anon member who carried the message to my doctor.

Here are some notes concerning Italy's structure. The Italian fellowship started in 1976 in Rome. It was three years before the second group was formed, also in Rome. In 1980, the Italian fellowship



## From the Heart

was registered as a non-profit organization and, in 1982, in order to improve sharings with other structures, an Italian delegate was sent to WSO in New York. The following year, the structure experienced growth problems, and our first committee was established. The Italian Al-Anon fellowship kept growing; other committees were set up, and a bimonthly magazine entitled *Incontro*—which means “meeting”—was produced in 1988.

As our number of groups continued to increase, the organizational structure showed signs of inadequacy. A structure committee was formed in 1990 to study a new statute as well as a new structure. Al-Anon members involved in this activity carried out a great job: apart from the real technical work, they had to face long and tiresome discussions with some members who felt that “Keep It Simple” meant nothing had to be changed.

In 1993, on the basis of the structure committee’s work, groups were given some new ideas. All the papers were read and discussed at district meetings.

Meanwhile, the offices of the Italian Al-Anon Fellowship had been relocated from Rome to Milan and a telephone service devoted to Twelfth Step work was established. In May 1995, our first National Conference took place, and, in June, a national newsletter was published under the title, *Mi Informo*, which means “I Get Informed.” Later that year, it was necessary to call an extraordinary National Conference in order to comply with procedural problems that had occurred during the first Conference. Although we encountered difficulties, the path toward the new structure had started, and growth continued.

At our fourth National Conference last year, we adopted the *Al-Anon/Alateen World Service Manual*, wholly translated into Italian. Our Board of Trustees and GSO have been cooperating in order to improve communications with the several sections of the structure. We continue to share with WSO, as well as with other European and overseas structures, which helps us evaluate links of the structure that are still missing, as well as improve and strengthen our current pattern.

With the primary purpose of carrying the message to those who still suffer from the effects of someone else’s problem drinking, many activities are underway. We participate in local and national events and promote the presence of Al-Anon/Alateen members in both hospitals and schools. We were recently able to have some Al-Anon/Alateen members participate in one of our public national television programs. The President of the Republic welcomed us in a meeting that took place at the end of February.

A widespread activity is being coordinated in the areas to display Conference Approved Literature at post offices and the shops of chemists (pharmacies). We are also organizing some activities in working environments and have recently been in touch with Italy’s three most important labour unions.

In the field of institutions, special emphasis is placed on legislation for young people. We have to raise our knowledge in order to provide a secure and safe environment for young people and protect as much as we can Alateen members, Alateen sponsors, the Board of Trustees, and our fellowship’s name. We work hard to maintain contacts that help make Al-Anon/Alateen a well-known resource for families and friends of alcoholics.

Lastly, we will celebrate our 25th Anniversary in 2001. Our Conference made a decision that the celebration will take place in southern Italy where we have a very few groups. It will be a big financial commitment for our structure, but it is also our commitment to make Al-Anon available to those in need. Once again, I thank the WSO for carrying the message to Italy.

I thank you all for listening, and I do hope I can see you somewhere in Italy in the near future. I love you all.

## Marilú C., Mexico



I am a miracle of survival through the alcoholism. I grew up knowing all the terrible consequences of living in a home with alcoholism. When I came to Al-Anon, my life changed. I got self-esteem by practicing the Twelve Steps in association with meetings, sponsorship, sharing with others, reading CAL, and the blessed service. I also got love, trust in God, and more.

How was this? I was involved in service right from the beginning. A year after my work as a delegate to the National Service Conference, I was invited to participate as a volunteer on the Executive Committee. Three months later, the Board of Trustees was restructured, and I was invited to work as Trustee Treasurer on the Budget Committee. I was not the only new member: the Executive Director and the Accountant had begun three years earlier.

We started with a budget of \$3,000.00 (US)—scarcely sufficient to pay the salaries and the rent. I immediately invited volunteers with knowledge in administration, law and accounting because I knew little of this type of work. Together, we planned some strategies, reduced some expenses, and re-oriented our budget. Our first year ended with a 150% recovery, according to the audited financial report.

At the time, we had many debts with WSO and printers, with virtually no money in reserve. Presently we have paid our debts, gained liquidity, and the bank reserve is \$50,000 (US). Our literature prices have not increased in three years. As a consequence of a healthy and recovered budget, our members now trust their GSO.

Our GSO is young, and so is our experience. We have fourteen staff members, 55 volunteers, and eleven members on our Board of Trustees. At present, we have three regional trustees (Northwest, Central, and Southeast regions), but may soon have five. Our groups now number 2,900—of which 185 are Alateen. The publication of our magazine, *Delta*, is bi-monthly, and we have an Alateen bulletin, *Voz*, that is similar to *Alateen Talk*. Our commitment is to provide service with love, and we do carry this out with the help of 13 permanent committees.

The other day, I had a dream that GSO was an ardent or fiery heart that pumps love to people who need Al-Anon. This image pervades my thoughts as I recall what we accomplished this past year through community regional service, committee work, and a special 25th anniversary celebration.

In regional service, we improved coordination and communication between our areas and their regional trustees and we are also offering better regional seminars. August 1999 will bring our eighth seminar. All 35 areas of Mexico will be represented—31 as delegates and four in pro tem structure. In addition, we have sponsored Cuba, a responsibility that is now nearing completion. We will encourage Cuba to become self-supporting in spite of terrible economics and the emotional situation in this loved country. Meanwhile, our representation at the WSC and IAGSM has been maintained.

In committee work, we are better positioned to develop plans successfully, now that we have a better economic situation. At a Policy Committee meeting, some volunteers gave a seminar on using resources wisely by developing projects based on area needs. This year, our GSO will work with the plan for projects.

We also celebrated our GSO’s 25th anniversary. With the help of Raquel K. from WSO and Nora V. from Cuba, we gathered some of the pioneers. One purpose was for all members of Al-Anon to get literature and assurance of the consequent recovery. Packets containing ten pieces of literature (different for each four-month period throughout the year) were offered at a 20% discount. In return for service to Public Information, Institutions, and Cooperation with the Professional Community, pamphlets at 80% discount and plenty of literature were donated to persons who required them. During the celebration, there was a particularly pleasant spiritual meeting, with special participation by some who had closely followed the begin-

ning of Al-Anon and the GSO in Mexico.

A big success of our past three years is that the price of literature was not raised. It is very hard to consider one more year because contributions to GSO now comprise barely 10% of the budget. GSOs tend to live as if they were printing houses rather than service offices, depending on their profits from literature for their income. This is sad but true—worldwide. When the representative from Cuba learned this, she had peace in her heart because she knew sadly Cuba was not alone in how few people give contributions. Maybe in the future when the Seventh Tradition has a real life, we will be able to support our service offices and be able to provide books to anyone who needs them. That would be a nice utopia—but in Al-Anon, all is possible don't you believe?

I know that, with better administration and a budget, our groups now trust their GSO. However, we still have many things to do. We need better control to assure quality service for our members. For example, a recent study found that the great majority of Al-Anon members in Mexico are housekeepers with low-levels of schooling—and that a full 60% never went past elementary school. This raises needs such as having the Fourth Step in Spanish to encourage people to live the Fourth Step and sponsorship. This is a reality in our structure, and the situation may be similar in other countries of Latin America.

### **Sheila A., UK and Eire**

When I received the letter asking me to address the Conference, my initial thought was that this would not be a difficult task. Then I began to think back over the last 28 years and realized that I could stand here and talk for a very long time. I promise I won't!

I came into Al-Anon the wife of a man who drank too much, the daughter of a mother who drank too much. I was a very different person from who I am now. I was defeated, apathetic, tired to the point of despair, and suicidal. Then I found Al-Anon—or should I say, someone found Al-Anon for me. My first sponsor was active in area service and took me along with her (she said it was an opportunity for a day out, and I believed her). I became involved in service myself—probably because of the example she had shown. I firmly believe that, as well as carrying the message to others, I also have a message of recovery through service to carry to all group members.

While attending the UK and Eire Service Conference, I was approached and encouraged to become a candidate for trustee-at-large and subsequently became Treasurer—mainly, I think, because of my business experience. In 1983, the General Service Board decided it was necessary to appoint a General Secretary to coordinate all services in the UK and Eire and to establish smoother links between the office and its volunteers. Because we are a small structure, we do not have staff members supporting volunteer committees with the exception of Planning and Conference. I applied for the job and still hold that position today, some 16 years later. In fact, I think I must be the longest-serving General Secretary in Al-Anon in the world. That's a humbling experience.

Through these years, I have seen tremendous changes in our structure. Some of these were growing pains; others resulted from experience. We have on file a letter from Lois, dated October 1951, that acknowledges the registration of the first Al-Anon group in Belfast. From this date onward, members began to get in touch with each other and reach out to those in distress. The numbers of our groups began to steadily grow. Our first Alateen group registered in 1964. In 1970, we were incorporated; we opened our first office; we held our first conference; and began to estab-



lish the standing committees and all the other services necessary to support the growth of Al-Anon and Alateen groups.

At that time, we considered ourselves an "area" of WSC, but this changed after 1978, when it was decided that overseas structures would be better represented at an international meeting, now known as IAGSM. I attended in 1986 as one of the delegates from the UK and Eire, again in 1988, when we hosted the meeting in London, and once again in 1997 IAGSM as an alternate delegate.

Attending IAGSM had an enormous effect on my perception of Al-Anon, its services, and its structure as practiced in differing cultures. For the first time, I experienced what George Bernard Shaw must have meant when he said, "England and America are two countries separated by a common language." For example, in the UK and Eire, we had given the term "district" our own meaning. I remember how that evolved, having heard that we operated a simplified structure in the UK and Eire because we would never grow to be as large as other countries. As a result, we omitted the term "area" from our structure—though we were acting in all respects as areas.

As growth in our numbers continued, we eventually found that our simplified structure did not work. What we were calling "districts" now wanted to divide into smaller units in order to better service local groups. In addition, we were confusing members from other countries, who, quite naturally, assumed we were using the term "district" in WSO context. Finally, in 1988, we changed our structure to align with everyone else's.

In the Al-Anon structure UK and Eire, we have five countries, five cultures: England, Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and Eire. Fortunately, Al-Anon is not affected by political boundaries, and we do grow to understand one another. I mention this purely to illustrate how important it is that we really understand each other and learn about our differences in language and culture. I heard on a radio programme recently that there are some four thousand common words we both use which have different meanings, depending on which side of the Atlantic we call home.

Attending the IAGSM in 1986 opened my mind to a much greater understanding of this and inspired me to persevere in becoming aware of both the differences and common purposes of Al-Anon structures throughout the world. We have a wonderful bond in love and fellowship that very few people are privileged to experience. It grows out of the fact that we share the same primary purpose.

In the UK and Eire, our major focus in recent years has been twofold. One is the effect of legislation in our country, which is influencing the way Alateen sponsors are selected. There have been, and still are, difficulties to be overcome. Fears of losing sponsors proved to be ill-founded. Many members are coming forward because they now feel secure and supported by their Al-Anon groups.

Another concern here has been the dearth of members interested in service. It seems that perhaps the profile of Al-Anon is changing and that great phalanx of people with the time and inclination to make the commitment to service is no longer available. Part of our forward planning in the UK and Eire is examining ways to motivate the desire to get involved.

My experience in Al-Anon has made me realize what a privilege it has been to be involved in service for such a long time. There have been so many highlights—and probably an equal number of down times. Some have caused me to examine myself; some have been very painful. But with the help of my Higher Power, I have survived and so has Al-Anon in the UK and Eire.

No one ever promised me a life of bliss; they promised me a life—if I worked at understanding and practicing the programme of recovery that Al-Anon offers. My gratitude is boundless to the founders, to the members of the groups I have attended, to my sponsors (present and past), and to those members in service whose recovery, at first, I envied, and later, strove to emulate.

## SPIRITUAL SPEAKERS

Each year, Conference members select two speakers for the closing session of the following year's Conference. In 1998, Roberta V., Panel 37, Florida (S) and Willie W., Panel 37, California (S) were chosen to share their stories at the 1999 closing dinner. Past trustees and staff were invited to join the Conference members at this dinner in Connecticut; about 25 of these trusted servants attended.

### **Roberta V., Florida (S)**

I grew up in northern Minnesota, the oldest of three children living with the family disease of alcoholism. I knew I wasn't adopted, but I never felt that I was part of my own family. Drinking was part of my life. My maternal grandfather lived with us. He was very old and couldn't walk very well. He was always sending me to the corner store with a note to buy beer. I got to spend a penny of the change on a piece of candy, so I was happy to go the store for him. He was in his 60s at the time.

I remember my father coming home in the morning after being out all night and not being able to walk up the stairs. I really didn't know what that was all about, but I couldn't wait to grow up so I could stay out all night too. I always got sent to bed very early.

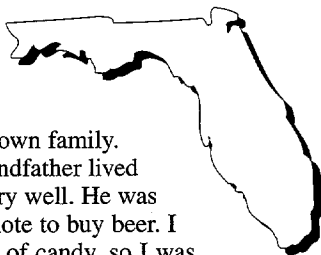
My grandfather was too old to work, and my father was too sick to work so my mother worked to support the family (and I learned the lessons of caretaking, martyrdom, and people-pleasing). At the end of first grade, I brought home a notebook of my spelling words, and I remember being ashamed because I had one wrong. I never focused on how many words I spelled correctly—I only knew that I was not perfect.

In high school I tried so hard to belong that I joined all the activities I possibly could. It took me until my senior year to figure out what was wrong—I didn't have a boyfriend. I just knew that if I belonged to a boy friend, life would be fine. Prince Charming appeared, and he was gorgeous! He was a college man, had a crew cut, Buddy Holly horn-rimmed glasses, and a 1950 green Mercury. When he opened the car door on our first date, out rolled a couple dozen beer cans—some empty, some full. He mumbled something about his cousin playing a practical joke and threw the cans into his back seat. I was not shocked or upset by seeing the beer cans. I just thought they could be kept more neatly. I saw a real place for me in his life.

We continued dating, I started college, and he asked me to marry him. He was in his second year, so I gave up a scholarship and went to work to support us. My belief was that the only reason to go to college was to get an educated husband. If I had not been able to accomplish that at the end of four years, it all would have been a waste of time and money. Here I'd accomplished the goal after just one year, and I knew my life was going to start after I was married. I'd be away from the chaos I'd known growing up, and he would make me happy.

After his graduation and a couple of jobs in our hometown, my husband got a job offer in St. Paul. I just knew my life was going to start after we got to St. Paul. We would be away from our critical families and be able to get on with our lives. We moved, I stopped working, and we had two baby girls over the next four years. But I was not happy. I didn't know what was wrong. We made friends with neighbors and got together for parties, but something was missing.

When he got a job offer in Macon, Georgia, I was so excited. We would be out of the snow and cold, we were sure to make new friends and enjoy new activities—we were on the ladder to success! I knew my life would start in Georgia. When we moved things were new, but I was still not happy. And I started to notice his drinking. But he returned to school to earn another degree while working full-



time, so I decided the drinking was due to his stress. I knew how to fix that. I went back to work so he wouldn't have to worry so much about money.

Five years later, he got a job offer in Lafayette, Indiana, and I was thrilled we would be back in the Midwest where I could be comfortable. I knew my life was going to start—I would be happy in Indiana. Except I wasn't. The family disease of alcoholism was progressing and although my denial kept me from seeing what was happening, I had a terrible depression one winter. I blamed the lack of sunshine and went to a neurologist only to receive a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis. When he asked if there was any stress in my life, I emphatically assured him there was not.

After four years in Indiana, my husband got a job in Naples, Florida. Once again, I was excited. Once again, I knew my life was going to start. The drinking was escalating and knew I had to find a solution.

He was a very intelligent man, and I felt certain he would stop drinking if he only knew how much drinking he was doing. We didn't have a set of jigger glasses to measure the liquor, so he just had to pour straight from the bottle. I bought an adorable set of jigger glasses, which he never used, not once.

At this point, he was bringing his liquor home in the big bottles that had handles, but they would be empty in less than two days. I never focused on the beer and wine because that was part of a good meal. Bourbon was the problem. My plan to bring him to his senses was very simple. I would save all the bottles he finished off in a month and set them on the table so he could see. I would take the empty bottles out of the garbage, brush off the vegetable peels and coffee grounds, write the date on the label with a large black marker, and hide them in a black plastic bag in the garage. My husband never cleaned the garage, but in the middle of that month he found the bag and asked why I was keeping the bottles. I told him to just throw them out. How could I make the point with only a half a month?

Meanwhile, my husband was fired from his job. He promptly got himself another job (at one-third of his previous salary) then shortly switched jobs again. This time, we were moving to Stuart, Florida. But this time I was in despair. I finally knew there was no hope in a new place. I felt my life was over. My mother was dying of cancer and came to live with us for her last couple of months. My oldest daughter was away at college earning honors and my youngest daughter was a junior in high school with three Fs on her report card. I was full of self-pity, anger, and fear.

After six months in our new home my husband went to a doctor to get help for his drinking. We had never discussed his drinking. I'd made snide comments, but we'd never had any discussion. The doctor sent him to a treatment center, and I attended family week where I was told to go to Al-Anon. I could do that because I knew it was my job to support him and keep him sober when he got home.

My first meeting was the Stuart Friday Night group. No sooner than they said the Serenity Prayer, I started to cry. I cried for the first six months, but I was able to hear some of what was said and do what was suggested. I bought an ODAT and was given a prescription

to read the page for July 1st four times a day for ten straight days (just like an antibiotic). The page says that the man I married is not the source of my happiness and the gift of life is mine. It worked. I started to feel better.

I went to a meeting almost every night of the week and learned that I didn't cause the disease of alcoholism, nor could I cure it or control it. I had been convinced that my husband's drinking was because I wasn't good enough, I wasn't pretty enough, I wasn't a good enough housekeeper, I wasn't a good enough cook, or good enough in the bedroom. When I began reading literature every day and talking with people after meetings I started to heal.

Something was still missing so I reached out to ask someone to be my sponsor. I chose someone who was retired and might have a little time for me—someone who spent six months in Florida and six months up North, so she wouldn't be around all the time. But God chose and provided me with His best sponsor. We immediately started studying and working the Twelve Steps, and I started to grow. I finished the Steps, and she had me studying and working the Traditions. I was so glad when I "finished" those because I felt certain I could now sit back and relax, but soon I was studying and working the Concepts of Service. I am glad to share that I still haven't finished any part of the program.

My sponsor never said (or I never heard her say) the word "service." Instead, she said she was going to a district meeting and needed a ride, and I was very happy to pick her up. (I never noticed there were always two cars parked in her driveway). After several months, the group representative (GR) for my home group moved away. I felt I was not good enough to be the GR, but I could be the alternate. I called my sponsor after the meeting to announce that I was the new alternate GR and that our GR had moved away. She asked me what the alternate GR did, and I explained that the alternate took over when the GR was gone. It wasn't until the words came out of my mouth that I realized what was happening.

Recovery and healing was happening in my family. My youngest brother was finding sobriety in AA, but my youngest daughter had become active in the disease and had moved several hundred miles away. I knew about enabling, and my Al-Anon friends told me I had to do what I had to do. She suffered a sexual assault, there was police involvement, and finally there was a suicide attempt. I was on vacation at a North Carolina mountain lodge when I got that news. She was at a hospital getting the care and help she needed. I remembered the ODAT page that talks about the woman who made tea for the minister who brought the news of her husband's death. I knew I was right where God wanted me to be. I was able to go on with what I was doing in spite of the news. When I went to see her a few days later I knew it was right on time.

I continued with service, first as DR and then as alternate delegate. The miracle of recovery in service widened my circle of friends and broadened my opportunities for growth. Then suddenly (and after seven years of sobriety), my husband announced that he wanted a divorce. I was devastated. Divorce had never been a conversation or even an option in my mind. I had planned his funeral many times but had never considered divorce. There was another woman and the old tapes played, "You aren't good enough! This is your fault! What did you do wrong? Why did you let this happen!"

Immediately I was surrounded by the love and support of Al-Anon friends. I started crying at meetings again. Sobriety had brought a lot of positive changes, but there were problems in many areas of my marriage. I am grateful for keeping the focus on myself during our last year together and for the denial that kept me from seeing many things. Today I can take responsibility for my part in that failed marriage, and I have made amends.

The area election assembly was being held in 1996, and I wasn't sure if I would be willing to serve. My sponsor had often told me if

I would be available, God would make me able. I stood with several others for delegate secretly telling myself that I was willing but that I would surely have the least votes after the first round. Instead, I had the most votes after the first round, and you can figure out the rest. Suffice it to say that I have been blessed and honored to carry South Florida's voice to this Conference, to the area, the district, to the members of the groups I attend, to my family, to my co-workers, to my neighbors, and to friends who are still strangers because I haven't met them yet.

The God of my understanding has carried me (and continues to carry me) one day at a time on my life's journey. Life for me is now—this moment. It isn't another place, at another time, or with anyone else. I did not come to Al-Anon expecting to hear the name of God, I only wanted to learn how to keep someone sober. It was a surprise for me, a person who had attended church and could even quote scripture and verse, to realize I had never known God personally. Today I know that His love is unconditional. I truly know it and feel it in my heart.

God has surrounded me with loving friends and family, and He has filled my world with abundance. He is my life's source of beauty and joy. I know that the God of my understanding will not give me more than I can handle with His love, His guidance, and the people He has put in my life. Because God loves me, I love me—and because I love me, I love you. That is carrying the message. There is help, there is hope, and there is love in the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon/Alateen. I love you all.

## **Willie W., California (S)**

I grew up in a family I loved, and I thought we were an Ozzie and Harriet family. To my knowledge, there was no alcohol involved. My dad was the primary provider, and my mom worked only to provide for her own needs. I have two sisters, one older and one almost 11 years younger. One story of my childhood is that my older sister sat on the porch when I was born and told everybody that passed, "Hey my mom has a little boy in there. Anybody want him?" Maybe we were more like the Addams family or the Simpsons.

My first recollection of any such magnitude is when I was under ten years old. Three neighborhood boys came into our home and held me down while they assaulted my sister. We have not ever talked about the incident since. No one in my family ever mentioned it again. I don't know if we ever told my parents about it. That part is still a big blank. I do know that, from that time on, I have always found the need to protect her. I grew large enough physically to do that. I was at least six feet tall and weighed 175 pounds by the time I was twelve years old. I do remember feeling ashamed, guilty, and like a coward for not being able to protect my sister. I also remember being very angry. I had frequent outbursts of anger. I developed a reputation of someone you did not want to mess with—if someone so much as raised his or her voice at me, I would explode and become very violent.

The next major turning point in my life was when I was 17 after finishing high school. I ran off with my high school sweetheart. The committee in my head had only given me three life choices: (1) go to college, (2) go into the military, or (3) leave Texas. The first two choices didn't go my way, so I exercised my third option. I made my choice the same way I made most decisions before Al-Anon. I put a map of the on the wall, closed my eyes, and chose wherever my finger landed. It landed on Denver, so that is where I went. I called my



## *From the Heart*

girlfriend to tell her that I was leaving. The next thing to come out of her mouth was, "Can I go?" In my typical insane pre-Al-Anon answer, I said, "Sure, why not." The only thing wrong with that response was that I'd planned for one, so when we got to Denver I only had ten dollars left. However, God takes care of fools and alcoholics. We found a place to live, and I found a job the same day.

We were two needy kids, one 17 and the other 16, trying to fill those empty holes in each other and the hormones running wild. Nine months later, we had our first child. We proceeded with the same behavior, and twelve months later, we had our second son. We had left Colorado and were now living in California. We sent the boys home to live with my mother-in-law until we got on our feet. We felt that if the boys were in Texas, then my wife could go to school and become a grocery checker.

After going for a couple of months, she realized she was pregnant with our third son. This was the second most significant thing in my life, because we decided to put him up for adoption. He was born in May 1960. I think we only got to see him once. We never brought him home from the hospital. It became this big secret that we never told anybody. It was easy to hide it from our relatives because we were in California and our folks were in Texas.

The moment after we did this, I felt like I had committed the ultimate sin. I was raised in a strict southern Baptist church, and I thought God would punish me forever. I was now 20 and my girlfriend was 19. We had planned to marry when I became 21. That never happened because I felt God had started a series of reprimands and punishments for my sinful behavior. The first thing that affirmed this thought was that my dad, who had never been ill to my knowledge, suddenly took sick in September that year and died on Thanksgiving Day. I was en route from California and never got to say good-bye. You can't imagine the guilt and remorse I felt. I thought it was all my fault.

While we were in Texas to take care of my father's funeral, my girlfriend decided she had had enough of me and left me for another guy. I was devastated because I had come from an intact home and felt we would spend the rest of our lives together. Our lives paralleled. Neither of us did well in our subsequent relationships, and I had this fantasy that someday we would get back together.

I did return to California and met a woman who had three little girls and a husband who worked sometimes but had a problem with criminal behavior. I felt she needed a man who worked and stayed out of trouble, and her three girls needed a dad to take care of them. I got this bright idea: I had two boys and she had three girls, so together we could form the Brady bunch.

We got married. After seven years, we had a little girl of our own. Again, because I tried to fill all those empty holes and was constantly trying to find myself, I left the marriage less than a year after my daughter was born. However, we did not divorce for 23 years.

After many relationships and looking for somebody to fix (or screw up in my case), Miss Wonderful appeared. I was approaching 40 and had developed a severe case of selective hearing. She was only 22. We began to have casual conversations during the early summer. She had a boyfriend who was a drug addict and a little girl two years old, whose natural dad was a drug addict too. Her mom and stepdad suffered from acute alcoholism. This woman was perfect for me!

One day she came into my place and said to me, "I am having a bad day. My boyfriend keeps going to jail, so I moved out of the apartment and am now sleeping in my stepsister's garage. Tomorrow I am going to lose my job, and I have to go back on welfare." That is what she said. What I heard was, "I lost my job, and I need you to take care of my daughter and me."

The second bit of selective hearing was when I went to visit her. The first time I called to ask if I could come see her, bring some cig-

arettes and her favorite drink. Here's what she said: "I'm not drinking tonight. I have to go to work in the morning." Here's what I heard: "I am a hard-working girl. I don't drink."

That seemed to be the basis of our communications throughout our subsequent relationship, compounded by insane behavior on my part. For example, I soon discovered she had two very different personalities. She was very quiet and withdrawn without alcohol, but when she drank, she became very talkative, fun-loving, and promiscuous. On one occasion, I came home from work and she and my neighbor's nephew were in a compromising position. I began to scold her, and she said, "Let me tell you what really happened." According to her, my eyes have a way of playing tracks on me. She told me they were just having a meaningful conversation.

This happened a second and a third time, and what I saw the third time was a very meaningful conversation. I became enraged. She sold crystal, and we had a lot of our own. I began to throw every piece of crystal I could get my hands on. If you had seen me, you would have called me the Crystal Terminator. But we go to great lengths in our attempt to stop the alcoholic from drinking. The very next day after the crystal-breaking episode, we went to Las Vegas and got married.

We Al-Anons are good detectives, too. Al-Anon women talk about the chenille robes, but I had a pair of Al-Anon sweats I wore most of the time. That way, she couldn't tell whether I was just getting up or if I was waiting up for her. I had the print of my venetian blinds right across my forehead from peeking to see if she was coming. My drapes had the oval shape of my head from peeking out of them. I could also tell the sound of her car and determine from her footsteps whether or not she had been drinking.

Just before the crystal throwing, she had told me that she'd been sexually assaulted by two men in a boxcar as she was coming home. She said these two guys dragged her in there and assaulted her. I did not think to call the police—this was a job for the Al-Anon detective. So I began to call all the railroad companies in my area to inquire about the car. I also went over to the crime scene to review the boxcar. Unfortunately it was not there.

I did not find that to be unusual because it was common for them to leave the cars parked and remove them at frequent intervals. But I persevered. Finally, after several telephone calls, a woman at the railroad did some research and called me back to say, "Mr. W., there hasn't been a car on that line for five years."

We had done a geographic and by now, moving from the inner city to the valley. I came up with the idea that if she knew how she acted when she was drunk, she would not drink so much. She would also understand how much pain and misery she was causing poor me. We recorded and reviewed the tapes the next day. She was surprised by her behavior and swore she would never do that again. That same evening, however, she went out with a girlfriend and came back at three in the morning, drunk as always.

The next day, I went to one of my friends who worked in the same office complex as me. I told her what was going on. That is when the miracle happened. She told me there was a place for me. She told me there was a friend who attended a meeting on Wilshire Boulevard and St. Andrew's Place. She told me to meet her friend there at eight.

That night, I showed up, but he did not. All I saw was a bunch of guys standing around outside a church laughing and smoking. You know who they were. I was all dressed up, so I proceeded upstairs past a room where there were a lot of kids. I remember saying to myself, "Man, this is strange." Finally, I got to the room where a lot of women were standing around talking with each other. A few were having private conversations. I still did not know what kind of a meeting it was. I thought I might have been sent to one of those direct marketing meetings. Little did I know that my life would never be the same.



I was still at the height of my disease, trying to fill that hole in my gut. I sat down between two ladies at the back of the room. One member shared, "I am so glad I married an alcoholic." We have to watch what we say. Do you know how that sounded to a newcomer?

After the meeting, the women I'd sat between wrote their names on my newcomer pamphlet and asked me to call. I couldn't wait. In the morning, I called over to one, but she was out the door to work and suggested I call the other. I did.

I tried to Thirteenth Step her, but she Twelfth Stepped me and became my sponsor that same day. And what a journey I was beginning. She taught me how to have a decent relationship with a female. I was so eager that I went to ten meetings in seven days and purchased a different piece of literature at each meeting. By the time I got to the seventh day, I had most of the literature I could find, so I would show up at our local LDC asking for new pieces. It never occurred to me to read them. I couldn't get past *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* and the *Serenity Prayer*.

My sponsor would say things to me like, "Willie, there's a good meeting on Thursday evening." Then if I did not show up, she would call and say something like, "You sure missed a good meeting." The first thing she told me was not to make any major decisions for six months, but she was too late because I had already begun fooling around with my neighbor. However, I did what she said and went back to my wife who had gone to a couple of AA meetings, read the "big book" in two days, and graduated. My sponsor reminded me to reason things out with another human being.

After two-and-a-half years in the program, I asked God for a solution. One weekend, I reached a moment of clarity. I stood still, not leaving my bedroom or getting out of my pajamas. I informed my wife I was ending our relationship. It was as if I placed a dagger in her heart and twisted it.

I left, vowing to myself I would never get involved with another relationship. That lasted about three weeks.

At the Monday night meeting, there was a lady who was very welcoming. I stuck my hand out, and she said, "We hug around here." She began to tell me about her deceased alcoholic husband, who would turn over in his grave if he could see her talking to me. Then she began to tell me about her estranged relationship with her son because of the disease of alcoholism. He was very angry. Whenever I saw her at a meeting, we would talk about their relationship.

Then I was asked if I would like to sponsor Alateen. This happened to be the most important direction I ever took from my program. One of the ladies at the Saturday night meeting had three boys, and she asked if I would give her son a ride to the Alateen conference. I agreed, not knowing he had epilepsy. When we got there, he had a seizure, which opened a whole new line of communication between his mom and me.

A few weeks later, I asked the mom if I could review some of her law books after the Saturday meeting. She is very bright and had gone through law school as a paralegal in family law. When I got there, we began talking, but I did not think much of it. We began telephone conversations late at night, and our romance began.

We were like two starry-eyed teenagers with lots of joy, energy, and hope. I really wanted to do this right, because I felt that, after all these years, I had finally found the girl of my dreams. She was bright, charming, intelligent and beautiful. Her estranged husband tapped her telephone line, so she and some of her friends thought it would be funny if she started the rumor she was pregnant. Mind you, she was 42 and I was 50. Her youngest child was eight; mine was 23. Well watch out for rumors, because they sometimes turn into reality. Nine months later, we were blessed with a baby boy, who, I believe, is one of God's greatest gifts to the two of us.

The lady I mentioned who taught me how to hug in Al-Anon is now my mother-in-law. My sponsor tells me that I have to practice these principles in all my affairs, yet the hardest place for me to practice them is at home. I don't know what God has in store for me, but I know if continue to carry the message to others, I will be okay.



Promotional for 2000 AA International Convention.

## SERENITY PRAYER

God grant me the  
*Serenity*  
to accept the things  
I cannot change,  
*Courage*  
to change the things  
I can and  
*Wisdom*  
to know the difference.

## CLOSING SHARINGS

Doris S.,

*Moderator, Executive Committee Member*

All Conference members, including those with voice and no vote, were invited to share in this closing session. Members shared about feelings of gratitude and success, fears overcome by comfort, new-found knowledge and friends, trust in an awesome process, and faith in a Higher Power guiding the Conference. The following are a few excerpts:

"It is our fresh and unencumbered view that makes us so valuable."

"After an experience like this, one realizes that service has done *something* to you."

"Between all and nothing is everything—that's what my Conference has been."

"You are the stars of my life."

"I would like to say no good-byes, just *hasta luego*."

"Throughout this week, I felt like a sponge."

"So many people in my area want to be delegate now because they have seen the growth in me."

"Over the years you have given me back my life and my family and I will thank you forever."

"I understand now what 'trusted servants' are..."

"I had a spiritual awakening at Stepping Stones. Now I know why AA is AA and Al-Anon is Al-Anon."

Multiple statements of gratitude were expressed. Outgoing Conference members, including delegates, trustees and Executive Committee members, were thanked for their service in many expressions of love for they have given so freely to Al-Anon and Alateen members and to those who have yet to find our program.

## PASSING IT ON

Marion W.,

*Assistant Conference Chairperson,  
Executive Committee Member*

Ric B.,

*Executive Director*

Each outgoing Panel 37 member was presented with a scroll and hugs of gratitude for their participation at this, their final World Service Conference. Marion W. then closed the 1999 World Service Conference and announced to all participants that the Panel 37 recovery skit would commence shortly.

## PANEL 37 SKIT

The skit began with the lone male leading the remaining members of this panel in a ceremonial reenactment of a funeral procession. While the leader read spiritually inspiring words from the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, other panel members dressed in mourning clothes expressed grief over the departure of their panel and the conclusion of their time at Conference.

With the reading of the "Panel Will," remaining Conference members were bequeathed memorable thoughts and items of love collected over the last three years. Humor overcame grief, laughter evidenced a sense of recovery, and a celebration of the years together became joy in the final experience. The finale included a song that invited members to "join right in, for service is the key—friends and fun—to recovery. One simple program brings hope and cheer."

Nearing midnight, Conference members concluded the celebration with best wishes, hugs and even a few tears.

All members were invited to attend the Annual Board meeting held the morning after the Conference closing.



# 1999 CONFERENCE MEMBERS

## - BOARD OF TRUSTEES -

### Trustees-at-Large

Donald C.  
Helen R.  
Howland R.  
Margaret G.  
Margaret M.  
Mary A-T.  
Mary C.  
Peggy S.  
Wilma K.

### Regional Trustees

Ann H., U.S. Northwest  
Blanche M., U.S. South Central  
Catherine J., Canada East  
Cecelia L., U.S. Northeast  
Larry A., U.S. North Central  
Marjorie S., Canada West  
Nancy B., U.S. Southwest  
Skip A., U.S. Southeast

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Doris S., Chairperson  
Marion W., Member-at-Large  
Pat S., Member-at-Large  
Donald C., Treasurer  
Margaret M., Policy Chairperson  
Helen R., Chairperson of the Board  
Ric B., Executive Director  
Sandra F., Staff Member

## NON-TRUSTEE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

\*\*Helen W., ECRPM

## - WORLD SERVICE OFFICE STAFF -

Ric B., Executive Director  
Caryn J., Director of Fellowship Communication  
Mary Ann K., Director of Membership Outreach  
Phyllis M., Director of Public Outreach  
\*Richard Keilly, Director of Business Services  
Sandra F., Director of Group Services

Claire R., Associate Director, Public Outreach  
Evalynn N., Associate Director, Group Services  
Marsha W., Associate Director, Membership Outreach, International  
Mary Lou M., Associate Director, Literature  
Susan A., Associate Director, Membership Outreach, Conference  
\*\*Carole P., Public Outreach Service Manager for Canada (NPIC)  
\*\*Patrick Q., Forum Coordinator

## - AREA DELEGATES -

Dora H., Alabama  
Robynn W., Alaska  
Mary R., Alberta/NWT  
Pam B., Arizona  
Brenda S., Arkansas  
Cindy L., Atlantic Provinces  
Janet K., BC/Yukon  
Cathy C., California (N)  
Willie W., California (S)  
Miguel C., Connecticut  
Dennis G., Colorado  
Susan N., Delaware  
Dee R., Florida (N)  
Roberta V., Florida (S)  
Linda S., Georgia  
Brigida C., Hawaii  
Pam A., Idaho  
Dorena S., Illinois (N)  
Deborah H., Illinois (S)  
Mary T., Indiana  
Debbie G., Iowa  
Keo O'R., Kansas  
Wendy G., Kentucky

Mary Lynn J., Louisiana  
Melanie F., Maine  
Bernice L., Manitoba  
Lee T., Maryland/DC  
Cindy H., Massachusetts  
Geri Lea H., Michigan  
Caroline P., Minnesota (N)  
Cheryl C., Minnesota (S)  
Susie M., Mississippi  
Laurie K., Missouri  
Penny H., Montana  
Judy Z., Nebraska  
Judy F., Nevada  
Shelia K., NFLD/Labrador  
Sue K., New Hampshire  
Tim S., New Jersey  
Juanita U., New Mexico  
La Vaughn R., New York (N)  
Mirta S., New York (S)  
Linda B., North Carolina  
Lana N., North Dakota  
Lynda E., Ohio

Sandy F., Oklahoma  
Barb S., Ontario (N)  
Ruth H., Ontario (S)  
Bunny G., Oregon  
Deb R., Pennsylvania  
Carmelo A., Puerto Rico  
Trudy C., Quebec (E)  
Lise M., Quebec (W)  
Ann H., Rhode Island  
Julie F., Saskatchewan  
Barbara Anne McK., South Carolina  
Jan L., South Dakota  
Lyn D., Tennessee  
Bonnie M-C., Texas (E)  
Sheri A., Texas (W)  
Ked K., Utah  
Victoria A-H., Vermont  
Sherri S., Virginia  
Nancy K., Washington  
Paula C., West Virginia  
Sharon S., Wisconsin  
Pam C., Wyoming

## - International Representative -

\*\*Annie M., France; \*\*Mariella S., Italy; \*\*Marilú C., Mexico; \*\*Sheila A., UK & Erie

\*Nonmember, non-voting

\*\*Non-voting

## 1999 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE MOTIONS

### **MOTION #1 - (96 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions) - CARRIED**

That the following persons be seated at the 1999 WSC with voice, but no vote:

Richard Keilly Director of Business Services, Non-Al-Anon Member

Helen W., Chairperson, Executive Committee for Real Property Management, Al-Anon Member

Sheila A., Overseas Representative, UK and Eire, Al-Anon Member

Marilú C., Overseas Representative, Mexico, Al-Anon Member

Annie M., Overseas Representative, France, Al-Anon Member

Mariella S., Overseas Representative, Italy, Al-Anon Member

Carole P., Public Outreach Service Manager for Canada (NPIC); Sunday, April 25 and Monday, April 26, 1999, Al-Anon Member

Patrick Q., *Forum* Coordinator; Sunday, April 25 and Monday April 26, 1999, Al-Anon Member

### **Motion #2 - (95 Yes, 1 No, 0 Abstentions) - CARRIED**

To approve the 1998 Annual Report as amended.

### **Motion #3 - (95 Yes, 1 No, 0 Abstentions) - CARRIED**

To approve the 1998 Audited Financial Report.

### **Motion #4 - (95 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions, 2 Void) - CARRIED**

To approve the 1999 Budget Committee report.

### **Motion #5 - (96 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention) - CARRIED**

To delete the last sentence on page 97, paragraph 6 of the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, Handbook Section.

### **Motion #6 - (93 Yes, 2 No, 1 Abstention, 1 Void) - CARRIED**

To delete the last sentence in the definition of Districts on page 100 of the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, Handbook Section, "Terms Used in Al-Anon."

### **Motion #7 - (70 Yes, 26 No, 1 Abstention) - CARRIED**

To approve a major expansion and revision of *Blueprint for Progress* to a comprehensive Fourth Step workbook.

### **Motion #8 - (95 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions) - CARRIED**

To add text to the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, "Terms Used in Al-Anon" section [page 101, following "French Services (PFA)"].

#### **General Service Office Structure (GSO)**

A service structure of one or more nations outside the US and Canada with a Board of Trustees and other elected Al-Anon members responsible for Al-Anon service related activities in their respective structure.

To amend the text on page 102 in the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, "Terms in Al-Anon" section as follows:

#### **World Service Conference (WSC)**

To amend the text on page 104, paragraph 4, last sentence in the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, "World Service Conference, Historical Background" section as follows:

AA's first conference met in the spring of 1951.

To amend the heading on page 116 of the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, "Conference Procedures" and delete the next two headings on pages 116 and 117.

#### **Area Procedures for Joining the Conference**

### **MOTION - #9 (94 Yes, 1 No, 2 Abstentions) CARRIED**

To delete the *Composition and Procedures* heading on page 113 of the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, "Conference Structure" section and to move the text on page 106 of the 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, "Suggested Procedures" section to page 113 to follow the "Composition of the Conference" section.

#### **Suggested Procedures**

While the procedures outlined in the "World Service Handbook" are only suggestions, they have been found by Al-Anon/Alateen members who have followed them to be a simple and direct method of selecting delegates for the Conference and for conducting assembly and Conference affairs free of political friction.

Al-Anon experience suggests that we follow these procedures before deciding on changes and to make changes only when they clearly become necessary. Using the same structural plan makes it simple for all of us to understand each other's assembly procedures. In addition, such uniformity does much to lessen the Conference workload at our World Service Office. The help of every assembly is needed in forming the best possible framework and to make our future secure. However, if by majority agreement an assembly decides to alter one or more of these guidelines, the changes should be a matter of record so all members of the area assembly can clearly understand them.

#### **How It Works**

**Motion #10 - (33 Yes, 62 No, 2 Abstentions) - NOT CARRIED**

To amend the text on page 62, 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, Policy Digest section, "Registration of Groups," as follows:

**Registration of Groups**

The WSO will register any group designating itself as an Al-Anon Family Group with the understanding that it will abide by the Traditions and that meetings will be open to any Al-Anon member. Alateen meetings, however, consist of younger family members assisted by an Al-Anon sponsor.

The WSO cannot register any group that is solely for Al-Anon members who are also recovering alcoholics and members of AA, because it does not qualify to have a group representative.

Although all Al-Anon members share a common bond, some relatives and friends of alcoholics feel it is easier to share experiences with those in situations similar to theirs. They have formed Al-Anon special focus groups, for example, for men, women, adult children, parents, and gay/lesbians.

These groups are registered the same as all Al-Anon groups. To avoid confusion they include Al-Anon or Alateen in their group name, e.g. Serenity Al-Anon Adult Children Group.

**Motion #11 - (41 Yes, 54 No, 2 Abstentions) - NOT CARRIED**

To refer Motion #10 to return to the Policy Committee for rewording and to be presented at the WSC 2000.

**Motion #12 - (94 Yes, 2 No, 1 Abstention) - CARRIED**

To amend the text on page 63, 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, Policy Digest section, "Choosing a Group's Name" as follows:

A name that includes the town or section of the town, the meeting day, or a phrase from our program would be inviting to all. A group's name should not imply affiliation with any other twelve step group, self-help group, commercial venture, agency, religious group, rehabilitation facility, or other outside enterprise, even if the name is associated with its location—e.g., the \_\_\_\_ Church AFG or the \_\_\_\_ Hospital AFG.

To help avoid confusion with other entities it is suggested that groups spell out their full name and include Al-Anon or Alateen.

**Motion #13 - (94 Yes, 1 No, 1 Abstention, 1 Void) CARRIED**

To amend text on page 69, 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, Policy Digest section, "Finances" sub-section, Contributions to WSO—Individual, second paragraph, *Direct Contributions* as follows:

At any time during the year, individuals may contribute directly to the WSO, indicating their membership since Al-Anon is self-supporting. The limit on individual contributions to the WSO is \$10,000 per year.

[Editors note: Motion 15 was carried on the floor prior to Motion 14]

**Motion #14 - (85 Yes, 10 No) CARRIED**

To amend the text on page 79, 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, Policy Digest section, "Other Publications" sub-section, *Outside Publications*, first paragraph, **Other Literature at Meetings** as follows:

**Other Literature at Meetings.** There are many outside publications on alcoholism, religion, and philosophy that appeal to members as individuals. Brief excerpts from such material may be part of their personal sharing at meetings. In a spirit of unity, it is suggested that only Al-Anon and Alateen Conference Approved Literature be used and displayed at meetings.

It is well to remember that all AA literature is written for and from the viewpoint of alcoholics and is not Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature. Reliance on opinions expressed in AA and other publications can distort the Al-Anon approach, particularly for the newcomer. (See *Al-Anon Spoken Here* (P-53), *Why Conference Approved Literature?* (P-35), and *Alcoholism The Family Disease* (P-4)).

**Motion #15 - (87 Yes, 8 No, 1 Abstention) CARRIED**

To amend Motion 14 by adding the word "all" before "AA literature" and by deleting the phrase "(including *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the AA Big Book)".

**Motion #16 - (88 Yes, 9 No) CARRIED**

To extend the committee trial structure for an additional three years to the year 2002.

**Motion #17 - (78 Yes, 19 No) CARRIED**

To hold a separate Al-Anon International Convention every five years beginning in July, 2008 and that we do not hold RSSs in the years in which we hold Al-Anon International Conventions. We will continue to cooperate with AA at their Internationals, when asked.

**Motion #18 - (55 Yes, 40 No, 2 Abstentions) NOT CARRIED**

That the 1999 World Service Conference recommend that there be a partial printing of the daily reader, *Courage to Change*, in quality soft cover for institution outreach and/or personal use.

**Motion #19 - (36 Yes, 58 No, 3 Abstentions) NOT CARRIED**

To have the Alateen Sponsor Preparation Workbook published as a service tool.

**Motion #20 - (30 Yes, 60 No, 7 Abstentions) NOT CARRIED**

That when the Al-Anon logo has the words Recovery, Service, and Unity on the three sides of the triangle, Recovery be on the bottom, Unity be on the left side, and Service be on the right side.

### **Motion #21 – (35 Yes, 60 No, 2 Abstentions) NOT CARRIED**

To reconsider Motion #10.

### **Motion #22 – (90 Yes, 4 No, 3 Abstentions) CARRIED**

To affirm our support of Alateen members and Alateen sponsors by launching "Operation Alateen" in our areas and by encouraging the participation of every Al-Anon group.

### **Motion #23 – (9 Yes, 88 No) NOT CARRIED**

That a standing committee be established on a trial basis for ten years for International Conventions which includes a Board member, one or more WSO staff members, and several volunteers from the fellowship. The purpose of the International Convention Standing Committee is to help the WSO to plan for and carry out Al-Anon International conventions.

### **Motion 24 – Tabled until the 2000 WSC**

That when the WSO uses the Al-Anon logo in publications, it be used without labeling specific sides of the triangle as Recovery, Unity, and Service.

## THE ASK-IT-BASKET

The World Service Office is divided into six departments, and within each department there are subdivisions. The Ask-It-Basket questions are listed under each department that focuses on the area of service in question. Delegates, committee members, and staff participated in answering these questions.

### ADMINISTRATION

#### **1. What is the time frame on completing training for staff on computer queries?**

*On-going training is determined by each department on that department's needs. Many departments have completed this training. For others it was a lower priority.*

#### **2. Why are we waiting so long to have an International? If we are going to have an International every five years we should start in 2003.**

*WSO needed a history from our first stand-alone International in Salt Lake before planning another. In order for the process of site selection to be inclusive using delegates and trustees, three years is not enough lead time to allow for this kind of input, as well as negotiate and complete all of the other arrangements.*

#### **3. Wouldn't it be better to have the International Al-Anon Convention alongside of the AA International, as we are "family?" I see that fitting in the Fifth and Sixth Traditions. Also, we could reach more family members.**

*We have discovered in doing International Conventions in Montreal and Seattle that most cities do not have enough facilities to support these side-by-side conventions, so Al-Anon has agreed to have workshop meetings during the day at AA Conventions and attend their Big Meeting and save Al-Anon Big Meetings for an Al-Anon Convention.*

#### **4. Will Al-Anon go back to having its International Convention at the same time as AA's?**

*Side by side Conventions put Al-Anon and AA in a position of struggling over the prime space in a host city. Rather than be put in an adversarial position, we mutually agreed to participate with AA and invite them to participate in Al-Anon's International Conventions.*

#### **5. Some of our members that attended the 1998 International Convention were disappointed in the poor quality of the workshops and low attendance. Can we consider having the next one in a more centralized location? How can we encourage better preparation of workshops?**

*The location is determined by a committee of Conference members, and location is one of the major considerations. The Planning Committee is keeping on file all suggestions made for the next event. If you would like to be more specific about the workshops, it could help the Planning Committee.*

#### **6. As a DR, GR, PI, & CPC coordinator for District 9 (Canada), the paper waste and cost factor of repeated brochures, flyers (with either old books or new books) put in with Area Highlights, Inside Al-Anon, appeal letters, etc. is ridiculous. As a GR, I have a responsibility to inform my group about books, pamphlets, The Forum and the first appeal sent out should be sufficient. We get new order sheets so we know about the books. The flyers etc. have U.S. prices, so we refer to the literature order form anyway.**

*In an ideal world sending out one notice would be sufficient, however experience shows that not all GRs, DRs and coordinators pass on all the information. It has come to our attention even with the brochures, articles, and letters in multiple mailings that information has not reached some groups. Our goal is to have every GR take responsibility for passing on information in The Forum and about subscriptions.*

*WSO has never set Canadian prices. Pricing in Canada is left to the individual literature distribution centers.*

#### **7. Why is there so much duplication of mailing?**

*WSO schedules some mailing of flyers and announcements to be sent to several service members which is often seen as duplication. However, experience shows that the information needs to be*

repeated in order for it to get to the members. Please pass duplicate copies onto other members, who don't receive mail from the WSO.

**8. Do we need to consider reorganizing the other departments – Forum and Literature – in a similar manner as Public Outreach?**

*Questions on structure can be sent directly to the Board. The Forum and Literature departments were reorganized and consolidated into what is now the Fellowship Communication Department.*

**9. Has a world wide web interface program been explored to help members and gather at relatively low cost direct data from members? (Note: An interface would allow – just as Federal Express did – for members/customers to become their own member/customer service representatives.)**

*At this time the World Wide Web page has one purpose — outreach to families and friends of alcoholics through contact with professionals and the public. Additional uses will be considered in future budgets.*

**10. Can WSO obtain licensing for multiple users of software programs to help areas communicate more effectively? (Group Services, web sites, etc.)**

*A future goal of the WSO is to make the Group Records software available for area use. Regarding web sites, many local areas, information service offices, and districts hyperlink to the WSO web site. We are exploring templates for web sites for local service arms.*

**11. Would it be possible to have a form in the World Service Office web site for group registration updates?**

*At this time, the web site is for information to the public and professionals. There are plans for the WSO to create a member services page in early 2000.*

**12. Can the decision not to have subscribers to Area Highlights be reconsidered?**

*Area Highlights has always been given to the service people with the idea of copying it. Setting up a database with subscriptions would not be cost effective for WSO.*

**13. There is one Web address which links to a Web site that also has a lot of outside issues listed, NA, AA, etc., along with Al-Anon. Is this in line with guidelines in the 1998 World Service Conference Summary?**

*It isn't clear to which Guidelines you refer. The Al-Anon web site is not linked to any other site to avoid affiliation, but other sites link to Al-Anon.*

**14. Why is the term "service tool" not listed in our Service Manual? Also, since service tools are not Conference Approved, it appears they may not be used at meetings.**

*The term "service tool" refers to some "service material." These service tools, such as "Getting In Touch with Al-Anon" or the guidelines do not go through the Conference Approval process as stated in the Manual. Service tools can be used as a topic for a meeting on service.*

## BUDGET

**15. Is there an estimated cost for the '99 Membership Survey? When will the final costs be available?**

*Yes, in the 1999 budget. Final costs will be reported in the 1999 Annual Financial Report.*

**16. Can a contribution summary be created showing the number of groups in each state and country and the number of years they have been donating? Can countries be listed individually?**

*The request will be brought to the Budget Committee where the method of disseminating financial information is determined.*

**17. Why, when the reason we were given for moving the WSO office from NY was to save money, has the WSO raised the price on nearly every book and asked for donations more than ever?**

*To answer in depth see the financial report at the 1998 World Service Conference Summary. Briefly, expenses were cut drastically. However, the literature sales projected for the year of the move and after did not meet the budget expectations. With literature sales and contributions our source of revenue, raising literature prices was the only option to providing a balanced budget. Trends seem to indicate that literature sales will not carry the proportion of the budget it has provided for the fellowship in the past and it is WSO's responsibility to let members know that contributions will have to fill in the difference.*

**18. Will the WSO consider sending World Service Conference Summaries to all groups (free)? English groups? The groups would benefit from the use of these Summaries. Inside Al-Anon Xtra does not do enough.**

*The costs of printing and mailing the Summary free to every group are prohibitive. In 1991 (see motion 7) the World Service Conference voted to discontinue "free" distribution and voted to "now make them available to the groups at the cost of \$2.00 each." This is to cover the cost of postage. Area trusted servants (including district representatives) receive complimentary copies. Each member and group may order a personal or group copy. Order forms are available annually in various WSO publications.*

**19. How much money have we saved since our WSO relocation to Virginia Beach?**

*Savings are approximately \$700,000 a year. The most significant saving is on occupancy costs — about \$600,000.*

## POLICY

**20. If anonymity is supposedly not an issue at the area level of service, why then, aren't full names of delegates given at the World Service Conference?**

*They are used during the Conference, but not listed in the publication of the Conference Summary. Printing names in the Summary would give the message that last names can go into printed publications.*

## Ask-It-Basket

### 21. Why are other Twelve Step members allowed to serve above the group level, but not AA members?

*Our history indicates from Lois Remembers (pg. 176), "Bill (co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous) felt AAs should not hold office in our (Al-Anon) structure." Since those early days, World Service Conferences have affirmed that decision in discussions over the years. Al-Anon has a special relationship with AA that we don't have with other Twelve Step programs.*

### 22. Where does registration of on-line meetings stand at this point, and how close are we to having "official recognition" of this segment of our fellowship?

*Because on-line meetings do not have a specific location, they do not fit easily into our existing structure. On-line meetings will continue to receive mail and have an identification number, but more research will be done to see how to fit them into the structure before registering them as groups. The Policy Committee extended the trial period of listing on-line meetings for an additional three years.*

**23. Dual Members' meetings:** In 1952, Lois W., Anne B. and other Al-Anon pioneers were granted permission by Alcoholics Anonymous to adapt their Twelve Traditions providing we be a separate entity and do not become a subsidiary of AA. Therefore, our Traditions state that we are a separate entity from AA. Currently, our policy is to register dual member meetings that do not have an Al-Anon member as they hope to attract such a member to represent them. Do we become a subsidiary when these groups are registered? This type of meeting is not representative of an Al-Anon meeting, thus, the newcomer may not return or will be absorbed into an AA type of meeting. Doesn't this affect the autonomy of Al-Anon and AA as a whole? Should the policy to register this type of meeting be changed?

*On page 62 of the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual it states: "The WSO will register any group designating itself as an Al-Anon Family Group with the understanding that it will abide by the Traditions and that meetings will be open to any Al-Anon member...The WSO cannot register any group that is solely for Al-Anon members who are also recovering alcoholics and members of AA, because it does not qualify to have a group representative." Therefore, we do not become a subsidiary since these groups cannot be registered. The Policy Committee reiterated the policy of registering Al-Anon meetings which do not restrict their membership. Many of our groups do not have a GR. As long as Al-Anon principles are discussed at the meeting, no harm is done to the newcomer.*

**24. I feel the explanation of "Closed Meeting" in our Service Manual is not correct and has been very damaging to new members. Too many people and meetings take this literally. If they can't answer the question, "Who has a drinking problem in your life?" they may be asked to leave because it's a "Closed Meeting." Can we clarify this?**

*On page 42 in the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual it states that "Closed Meetings are limited to members and prospective members." Those persons who feel their lives have been or are being deeply affected by alcoholism in a family member or a friend can attend any Al-Anon meeting. Groups are free to determine at individual meetings whether to declare them open or closed depending on the group conscience of those present.*

**25. In an Al-Anon group could we refuse newcomers who are concerned by the drug addiction of their children? A member in the group told them at their first meeting that it was not their place.**

*Tradition Three states, "The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend." Most groups suggest to newcomers that they initially attend six meetings. During that time information is obtained concerning the purpose of the Al-Anon program, and the newcomer is able to determine if Al-Anon is a viable source of help.*

### 26. Are members of AA allowed to serve at the intergroup level or on the board of an AIS Office?

*Yes, however, it is up to the autonomy of the service arm or area. Usually, AA members are only limited in the chain of service where they could eventually become a Conference member.*

### 27. Why don't we have "Family Week" any more with treatment programs? This brought new members to Al-Anon.

*These were programs in treatment facilities and were not within the Al-Anon program.*

**28. The request form specifically says that on-line meetings do not have permission to excerpt from daily readers. However, on page 45 of the Service Manual, it reads, "an unlimited supply of topics can be found in Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature." The Policy portion of the Manual indicates that small excerpts from outside literature is acceptable at meetings. Copyright laws permit small excerpts as long as the book and author are credited. Is WSO or are we attempting to regulate behavior at electronic meetings? Will permission to quote from daily readers and other literature eventually be required by regular meetings? Please explain why on-line meetings cannot use the daily readers. Why do on-line meetings have such different meeting guidelines from regular meetings? What can be done to change this?**

*This has already been changed, after a minority appeal on this issue was heard by the Board of Trustees at the October 1998 meeting. Use of Al-Anon literature, including daily readers, is permitted as long as it follows the guidance found in the Fact Sheet for Al-Anon On-line Meetings (S-60).*

### 29. Has the idea of regulating usage of Al-Anon literature been discussed and voted on at the World Service Conference? Is there a policy concerning the usage of Al-Anon literature in existence in the Service Manual?

*Yes, in the Policy Digest of the Service Manual, for questions pertaining to reprinting or copying our literature, please refer to page 81, which was approved by the Conference. Use of Al-Anon literature in meetings and in personal recovery is encouraged at all times.*

### 30. Is it possible to revisit changing references to God in the Steps and literature to gender-neutral language?

*Please refer to the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, page 138 where it states, "d. But no changes are to be made in the Traditions, Steps, Concepts of Service or General Warranties of the Conference Charter (item 12) without written consent of three-*

quarters of the Al-Anon groups." This would require contacting all Al-Anon groups worldwide for this permission. This issue has been discussed at several past World Service Conferences without a motion being proposed.

**31. The Al-Anon Twelve Traditions infers in the Fifth Tradition that we Al-Anons practice the Twelve Steps of AA. Couldn't this read "Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose; to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics"? Omitting, "of AA," as in the AA's Twelfth Step, "carry the message to Alcoholics," we carry the message to others, not alcoholics.**

*In order to change the wording of the Steps, we need written consent of three quarters of all registered groups.*

**32. One of the members of my group read the Twelve Steps and substituted the word "God" wherever "his" or "him" appears. I'm concerned with the interpretation with Tradition Four; they seem to forget the part that follows "autonomous". Page 138 in our Service Manual addresses this issue. How can I emphasize that changing such items is not at our discretion?**

*A meeting on the Fourth Tradition, specifically on the second part where autonomy is qualified by its effect on AA or Al-Anon as a whole. A change in the Steps would affect Al-Anon as a whole, thus a discussion on the principle of abiding by the group conscience of the fellowship may help.*

**33. Why isn't the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (the big book) Conference Approved, since our Fifth Tradition states we practice the steps of AA ourselves and the Big Book is the primary source to work the Steps?**

*The AA "big book," Alcoholics Anonymous, was written by and for alcoholics. Al-Anon literature is written by and for Al-Anon members. This issue has been discussed at length by past World Service Conferences, including the 1999 WSC, and it has been affirmed that, although we do cooperate with AA, we do not use their literature in meetings, as they do not use ours.*

*In 1968 Lois W., Al-Anon's co-founder, sent a letter to an Al-Anon member in Texas responding to specific queries about our relationship with AA. This is what she wrote:*

*"AA has always been generous to Al-Anon. It invites us to hold meetings at their conventions and often pays our expenses for speakers and facilities...Al-Anon members in turn assist AAs by changing attitudes and improving the atmosphere in their homes. The two fellowships walk hand in hand. It is a most unique relationship.*

*"However, for organizational and psychological reasons AA and Al-Anon have to be separate entities. In 1966 the World Offices of both fellowships held a joint meeting to discuss forming guidelines for group separation..."*

**34. Why do we not have 12 promises in either our *How Al-Anon Works, Paths to Recovery*, daily readers, bookmarks or pamphlets?**

*Al-Anon does not have "promises." A suggestion for adoption of potential "promises" or "gifts" was reviewed by the Policy Committee in the past. The committee affirmed that such statements are an individual member's sharings, and are just that — sharings.*

**35. Could we incorporate some of the Hazelden literature into Al-Anon CAL as so much of it is so relevant to living with alcoholism and our recovery?**

*All Al-Anon CAL is written by and for Al-Anon members and is developed out of a need within our fellowship. Please see pages 75-87, "Recovery and Service Materials" in our 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual for further clarification.*

**36. Why was the reference to the butterfly not being an Al-Anon "symbol" taken out of the *Manual*? (On-going problem in a lot of our groups.)**

*The reference to the butterfly was considered very directive, and in the review of the entire Policy Digest it was eliminated. If this is an ongoing problem, please write to the Policy Committee with your concerns.*

**37. Is it true that Al-Anon's Executive Director has veto power over the decisions made by the Conference? If so, why?**

*No one person has veto power over the World Service Conference. The Board of Trustees does have the obligation to review Conference motions, which it does at its meeting following the Conference and in the course of the year. If a motion is not financially feasible, the Board has the obligation to explain the reasons for not implementing the motion to the Conference the following year. The Executive Director can prevent the publication of material which is either contrary to the best interests of Al-Anon as a whole or does not comply with the spirit of a Conference motion.*

**38. Is there a policy, or can a policy be implemented, for linking area web pages to the WSO Web site?**

*This was discussed at the 1999 WSC. Area web sites already do link to the WSO. We do not currently link to them. See Annual Report page for further clarification.*

**39. Many areas use our logo in their convention flyers and T-shirts that violate our copyrights; will this jeopardize our copyrights?**

*Within the Al-Anon/Alateen fellowship the logo of the circle, within the triangle with and without the AFG, was adopted by WSO for easy identification of stationery, guidelines, and other Al-Anon/Alateen material and a popular means of identification at conventions. It may be used by other Al-Anon service arms for these purposes. Modification of the logo is not permitted, and when the WSO is aware of violations, the individuals involved are notified.*

## Ask-It-Basket

**40. A new book was published called My Journey in Service. When was this approved by Conference? If not approved: how come it was printed? Is this book not in the category of "trinkets"?**

*"My Journey in Service" is neither a book nor Conference Approved Literature; it is a "service tool." Service tools, such as reprints and guidelines, are not created by Conference motions. Only Al-Anon Conference Approved recovery and service literature require a Conference motion. This journal, much like "Cal's Journal for Recovery" introduced at the 1999 World Service Conference, contains quotes from existing Conference Approved Literature. It is a tool to familiarize the membership with powerful quotes contained in our literature.*

*A journal containing previously approved CAL does not fit into the category of "trinkets" as discussed in our 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual on page 71, since each quote is referenced to the Conference Approved Literature it is derived from, therefore encouraging further program study.*

**41. Members of our fellowship would like to purchase products with our logo (jewelry, calendars, notes, etc.). Please explain exactly how WSO providing such items for our fellowship would diminish the spiritual nature of our program.**

*The question of the production of jewelry was brought to an Open Policy meeting at the 1997 World Service Conference, and no change in our current policy was approved. A calendar is to be produced for the 50th Anniversary with Policy approval.*

**42. Why was a jeweler given permission to reproduce our logo? Will WSO be selling these items? If not, why does some other entity serve to profit from its use when our fellowship will not? If WSO will not provide these items to the fellowship, can you give us the name of the jeweler or is this affiliation?**

*The WSC has determined that the WSO will not produce items such as jewelry containing the Al-Anon logo. Since there are members who want these items and the WSO is unable to provide them, the WSO does give permission to outside sources to protect our registered trademark. In keeping with Tradition Six, the WSO cannot offer the names of these suppliers.*

**43. The slogans artwork displayed at the WSO and reproduced in a brochure for the 1990 International are attractive to many members in Al-Anon. It was stated at the time that this brochure would only be available at the Convention. Can this artwork be reproduced in other ways for the fellowship to purchase?**

*This was produced as a one-time souvenir booklet. The Conference has from time to time considered other uses — book-mark, calendar, etc. To date, these requests have been denied.*

**44. Guideline for Dual Members: How to keep their other program separate from the Al-Anon meeting, language to use, etc.**

*Dual members are Al-Anon members in every way except the fact that they do not serve beyond the group level. See the Al-Anon Focus (P-45) and Al-Anon Spoken Here (P-53). Both pamphlets help address these issues.*

**45. How do we publicize round-up events organized by AA, Al-Anon and Alateens but not part of the area events?**

*Al-Anon has a history of participating with AA in their conventions. We print these events in our Forum when Al-Anon/Alateen participates and requests it. Announcements of these events would be up to the autonomy of the area.*

## BUSINESS SERVICES

**46. How do we increase literature sales?**

*See ideas in the 1997 World Service Conference Summary, Director Chosen Workshop.*

**47. Why is not more attention paid to the shipping of literature? This is where Al-Anon makes money but there are so many mistakes made. Is it a personnel problem?**

*Additional personnel has been hired and complaints have diminished.*

**48. Our LDC and individual WSO direct orders have experienced repeated problems with multiple orders and reorders of incorrect items shipped. What will be done to correct this problem?**

*See question 47.*

**49. Our area literature distribution coordinator asks why there is "a scarcity of desired literature (six week wait for eight books) and overabundance of other unordered literature being shipped to us?"**

*WSO is currently shipping orders within two days of receipt. If you experience any delays in receiving your order, please let us know. If we shipped your order UPS, we can trace its status. Please notify WSO Customer Service of any errors in your shipments.*

**50. Our area LDC coordinator states seven of sixteen literature orders have been problematic — wrong items received. What quality improvement measures have been instituted to correct this situation?**

*Recent orders should not contain any errors. We have added an additional person, and the number of errors brought to our attention declined to between eight to ten a month, with none recently, as staff is more experienced.*

**51. Our area LDC coordinator states that the new WSO bulk order pricing will threaten the viability of our service. Can you provide some consideration for the smaller areas?**

*We have not changed the pricing or discount policy in recent years.*

**52. How can the fellowship be better informed and aware of the property? Re: Its cost, maintenance, profit/loss, effect on funds. How does it fit in with the long term plan of the move? We hear very little about such an important move.**

*A separate Executive Committee for Real Property Management*



(ECRPM) meets twice a year at WSO and specific questions can be sent directly to them. While the chair of the committee attends the WSC, the committee was designed to be separate, so the ownership of property would not divert the WSO and the Conference from their primary aim. To ensure communication with the Board of Trustees, the Treasurer and Business Services Director serve with three other long-time Al-Anon members on this committee.

**53. Could WSO reduce the percentage of shipping to LDCs due to lack of storage space and volunteers; LDCs have added expense for storage space and labor?**

*We only ship the LDCs what they order.*

**54. Groups are refusing to buy books from LDCs and prefer ordering directly from WSO?**

*WSO must sell to those who request it. Perhaps a discussion with groups as to where the money for increased costs go would be helpful.*

## PRINTING

**55. In Area Highlights, Inside Al-Anon Xtra, Getting in Touch with Al-Anon/Alateen (S-23), etc., will you (WSO) please use black ink for the fine print and color for the larger print, borders, boxes, etc.? These publications are great but difficult to see, read, Xerox, etc. Please continue to use color/tinting but not in or over fine print.**

*A variety of colors are used to distinguish issues and attract attention; however, your suggestion will be brought to the attention of staff members who produce these publications.*

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

**56. The Public Information Committee in our district has organized a fund-raising event. There were some serious discussions and some disagreements concerning the participation of AA. In the previous Ask-It-Baskets there were questions on that topic, but we found them too vague to be able to clarify the questions to our members. Are there some clarifications you could give us on that topic, so we could have an easier discussion when we plan such an event?**

*There are so many variables and unknowns involved in this question, it is impossible to answer clearly. However, pages 70 to 73 of the 1998-2000 Service Manual set the boundaries for fund-raising. Guideline G-3 on cooperation with AA may also be helpful.*

**57. It seems that WSO Public Outreach activities have been geared more toward the area and even a national/international scope. What does the PO department plan on doing to develop activities on a more local level? (How to...)**

*Essentially we rely on local members to adapt a national or area project to their community. Some of our current efforts include: asking members to distribute more PSAs, contacting Navy, Air Force and VA Family Service, counselling centers or hospitals, the "Care-A-Van Project," and using the revised Media Kit for mem-*

*bers to take to local radio and TV stations and newspapers.*

*During 1999, we created the "My Hand Is Out" coupon for local members to fill out so DRs and area coordinators will know who is available for volunteer work. The 1999 Newspaper Outreach Project will result in quarterly distribution of two column articles to 10,000 US and 6,770 Canadian newspapers. We updated the seven open letters for local member mailings to professionals. Two booklets are underway: a professional resource booklet and "how to" motivational service booklet. AIS, district and area web sites can be modeled after the WSO's site. Our national and regional projects lay the ground work for local member projects. Ultimately the footwork (follow-up) of local members is what attracts newcomers to their first meeting and generates more professional referrals of their clients.*

## MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH

**58. I have found that providing mailing labels and envelopes with the WSO address printed on them improves response. Could the WSO experiment with this idea? i.e. Include some in group mailings and The Forum.**

*We provide return envelopes with RSS registration flyers and quarterly appeal letters. To include them in every mailing would be costly.*

**59. Why do groups have chairmen (as is suggested in the handbook) when it is usually the group representative that performs those duties?**

*The responsibilities of the chairperson of the group is to lead the meeting and different from that of the group representative who brings information to the group from the district and the assembly as well sharing information about in and about The Forum.*

**60. Our Service Manual has information on area election procedures on more than one page. Could we clarify, simplify and put an easily understood procedure on 1-2 pages?**

*Since every word in the Handbook section of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual is agreed to by the entire World Service Conference and then translated into Spanish and French, a change such as this would be impractical at this time. Your suggestions will be passed on to the Admissions/Handbook Committee.*

## CONFERENCE

**61. Why are the areas not being self-supporting in the paying of equalized expenses of the Conference? Could the WSO request gradually increase the equalized costs to the areas?**

*WSO has traditionally accepted part of the financial responsibilities for the areas to attend the WSC. In more recent years the equalized expense has been increased giving areas a larger percentage of the cost. The Board of Trustees balances consideration of increased costs with the inclusion of all areas. Many areas do voluntarily pay the full cost.*

**62. For the Conference Committee:**

**- Could we be more specific about equalized expenses; for**

## Ask-It-Basket

example, \$900 required vs. \$1,450 total delegate expenses: give the area a specific dollar amount; e.g. \$1200.

### - What does each figure mean?

The actual cost to the WSO for each delegate to attend the Conference equals \$1,450. This cost takes into consideration the travel expenses of delegates far and near and makes them equal. Only costs of the delegates (including meals, per diem) are included in this figure. Staff, trustee, volunteer and summary costs are not included. The \$900 figure is the equalized expense amount determined by the Board each year; the WSO pays the \$550 difference for each delegate. Our history indicated not all areas can afford the entire amount and the WSO traditionally accepts a portion of delegate expenses plus other Conference expenses. The appeal letters to each group help to make up this difference.

**63. Delegates' names and home addresses are given out in Conference materials. Trustees' status as a volunteer from the fellowship and availability at the WSO is different than that of an employee. In order to facilitate direct and timely communication, could we please have a listing of the trustees' home addresses?**

No. Unlike the individual delegates, the Board of Trustees functions as one body. Broader issues important to all trustees are forwarded to each member. Correspondence to trustees is forwarded in a timely manner from the WSO.

**64. Could the World Service Conference remain located in Virginia Beach and a special excursion arranged for those wishing to visit Stepping Stones before or after the scheduled Conference?**

Your suggestion will be considered by the Conference Committee and Board of Trustees and evaluated before the next Conference.

**65. What is the cost to ship materials, transport and lodge staff to the NYC area for the Conference this year?**

Shipping materials costs were \$550; travel for the staff was \$3,240; hotel and per diem were \$6,431. Hotel and per diem costs would also be necessary in Virginia Beach. Currently we are tax exempt in Connecticut, and this is a savings.

**66. In our Service Manual it is mentioned that the Concepts [of Service] are as important as the Steps and Traditions. Is this a reality at the Conference level? How can we make it a reality at the group and district levels?**

The 1984 Conference voted that the Twelve Concepts of Service be given the same stature as the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. Service is our third legacy, and these Twelve Concepts of Service guide and direct our service arms at all levels of the fellowship. The Concepts of Service are a reality at the Conference level. Workshops on the Concepts of Service may expand knowledge and use of them at the group and district levels.

## INTERNATIONAL

**67. How can Al-Anon outside the U.S. and Canada (groups and GSOs) be given more of a say in Al-Anon's decision making?**

The WSO is in constant contact with GSOs as well as other international groups. GSO delegates to the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) held every two years provide the WSO and Conference with valuable input and suggestions.

**68. What steps is WSO taking to insure copyright protection of our literature in GSO areas such as Russia?**

Reprint permission has not been given to any entity in Russia at this time. When a structure asks to reprint Conference Approved Literature for the first time they must meet the certain criteria set up by the Board of Trustees. Their responses to the criteria are then given to the Board through the Executive Committee before the reprint permission is given. Lithuania was the last structure to receive reprint permission. [Note: Russia is not a "GSO area." They have recently formed an Al-Anon information service in Russia.]

## AREA

**69. At the assembly who could put a motion forward? Only the group representatives or can any member in attendance do it? We put it forward last year at our assembly, but there were few negative reactions to it and there was nowhere for us to back up this idea. This seems the normal way to proceed: only the voting members could put motions forward in most organizations.**

At assemblies, generally motions are made by group representatives and area world service committee members. There is only one vote per group (pg. 127). This varies according to the autonomy of the area.

**70. Does the "Beginner's Meeting" have a group representative? If yes, how long is his term? If no, who assumes the responsibility of the group? Does the Beginner's Meeting have a group number? Does it have to register like a regular group or is it under the responsibility of a regular group?**

Beginners' Meetings are usually a series of six meetings held before the regular meeting or in a separate group. They are led by an experienced Al-Anon/Alateen member who explains alcoholism as a disease with far-reaching effects (pg. 44 Service Manual). Beginners' Meetings may register, but like other outreach meetings (institutions) usually they do not have a GR. If the group does not have regular members usually a meeting contact may bring relevant information to the meeting.

**71. A member in our area involved with the area convention has written a document to help people prepare for any of the Al-Anon/Alateen conventions in the area. From what I understand the document is based on the existing Guideline (G-3) with some other ideas and experiences from our area convention. The member announced his document in our area newsletter and asked the members to send \$3.00 (at cost) to receive a copy of the document. Is it acceptable to produce such a document?**

It is suggested that a locally produced guideline be authorized and approved by the AWSC or assembly. If it is to be sold, the recommended charge may cover production costs only.

72. In our area, a member, who is serving at the assembly level as coordinator and has the list of district representatives and group representatives to use as part of his functions. He is using those same lists to write to the districts and groups to express his personal views on various aspects of the program. Some ideas are very well expressed, but others are rather confusing and questionable. The officers and myself, as delegate, are quite concerned about this kind of writing. We feel that the unity of our area could be affected as our members have a hard time to comprehend what is expressed and also often think we are the author of those writings. What could we do as officers in such a situation?

*This is an anonymous fellowship and group listings should not be used for personal purposes. Perhaps someone could tactfully explain this to the member.*

## ADMISSIONS HANDBOOK

73. When the *Service Manual* is revised in 2000 or later, will you please add:

- By-laws of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
- Procedures for election of regional trustees, trustees-at-large.
- Volunteer members elected for committees at WSO.
- Map showing locations of regions.

*This is the first request we have received for these additions. The Admissions/Handbook Committee, which has delegate members, will review your suggestions.*

## TRANSLATIONS (FRENCH/SPANISH)

74. Is there a budget for publications in foreign languages? If yes, what is the budget?

*The costs of production, including translation, is not a budgeted line item as it is offset in the sale of publications. Some money is budgeted to translate correspondence and other materials when, due to time limitations, the staff cannot.*

75. What is the income and expenses for Spanish literature?

*The income for 1998 Spanish sales was \$94,277. Cost of goods to produce was \$42,042. However, the net cost of producing Spanish literature is two to three times higher than English because smaller quantities are printed. We do not allocate staff salaries of Membership Outreach, Fellowship Communication, Publications, Customer Service, Shipping or the Executive Director in this calculation.*

76. The Hispanic groups in our area have written to the WSO over 100 letters, requesting the translated version of *Paths to Recovery*. We understand it is a great piece of recovery literature. We think it will cause the same impact in the recovery process, for the Hispanic-speaking groups, that it caused in the English-speaking groups.

*Paths to Recovery is on our schedule of books to be translated and produced in French and in Spanish.*

77. AFG francophone members were never consulted as to the usefulness of a French-translated *Forum* or any other translated magazine to which they cannot participate unless they write in a foreign language. Why are they consulted now to find a name for such a magazine? They already have a magazine of their own; why not improve it and make it a true French-language AFG magazine? Are not AFG francophone members worth anything but translations? Translations being a necessary evil, should everything be translated, especially personal stories, or only "First Things First" and room be made for true French language personal stories?

*WSO's desire is to serve the French-speaking members. To do this, *Le lien*, a 12-page newsletter, sent free to each French-speaking group four times a year, was created. Members were asked to name it as another way WSO would include members' ideas. In order for a publication to be an official WSO publication it must go through a review process. Articles in *Le lien* go through this process because they are all translated from approved *Forum* magazine articles which go through a seven-person committee review.*

## GROUP SERVICES

78. Why are suspended groups kept on the mailing list when it causes so much confusion?

*The majority of suspended groups are viable groups. They are usually suspended because the current mailing address moved and the group has not provided new information. Area delegates are advised about groups in "suspended mail status" and most respond quickly so the Group Records Department can update the record. To avoid confusion, a form now accompanies all printouts that clearly explains why suspended groups appear on the printout.*

79. Our LDC office manager is the best and informs WSO of any changes in the area. Why after two years does my own group find itself on the inactive list?

*The conduit for changes to area printouts are through the area group records coordinator or the area delegate. Your group can also contact the WSO directly by phone, fax or e-mail (WSO@al-anon.org) to update the record of your group. The Group Services Committee is constantly reviewing group record procedures with an eye toward ongoing improvement. A group is suspended when mail is returned. A group which remains suspended for one year becomes inactive.*

80. What are the guidelines and proper method of eliminating an inactive group from the rolls? How do we deal with treasury funds?

*In order to eliminate an inactive group from the rolls, depending on the area, the group needs to advise the district or the area (through the group records coordinator or area delegate), the Al-Anon information service and the WSO. The remaining members of the group can take a group conscience vote as to how to disburse any literature and funds it may have. It can also turn to its links of service for guidance (the district representative or the area delegate).*

81. Could the group registration form be made clearer? Is the meeting contact person's anonymity being broken by WSO giv-

**ing this information out? (With Caller ID a person's first name and phone number shows the full name.)**

In addition to the Group Record Registration/Information Form, there is a document titled "How to Fill Out the Al-Anon/Alateen Group Record Information Form," that is sent with the form to new groups that register with the WSO. Under "Line 9," it reads: "Contacts — Members of the group who volunteer to give information over the phone to the WSO, prospective members of professionals. These members need to know that the WSO may give callers their first name and phone number..." Members making calls may want to consult their telephone directory regarding the method of blocking Caller ID information from being given.

**82. Our area secretary has concerns about only receiving the area meeting printouts twice a year. Is that still the WSO policy?**

The Group Services Committee determined at its meeting in April 1998 that it would be in the best interest of area/WSO record-keeping to process no more than two printouts annually. If your area has the need for an additional printout, please contact the Director of Group Services. Frequently multiple projects were causing problems in that they were not returned in enough time to make corrections before another printout was due to be sent, thus causing concern and confusion.

**83. Why do we have sheets with the meeting format, Steps, Traditions and Concepts of Service in the new binder instead of a list of the books in which they can be found?**

The contents of the new group binder was reviewed by the Group Services Committee and within the WSO. The format pages in the binder indicate that the format was printed for convenience and it also refers to the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual. The goal was to ensure that groups used material from Al-Anon's Conference Approved Literature. In a recent evaluation of the new group binder, new groups rate this section as the most useful part of the binder.

**84. Can areas' web sites be included in "Getting In Touch"? The WSO is only allowing it at this time if the web site registers as an Al-Anon information service.**

No, "Getting in Touch" is a listing of Al-Anon information services (AIS) and their web sites only.

**85. Would it be possible to have a form in the World Service web site for group registration updates?**

At this time the Al-Anon web site is designed to give information to newcomers, professionals and the public. In the future the design and purpose of the page could be expanded. See questions 9, 10, and 11.

**86. The 1998 WSC voted to change the wording in the Service Manual on page 65, "Convention" section, to "has a voice and may have a vote..." Why does the new Service Manual read "may have a voice and a vote" rather than in the language of the approved motion?**

Thank you for bringing this error to our attention. It will be corrected in subsequent WSO publications so that members can make the substitution in their own copies of the Manual.

**87. What is the experience in prison meetings in more members doing Fourth and Fifth Steps?**

This question has been asked of the WSO and to date there is no experience to share. The subject will be brought to the attention of the Group Services Committee.

**88. Is it possible to add the field "County" after the field "City" in line 8 of the Al-Anon/Alateen Group Record Registration/Information Form? The districts in our area are fairly consistent with county lines. We have a map which indicates which counties are in each district. Therefore, when WSO returns the Group Record Forms to the Delegate requesting district numbers, it would be much easier/faster for this information to be obtained. Could this be considered?**

The Registration/Information Form is designed to be universal. Creating a field for county lines might be applicable to some areas but could cause confusion for others. Some areas have slightly redesigned the form and added fields that are applicable to their area, but it would cause confusion if the WSO changed the form.

**89. Would it not be more prudent for areas to have only one LDC that could be supported by an entire area? An AIS could be formed in each district; therefore, they would not be part of LDCs. Is it not true that AISs tend to get lost in LDCs?**

The needs of an area with large geographical boundaries and population are very different from smaller areas. It is not true for every area that the AIS tends to get lost in the LDCs, and when AIS/LDCs work within the overall area structure, the group conscience can determine the best solution (based on individual requirements). These decisions are left to the local autonomy because so much depends on the population of the area and the history of the AIS or LDC.

**90. How can we make buying literature easier to have for Al-Anon/Alateen? Available in bookstores? Each larger city have a hub? (Sometimes we wait weeks for our order.)**

Members can ask local bookstores to stock Al-Anon books. See question 89..

**91. Was the suggested addition to the welcome for Al-Anon adult children approved by the Literature Committee, Board of Trustees?**

The sheet added to the Group Binder with the welcome for Al-Anon adult children was approved by the Group Services Committee. This was printed in an early edition of Inside Al-Anon and was in a reprint which is no longer published.

**92. How about more suggestions on how to start meetings in institutions?**

More Twelve Step work! WSO Group Services Department relies upon the suggestions sent to us by members to pass on to the fellowship. Because many members are employed and free time is minimal, group sponsorship and rotation of volunteers is helpful. There are usually members who are retired, unemployed or available during daytime business hours to contact professionals at institutions. Tap into them to make telephone calls or personal contact at facilities in your community. Offer to do a series of six Beginners' Meetings at a facility to see if there is interest in having a group and to develop a corps of Al-Anon members to volunteer to

sponsor the meeting. Go high tech — do an e-mail distribution to agency and facility web sites in your community offering to set up an Al-Anon or Alateen meeting at their institution. Contact adult education programs to offer a workshop about Al-Anon (six Beginners' Meetings). Be imaginative. To get even more ideas, hold a brainstorming session at a district or information service meeting or area workshop.

## ALATEEN

### 93. How can we support Alateen groups without actually being a sponsor of a group?

Refer to Director's Presentation and discussion at the 1999 WSC, page 25-26.

### 94. Project 3000 is alive. Our Alateen Coordinator is busy. So far, 31 books have been purchased (this year) from donations from Al-Anon Groups to give to Alateen Groups. Are other areas doing the same?

Several areas have participated in Project 3000. As a result, approximately 200 Courage To Be Me books have been made available to Alateen members.

### 95. If Alateen is part of Al-Anon, does an Alateen members' years in the Alateen program count toward their program longevity when being considered for service work in Al-Anon? If not, why not?

World Service Office résumé forms consider years in Al-Anon/Alateen as the number of years an individual has been in the program. The Group Services Committee is asking the Policy Committee to review this idea as it relates to Alateen sponsors.

### 96. Could it be made clearer about AA members who sponsor Alateen groups, i.e.: being an active member of Al-Anon also?

Only Al-Anon members can sponsor Alateen groups; Al-Anon members who are also members of AA may sponsor the group by virtue of their Al-Anon membership. This information can be found in the Policy Digest section of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual.

### 97. What is legal position on doing background checks of a potential Alateen sponsor?

The WSO is in the process of completing a new guideline titled "Safety for Alateen Members and their Sponsors." This guideline (G-34) will indicate that the experience of our groups suggests that it is essential to check with local authorities regarding legal issues in regard to minors. It is impossible to offer blanket direction because laws vary from state to state and province to province.

### 98. How do our Alateen guidelines address the issue of reporting suspected child abuse?

The issue of reporting suspected child abuse is addressed in A Guide to Alateen Sponsorship — an Unforgettable Adventure (P-86), page 114, and the upcoming Alateen safety guideline (G-34). Essentially, they recommend a knowledge of the laws of your state/province regarding reporting of abuse and how it pertains to volunteers. In keeping with our Traditions, if reporting is

required, it is best to let the Alateen members know this and encourage them to talk to a personal sponsor.

### 99. Spending group money, i.e. sponsoring scholarships for Alateens or a particular interest. Does WSO have any recommendations about this besides "personal progress for the greatest number"?

Page 40 of the Service Manual, last bullet under "Financial Policy": "Members... plan how funds will be budgeted for the purchase of literature, refreshments and contributions. Some groups take additional collections for special local projects within the district or area."

### 100. Please state the position of the Conference regarding Alateen conferences that are not a part of area structure? What potential legal concerns do sponsors, groups, areas and WSO have by contributing to and/or participating in these events?

See p. 65 of the Service Manual "Conventions." As suggested in the guideline on Alateen Conferences (G-3), "Establishing a connection between the conference board and area assembly is essential." This guideline also offers tips regarding legal concerns in the section titled, "Ensuring a Safe Environment." The same legal concerns regarding Alateen conferences exist whether or not the conference is a part of the area structure. Since laws regarding minors vary from area to area, it is necessary to obtain advice locally regarding the question you posed.

### 101. What legal considerations exist regarding areas and/or districts investigating the background of potential Alateen sponsors? Can WSO give or develop a procedural guideline?

See question 97 and 98. Legal considerations regarding Alateen vary from area to area and must be reviewed with local legal sources.

### 102. What can areas do to incorporate state and local laws regarding volunteering with minors?

Areas may create their own safety guidelines. See answer above.

## FELLOWSHIP COMMUNICATIONS

### 103. Several "double winners" have asked why "dual members" replaced "double winners." They prefer being referred to as "double winners" — makes them feel like winners — more positive. Could you change it back?

There were some members who felt the term ironic, that needing a program made members winners. Other members had problems with the term, that it inferred superiority.

### 104. How can we encourage using a variety of literature at our meetings?

Making the suggestion to use a variety of literature to those you sponsor, mention various pamphlets and books that helped during your personal sharing and lead by example when you chair the meeting.

## Ask-It-Basket

### 105. How to keep only Conference Approved Literature in meetings.

*Suggest a meeting on the pamphlet, Why CAL? (P-35). Give personal examples of using outside material as a break of the Fourth Tradition.*

### 106. How can we get more members to subscribe to *The Forum*?

*Hold a group meeting on The Forum and brainstorm ways to increase subscriptions. Use the presentation presented at the '99 WSC on The Forum. Please consult your area delegate and your area Forum Coordinator.*

### 107. The decline in *The Forum* subscriptions continues. Our area members feel that the stories are "over-edited" and bland. Can the editors not edit but also retain some of the writer's personality?

*Retaining the original voice of the writer is our primary effort. Editing for our international monthly magazine requires that slang, colloquial phrases and inappropriate use of language be corrected. In a recent survey of Forum subscribers, we learned that a vast majority of readers are pleased with The Forum and its current presentation. Some have shared with us that they believe that more editing is needed. Please know we hear your concerns.*

### 108. Many members of my meeting have commented on the lack of "weight" in the new literature. Specifically lack of discussion of Steps, Traditions and slogans (excluding *Paths to Recovery*). Can this be brought to the attention of the Literature Committee?

*This comment will be forwarded to both literature committees for their consideration.*

### 109. Can we have more emphasis on the spiritual nature of Al-Anon without bringing in individual religions?

*A study of our international spirituality book, Having Had a Spiritual Awakening (B-25), may be helpful.*

### 110. How can a Fourth Step recovery tool be developed? Many members have asked us to develop additional sharings, suggestions, literature on doing a Fourth Step.

*The 1999 WSC approved a motion to revise "Blueprint for Progress" (P-5). See motion #7 in this Summary.*

### 111. Could the WSO take gender-specific pronouns out of our literature?

*As our literature is revised and more literature developed most gender-specific pronouns are taken out of text. Gender specific pronouns are retained in personal stories in order to retain the voice of the writer. The Literature Committees are in the process of reviewing the inventories taken in the areas on each piece of literature. This issue will be addressed when it is called for. In 1993 the Admissions/ Handbook Committee considered a recommendation to change all gender-specific language in the "World Service Handbook" section of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual. The committee agreed that for historical accuracy and clarity the pronoun "he" would be used throughout. A notation to this effect was added in 1992 (see p. 99 of the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual).*

### 112. Advice: We do not give advice, but sharings in our literature refer to advice given. Is this not giving a mixed message from WSO?

*In our welcoming meeting statement we say, "The loving interchange of help among members and daily reading of Al-Anon literature thus make us ready to receive the priceless gift of serenity." Some members may consider other members' sharings as "loving interchange" while others may consider it "advice." Members who sponsor or have sponsors may consider the personal sharing advice. "We aren't perfect." As it is stated in our Suggested Closing, "Talk to each other; reason things out with someone else, but let there be no gossip or criticism of one another."*

*The members of the Literature Committee, Forum Editorial Advisory Committee, and Policy Committee, as well as WSO staff who participate in the review of Al-Anon literature are committed to retaining the voice of the member sharing. As one member stated in a recent review, "Take what you liked and leave the rest."*

### 113. Is there a special process for adding new slogans to the list approved by Al-Anon?

*There is not official process for designating an Al-Anon phrase a "slogan." Al-Anon "slogans" have evolved from our literature over the years as members have identified them and used them on a more frequent basis.*

### 114. The *Courage to Change* book is not very durable. How can you improve the binding of these?

*The bad bindings you are referring to are from the 1992 printing. Subsequent printings have been "smyth sewn" and become defective only with years of "daily" use, as does any book. The book has been reprinted numerous times since then and there have been little to no problems with the binding. (Note: We are no longer accepting any books from the 1992 printing for refund or exchange.)*

### 115. Can a compilation of the works of Serena T. be put together as a new and exciting piece of literature?

*This request will be forwarded to the Literature Committees for consideration.*

### 116. Can the Literature Committee come up with a new piece that deals with humorous incidents both during active alcoholism and during the recovery process?

*This request will be forwarded to the Literature Committees for consideration; however, based on the limited number of "humorous" sharings received for "The Lighter Side" department in The Forum, this request is unlikely to be seriously considered at this time.*

### 117. How was the issue of combined stories in *How Al-Anon Works* resolved?

*In late 1997, the WSO received a request from one member to remove his story from the book. The second printing had just been completed. The member was told his story will be removed and another story inserted with the third printing. The WSO is aware of two additional "blended" sharings. In both cases, the primary writers have not requested that they be removed. See p. 52 from the 1998 World Service Conference Summary for additional information on this topic.*

**118. Why did we discontinue the table card and door hanger relating to "Al-Anon spoken here. Leave all hats outside."? Problems are constantly arising with dual members and outside entities.**

*From a production and cost-effective standpoint, the table cards/door hangers were not used by the fellowship. Similar phrases can be found in our pamphlet "Al-Anon Spoken Here" (P-53). If these issues are a problem in the group perhaps a meeting or series of meetings from this pamphlet may be helpful. Groups or individuals may create their own table card or door hanger.*

**119. Have CD-roms and other multi-media products for current literature been considered? Has a detailed cost analysis been performed? Is there anyone on the Board of Trustees with expertise and insight in computers/multi-media to aid in this process?**

*The Fellowship Communication department has recently tabulated a survey conducted throughout the fellowship regarding the potential demand for audio taped Al-Anon literature. After analysis and review by the Budget Committee it was decided that efforts to create such materials were not an effective use of Al-Anon's resources and WSO staff time. See page 52 (re: audio cassettes) from the 1992 World Service Conference Summary for additional information on this issue. Several members of the Board and staff have this expertise.*

**120. Could the Fellowship Communication's semi-annual mailings be sent to district literature chairs or c/o AIS/LDC or DR?**

*The WSO link of service for literature is through the area Literature Coordinators. If communication is lacking between the area and the AIS/LDCs, and districts, perhaps a workshop or area discussion is needed to establish this communication. LDCs are sent timely updates on business related issues regarding WSO sales terms and upcoming releases.*

**121. What is the bookmark with the slogans? Pamphlet on Anonymity?**

*The WSO does not publish a bookmark on slogans. Perhaps you saw one created by a district or area as a fundraiser.*

*There are two pamphlets on anonymity: Anonymity (P-65) and Why Anonymity in Al-Anon? (P-33). There is also a discussion about anonymity in the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual.*

**122. Could we have...**

- A pamphlet on Service: Awareness, Acceptance, Action?
- Pamphlet on Carrying the Message Inside Al-Anon: How? Where? When? Who? Why?

*These ideas will be passed to the Literature Committee.*

## GENERAL

**123. According to the First Step, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." Should Al-Anon members abstain to drink alcohol and admit they are powerless over this fact? I would like a clear answer,**

**very precise with a yes or a no.**

*In Al-Anon, there is no precise answer to your question. Each member would need to decide this for themselves. Al-Anon has no opinion on another person's drinking.*

**124. What have been the most successful ways to obtain and retain new members?**

*See discussion in Workshop #3 that took place at this year's WSC, see page 23.*

**125. What have you found to be the most effective methods to motivate "middle" or "average" members to volunteer for service work at district and area levels?**

*See discussion in workshops in this year's Summary, see page 23.*

**126. What can each member do to support this program?**

*Get involved in service — "Participation is the key to harmony" (Concept Four).*

**127. What can each member do to carry the message? As trusted servants, how do we convey the importance of commitment to the Al-Anon Family Groups?**

*Set a good example. If every trusted servant acted and spoke as if Al-Anon was their first priority, then that message would be communicated. Invite someone to go with you when doing service work.*

**128. Do we [groups] practice responsibility not only authority in Concept One?**

*Members or groups can only speak for themselves.*

**129. Some members see the Concepts of Service as just for service, even with the book *Paths to Recovery* as a source. How can we make members aware that this legacy may be used on a daily basis — at home and at work too?**

*Use this as a meeting topic. Present these ideas when speaking about Al-Anon principles. Use the pamphlet The Concepts — Al-Anon's Best Kept Secret (P-57).*

**130. Who constitutes a "member" of a group for purposes of voting, group conscience meetings and group decisions? The *Service Manual* clearly defines this (p. 63) but what suggestions do you have when people at a group conscience meeting do not fit into these guidelines?**

*Let the group conscience decide before a vote. There are many options such as giving them voice and no vote, or no voice or vote but the option to observe.*

**131. When two members in a small district "impose" their ideas, unfortunately using quotes from the *Manual* and visiting all the groups, newcomers are not returning and some old timers are leaving. Any suggestions? (I know this is dominance.)**

*In order for some to dominate, other members must be silent. Hold meetings on the Three Obstacles to Success*



## Ask-It-Basket

(Gossip/Dominance/Religion) from Alcoholism — the Family Disease (P-6). Others will become knowledgeable. Use the text on Concept Twelve, especially the section on prudence and Warranty Two as a meeting topic. Also refer to page 38 in the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual in a discussion of Group Problems and Solutions, which refers to dominance, and sharings in Paths to Recovery on Tradition One.

### 132. How to keep an Al-Anon member from dominating the meeting with his/her problems?

Speak individually to the dominating person at the break or after the meeting. The greatest good for the greatest number is the spirit of Tradition One. Recommend the use of a temporary sponsor. Give the member time to adjust to the program and observe the give and take of all members. Recommend the group take a Group Inventory and work together to resolve issues.

### 133. What does group autonomy really mean? How can we safeguard Traditions? Too many times they are broken, ignored, violated with excuses they are only guidelines. "It's group autonomy."

There is a second part to the Fourth Tradition, "except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole."

### 134. Are groups aware of the interdependence between groups and our World Service Office?

It is the responsibility of every group to elect a group representative (GR), who is the link between the group and the WSO. It is the group's responsibility to listen to the GR, pay their expenses to attend the assembly and district meetings, and support and strengthen the links of service. Reading the appeal letter from WSO, reporting on items in Inside Al-Anon Xtra, and ordering a group copy of the Conference Summary all connect your group to WSO. Encouraging attendance at a regional service seminar when held nearby also strengthens the WSO bond with the groups. If your group does these things, they are aware of this relationship and this interaction will inform new members about Al-Anon's worldwide nature.

### 135. Three Obstacles of Success in Al-Anon — #1 Discussion of Religion. I feel that it has such contradiction when several meetings end with the Lord's Prayer. This may be confusing to the newcomer. Can the WSO remind our groups that the Three Obstacles need to be upheld?

Every group is autonomous as to how they choose to close their meeting. If the meeting you attend uses a format that includes discussion of religion, gossip or dominance, volunteer to chair a meeting on that subject. See question 131 above.

### 136. Could we have a better definition of "anonymity" and "attraction vs. promotion?"

Anonymity is defined in the 1998-2000 Service Manual in the Suggested Welcome (pg. 52) and a section on pp. 67-68. If you have ideas to improve the definition, send them to the WSO, ATTN: Policy Committee.

Attraction is compared to promotion on pp. 82-83 in the 1998-2000 Service Manual and in the leaflet "Attracting and Cooperating" (S-40). Feel free to send your suggestions for improving this as well to the Policy Committee.

### 137. The 1999 WSC theme, "Carrying the Message — Our Primary Purpose." Is this misleading and confusing to the newcomer? I always thought our primary purpose is to give comfort to the families and friends of alcoholics.

We give comfort to families and friends by carrying the Al-Anon message.

### 138. Our Suggested Welcome seems to be redundant and lacks the impact that some of our other statements have. Can we reword the welcome to be shorter and to the point?

This has been the Al-Anon welcome since our earliest days. If you have a suggestion to improve it, send it to the WSO.

### 139. Besides sharing at meetings from where does the next largest segment of recovery come?

This is a personal issue for each member.

### 140. Why do other people besides the delegates have a vote at the Conference?

The reason all Conference members vote is a reflection of the Twelve Concepts of Service. "The Principle of Participation has been built into our whole service structure." (See Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, Concept Eleven, pp. 177-190 for details.)

### 141. Why does Step One say, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol..." instead of powerless over "the alcoholic or alcoholism"?

Our pioneer members chose to leave this Step as written by AA. The Steps as written were adopted by a vote of the groups. It would take a vote of the groups to change them. See questions 30 and 31.

### 142. Why do we not have Step prayers in *How Al-Anon Works*, *Paths to Recovery*, bookmarks or pamphlets?

Belief in prayer indicated in the Eleventh Step has a different meaning to each Al-Anon member. Members pray as they wish. The prayers to which you refer were written by AA members and are in AA literature.

### 143. Can an individual member of Al-Anon have their own web page?

Members can have their own web site, but it would be a break from Traditions to call it an Al-Anon web site or identify themselves as Al-Anon members. Some members have hyperlinked their site to the WSO with an appropriate reference such as, "Helping families and friends of alcoholics." No individual speaks for the fellowship as a whole, nor has permission to use Al-Anon/Alateen in the web site's address.



---

---

# ***1998 WSO ANNUAL REPORT***

# 1998 WSO ANNUAL REPORT

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*Ric B., Executive Director*

### INTRODUCTION

This report of the World Service Office's activities is provided annually to the World Service Conference (WSC). These reports are printed in the Conference Summary that is available to the entire membership. An abridged version, appearing in *Inside Al-Anon Xtra*, is sent to all registered English-speaking groups and is translated into French and Spanish.

### OVERALL ADMINISTRATION

The Board of Trustees of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. meets quarterly and is responsible for: carrying out the mandates of the World Service Conference; establishing business policies of the World Service Office (WSO); estimating revenue; administering service to the membership; publishing and distributing Conference Approved Literature (CAL); approving the quarterly and annual reports submitted by the Executive Director and WSO staff.

The Executive Committee meets monthly and is empowered to act on behalf of the Trustees between Board meetings. It has legal authority bestowed by the Board of Trustees to have oversight of day-to-day affairs of the WSO.

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. (WSO) is a not-for-profit organization, listed under Section 501 (c) (3) of the US Internal Revenue Code, and has been incorporated in New York State since 1954.

With a staff of 56 full-time employees, the Executive Director is responsible for overall supervision of the WSO staff and for administration of the organization's policies. In the absence of the Executive Director, the director serving on the Executive Committee or the Executive Director's designee acts in his stead. The Director of Business Services is directly responsible for business operations and controlling finances. Changes to the WSO staffing structure were approved by the Board of Trustees on a three-year trial basis beginning June, 1996.

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., is committed to equal employment opportunity and is in compliance with all existing Federal, State, and local fair employment laws and guidelines. AFG, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or handicapped status. Every effort is made to maintain a work atmosphere that is free from harassment.

### ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*Helen R., Chairperson*

The Board approved the interim actions of the Executive Committee at each of its quarterly meetings. An increase of \$1.00 in the sales price of *One Day At A Time*, *One Day At A Time* - large print, *Courage to Change*, *Courage to Change* - large print, *How Al-Anon Works*, *From Survival to Recovery*, *As We Understood...*, *Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions*, *Alateen: A Day At a Time*, *...In All Our Affairs*, and *Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* was approved effective April 1, 1998. The cost of *Forum* subscriptions increased by \$1.00 US for a one-year subscription in the US, Canada, or overseas effective July 1, 1998, in order to partially recover mailing costs. Multiple year subscription prices were adjusted accordingly.

The Board decided to discontinue the French *Forum* in its present form effective July 1, 1998. An excerpted version of *The Forum* and "Inside

Al-Anon" will be produced in French similar to the one printed for the Spanish-speaking groups and will be increased to four issues per year beginning January 1999. This will be sent free of charge to each French group and to the French-speaking GSOs. It will also be available to individuals by subscription at a cost of \$4.00 US for the US and Puerto Rico and \$5.00 US for Canada and all structures outside of the US. This cost basically covers the postage.

The Board previewed and approved the Al-Anon and Alateen Tornado PSAs as well as the new poster that has been produced in conjunction with the PSAs. The Board also approved the printing of a "Service Journal." This is to be used as a service tool.

The practice of two local Alateen members of the Alateen Advisory Committee attending the first WSC Group Services Committee meeting was approved on a three-year trial basis and will take place when local Alateen members are available.

The Board approved the Guidelines for Electronic Meetings for distribution at the Conference. The reprint permission criteria for on-line meetings was distributed at the International Convention, and it was amended after the October Board meeting and redistributed to the on-line meetings that had requested it originally. For further information, see the *Fact Sheet for On-Line Meetings* (S-60).

The Board authorized the creation of templates for ten pages which they will offer to GSOs in conjunction with the WSO web site. We will also offer each GSO the ability to host a web site which will include an e-mail address. This will be a cooperative effort with the WSO as the host site and the GSOs paying for their own pages.

All nominees for trustee-at-large, regional trustee, as well as Board officers, Executive Committee at-large members, at-large member of the Executive Committee for Real Property Management, and the respective chairs of the two Executive committees were elected, having been given traditional approval by the Conference where required. The chairperson announced her selections for committee chairs and assignments which the Board approved.

The Board voted to discontinue the Alateen Table Card (S-26), *Anne's Story* (P-66), Al-Anon and the Military (reprint), Lois W. and the Pioneers (A-4 Audiocassette), and Alateen Tells It Like It Is (A-8 Audiocassette). The Board recommended that *Forum Favorites*, Vol. 1-4 be discontinued as of December 1, 1999.

At the recommendation of the Public Outreach Committee, the Board is discontinuing posters M-41 and M-41s — Is Alcoholism A Problem in Your Family?; M-48 Door Poster; M-49 Flower Poster; and M-51 Giraffe Poster. Four service pamphlets, *Concerned About Your Mental Health?* (P-79); *Worried About Someone's Mental Health?* (P-80); *Are You In a Correctional Facility?* (P-83), and *Worried About Someone In a Correctional facility?* (P-84), will be discontinued, as the committee decided to combine the contents into two new pamphlets. *Pebble in the Pond*, (P-42) will be discontinued, since many of the service materials listed in it have been discontinued or revised. When completed, a new "How To" Public Outreach service booklet will take its place.

Al-Anon's Third International Convention was held in Salt Lake City, UT in July 1998 and was an overall success. Even though the attendance was less than we had originally anticipated, several changes kept the costs lower than we projected. The Board will recommend to the 1999 WSC that we

hold an Al-Anon International Convention every five years beginning in July 2008, and that we do not hold RSSs in the years in which we hold Al-Anon International conventions. We will continue to cooperate with AA at their Internationals, when invited.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*Pat B./Doris S., Chairpersons*

As delegated by the Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee approved the seating of the following persons at the 1998 World Service Conference with voice, but no vote: Richard Keilly, Director of Business Services (non-Al-Anon member); John B., Chairperson, Executive Committee for Real Property Management (Al-Anon member); Hilda Maria B., representative from Mexico (Al-Anon member); and Patrick Q., Forum Coordinator (Wednesday, April 22 and Thursday, April 23, Al-Anon Member), and Carole P., Public Outreach Service Manager for Canada (Sunday, April 19 and Monday, April 20, Al-Anon member).

Permission was granted to print the *Joy of Service* leaflet for GRs and DRs and a Contribution Acknowledgment Card for birthday and memorial donations. Reprint Policy and Procedures were accepted and trial Alateen Advisory Committee guidelines were received.

Price increases for the following sets were approved, reflecting the price increases for books in each set which were approved by the Board of Trustees in January, 1998: *ODAT* and *Courage to Change* (B-17) from \$14.00 to \$16.00; *ODAT* and *Courage to Change* - large print (B-19) from \$16.00 to \$18.00; Recovery Collection (RC-1) from \$75.00 to \$80.00; Alateen Recovery Collection (RC-2) from \$25.00 to \$26.00.

Permission was granted to make the annual transfer of \$38,000 to be held in the capital account for use in repairs/replacements to the building.

Action was taken to print 100,000 *Courage to Change* in hard cover for this printing, after the Executive Committee decided that the need for soft cover daily readers was not clearly documented.

When purchasing the book, *Having Had A Spiritual Awakening...*, at the 1998 Al-Anon International Convention, the committee agreed there would be no shipping charges or discounts when purchasing in quantities of five or more.

As delegated to the Executive Committee by the Board of Trustees, the committee accepted these candidates for at-large members of the following committees: Alateen Advisory Committee: Alateen - Shana G., second year; Kasey L., Janelle H., Jenny L., all first year; Al-Anon - Laurel L., third year; Kathy M. and Dylan H., both second year; Dorothy P., first year; Archives Advisory Committee: Juanita G. and Judene G., both third year; Linda C., second year; Jenny G., first year; Forum Editorial Advisory Committee: Roland D., sixth year; Suzie C., Ora B., and Sandie D., all third year; D. C. (Buck) D., first year; International Coordination Committee: Jennie H., second year; Literature Committee I: Margaret McP. and Jo F., both third year; Wesley M. deC., and Catherine T., second year; Alice A., first year; Literature Committee II: Victoria LaB., Patricia L. and Karen C-S., all third year; Melody G., second year; Ann B., first year; Public Outreach Committee: Frank R., third year; Khayriyyah A., and Diane H., both second year; Edyth W., first year; Outreach to Professionals Advisory Committee: Pat R. and Pat H., both third year; Theresa M., second year; Pat B. and Sara Jane G., both first year.

Authorization was given to Group Services to produce a service tool on service sponsorship. Authorization was also given to Public Outreach to create a service tool for employee assistance professionals.

Responding to requests from outside organizations for permission to reprint CAL on Internet web sites, the committee decided at this time that permission be given only to on-line meetings.

Approval was given for the format of the letters and the procedure to be given to on-line meetings regarding guidelines and permission for using CAL.

Approval was given for a project proposal to create a "How To" Public Outreach service booklet.

Permission was given to distribute one new PSA annually to 500 TV stations and 1500 radio stations for six months and to distribute the same PSA to different TV and radio stations in corresponding amounts for the remaining six months.

Approval was given to produce three sheets for Al-Anon adult children of alcoholics for the New Group Binder that can also be used as a supplement when Al-Anon adult children groups register with the WSO.

In reviewing safety guidelines for Alateen members and sponsors, the committee recommended that the Board review previous correspondence with the attorney to verify the legal recommendations made previously for further discussion on Al-Anon's liability in issuing such guidelines before further reviewing the content. The Board needs to consider that many areas have developed their own guidelines.

Approval was given to the replacement of literature in Alateen Kits (K-6, K-7, K-16, K-18) as some of the original literature has been discontinued.

The Executive Committee passed these recommendations from the Budget Committee: to price a set of banners: Steps, Traditions and Concepts, at \$38.00 and individual banners at \$15.00; to repay to the Reserve Fund the existing loan of \$142,598.19; and to authorize a wireless UHF sound system for the Board room.

Additional actions included: approval of the Definitions of Revisions to Literature; the concept of "Stay Healthy - Stretch Your Outreach" as the theme for the 1999 AFG Service Plan; and to print 10,000 copies in English, 2,000 copies in Spanish, and 1,000 in French of the CAL Recovery Journal to sell for a cost of \$5.00 US.

The committee reviewed changes to the Personnel Manual prior to distribution to the staff.

Approval was given to discontinue the "Turning Points" (R-17) reprint.

### BUDGET COMMITTEE (SEE BUSINESS SERVICES)

### POLICY COMMITTEE

*Margaret M., Chairperson*

Upon recommendation of the Budget Committee, a motion was passed to change the triannual appeal to a quarterly appeal. This was presented to the 1998 Conference.

The committee agreed that in the printed program for the 1998 International Convention, it would be clearly stated that personal picture-taking be limited to those members who granted permission. Additionally, no videotaping will be done at the convention.

In response to questions from members, GSOs, and AISs, an ad hoc committee was formed to review the 1995-1996 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, Policy Digest section, page 69-70, "Finances," sub-section, Contributions to WSO - Regular, regarding contribution limits. After study, proposed changes to the text of page 69 were approved.

A consensus was reached to hold an Open Policy Committee meeting at the 1998 World Service Conference.

It was agreed by consensus to add the Steps, Traditions, Concepts of Service, Suggested Welcome and Closing to materials available for use in on-line meetings.

A discussion regarding members using the AA big book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, at Al-Anon meetings resulted in a motion to amend the text in the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, Policy Digest section, "Recovery and Service Materials," sub-section page 79, Outside Publications.

As a result of the topic chosen for the Open Policy meeting at the Conference regarding naming a group (page 63 of the Policy Digest), two ad hoc committees were formed. The Special Focus/Special Interest Groups Ad Hoc Committee considered the wording in the Policy Digest regarding "Special Interest Groups." The other ad hoc committee, Choosing A Group's Name, considered the wording in the digest referring to this topic. The ad hocs met, and after further discussion, motions were passed to make additions to the texts on pages 62 and 63 of the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual Policy Digest section.

Due to difficulties in keeping updates current, a motion was passed to remove *Getting In Touch* from the list of materials that can be reproduced by individual members on the Internet. Other sites can hyperlink to our web page for updated information.

After lengthy discussion regarding the inclusion of original recovery material by a structure in *How Al-Anon Works...*, a motion was passed that the idea — using the criteria adopted by the Board in 1992, structures could substitute their own recovery stories when translating or reprinting *How Al-Anon Works...* — falls within policy guidelines. Structures will now be polled as to their interest prior to final approval/disapproval by the Board of Trustees.

Consideration was given to a member's concern regarding registration of dual member groups. After earnest discussion, the Policy Committee agreed that the WSO is following the procedures contained in the Policy Digest regarding group registration.

The Group Services Committee request that the Policy Committee recommend to the Board of Trustees to recognize the position of Group Records Coordinator was approved by the committee. The Policy Committee denied the Group Services Committee request to recommend that the Board of Trustees ask the Conference to reconsider the creation of the position of area Adult Children Coordinator.

The 50th Anniversary Committee requested that the Policy Committee consider the appropriateness of US and Canada commemorative stamps. By consensus, the Policy Committee felt it was not appropriate to proceed with these projects.

After a request by Public Outreach, the Policy Committee determined that the proposed Membership Assessment Survey to be conducted in conjunction with the 1999 Membership Survey does not violate policy.

Fellowship Communication forwarded a suggestion from a Conference member survey suggesting a phrase be added to all Conference Approved Literature: "Al-Anon/Alateen is supported by members' voluntary contributions and from the sale of our Conference Approved Literature." The Policy Committee supported this suggestion and sent it to the Board for implementation.

All motions reflecting changes to the 1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual will be presented to the 1999 WSC.

#### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

*Betty B./Catherine J., Chairpersons*

The committee presented a slate of Board officers, at-large Executive Committee members and Executive Committee Chairperson to the Board in January, as well as a nominee for the Executive Committee for Real

Property Management and its chairperson.

Revised resume forms and scoring sheets were approved by the committee and copies were presented to the Board and Conference members. Election and voting procedures for the Conference were reviewed.

The Nominating Committee met with the Conference Committee on Trustees during the Conference. Headings on the scoring sheets were aligned to correspond with the order in which they appear on the resumes, allowing for easier scoring of resumes. The CCT and Nominating Committees requested that the delegates having trustee-at-large and/or Executive Committee for Real Property Management candidates from their areas, as well as the CCT and Nominating Committee members, receive a letter notifying that delegate that a candidate from their area has submitted a resume. Delegates having candidate(s) are requested to forward concerns in writing regarding the candidate(s), if any, to the WSO by September 15. The WSO will then send comments, if any, to the CCT/Nominating Committee. At the second delegates' meeting during Conference, a motion was passed that the previous year's minutes be sent to new delegates that will serve on the CCT prior to the Conference.

The committee reviewed a proposed notice of candidacy as requested by the CCT to be mailed to the delegates regarding concerns they may have about any individual candidate. The Board of Trustees, however, did not agree with the text or intent of this letter. The Board requested that the Nominating Committee file a minority appeal with the CCT, and, pending the results of the appeal, send a letter of notification only to the delegates.

In discussing the need for a minority appeal to the CCT based on direction from the Board of Trustees, the committee reviewed the history of the idea of seeking delegate input for trustee-at-large nominations. By consensus, the committee decided to discuss the intent of the original motion from the Nominating/CCT minutes of April 20, 1998 and the succeeding motion in the CCT minutes of April 23, 1998 with the CCT at the 1999 WSC meeting to see whether the resulting letter from the Executive Director in August 1998 meets the CCT mandate to notify delegates from areas having candidates for trustee-at-large and Executive Committee for Real Property Management. The committee will report its decision not to file a minority appeal at this time to the Board of Trustees.

The feeling that family members serving on the same at-large or advisory committee would not allow for diversity of experience and opinion resulted in the committee passing a motion that family members may not serve on the same committee at the same time.

The committee prepared a slate of candidates for the Board of Trustees and a nominee for the Executive Committee for Real Property Management to be presented to the Board at its January 1999 meeting.

#### **LONG RANGE STUDY PANEL**

*Nancy B., Chairperson*

*Sandra F./Phyllis M., Secretary*

**LRSP Mission Statement:** At its January 1998 meeting, the LRSP determined that its mission statement was more of a job description than a mission statement. The panel conducted a brainstorming session to provide a more concise statement and continued to explore this at its July meeting.

**1998 WSC Presentation:** An update of the Bell Curve was presented by means of a handout, as this has now been handed over to the Budget Committee. Conference members were given a written report that included an annual update of the Five Year Plan along with a summary of the work of the Fellowship Focus Groups (FFGs). The panel provided an explanation of the purpose/utilization of FFGs as well as an explanation of the duties/focus of the Long Range Study Panel, since it was determined by the panel that it had become an "implementer" rather than a "generator" of ideas. Conference members were also informed that the panel was remaining with a structure-wide inventory and public outreach (Goals #3 and #5) for 1998/99 while the panel takes its own inventory.

**Fellowship Focus Groups (FFGs):** All nine area FFGs (one in each region) submitted a final report on Goal 5 (*Establish the Name "Al-Anon" as the Best Known Service/Resource for Relatives and Friends of Alcoholics*). In addition to the report for the WSC, the recommendations refer to public outreach work, and all FFG reports, minutes and handouts have been turned over to the Public Outreach Department.

At the regional breakout sessions during Conference, one area within each region agreed to conduct FFGs to determine how to implement public outreach (goal #5) in their own area. The 1998/99 FFGs are: Canada West (BC/Yukon); Canada Central (Ontario S); Canada East (Quebec W); US Southwest (New Mexico); US South Central (Arkansas); US Southeast (Florida N); US Northwest (Montana); US North Central (Minnesota N); and US Northeast (Maine). The examination of Goal 5 continues with a mailing sent to new FFGs asking for their participation in this project. As of the date of this annual report, seven of the nine areas contacted have replied affirmatively, and follow-up letters were sent to the two remaining areas.

**Long Range Plan:** The results of a questionnaire to the Board of Trustees at their October 1997 meeting indicated that much has been accomplished and that many items need to be carried forward. Reprioritizing and/or dropping or changing the time line on some of the goals might be in order. Using the questionnaire as a guideline may help next year's panel decide whether to rewrite the plan or take a different course of action. The panel determined that it was not within its realm to implement and/or monitor ideas which it presents, but that once established, these can be implemented elsewhere within the fellowship. A consensus of the panel was to let go of the FFGs after completing the process for 1998/1999. The panel made the following recommendations to the Board of Trustees: that the Long Range Study Panel relinquish the annual implementation, monitoring and reporting of the Fellowship Focus Groups (FFGs); that the WSO staff and volunteers continue to use the eleven goals of the Long Range (Five Year) Plan as a springboard for annual planning; and that the Board of Trustees develop a planning process that would create an annual focus for the WSO and which would be reflected in the AFG Service Plan.

**Other:** Following the Board's charge, the panel began its study of trends in Al-Anon literature sales and distribution that impact the fellowship in order to test the premise that literature is the primary means to carry the Al-Anon message. The study was divided into two questions: What's happening? and What do we need to know? This developed into an in-depth discussion based on many facts from the 1993 and 1996 Membership Surveys, the expansion of LDCs and their impact on literature sales, and review of graphs showing trends in sales for all of our books from 1955 to the present. The panel continued this study at its October meeting based on additional data compiled in the interim. An emerging trend from this discussion is a disparity between the communication being disseminated and its becoming diluted because of missing links. A proposal is to determine what we can do to strengthen the links.

Long range planning sessions with the various service departments within the WSO will be conducted at the January 1999 meeting.

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

### **LEGAL**

After years of suggestions and comments from the Canadian delegates and trustees, the Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director to contract with a Canadian attorney to incorporate as a non-profit entity in Canada as Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters of Canada, Inc. When accomplished, this will permit Canadian members to deduct contributions to the new corporation on their Canadian income tax returns. There may be additional benefits to members who make bequests to the new corporation as well. The new corporation will be subject to the actions of the Board of Trustees and will not affect the provision of services or the membership in the Conference.

Prior to the final approval of the reprint guidelines for on-line meetings, our copyright attorney reviewed the guidelines and made suggestions or changes which were considered by the Board in the adoption of the final document — now available as *Fact Sheet for Al-Anon On-line Meetings* (S-60). The attorney also reviewed the permission forms and process prior to the Executive Committee's approval. In reply to our annual letter asking for an update of copyright law pertaining to the Internet, our attorney stated in writing: there have been no changes in the law, other laws, nor case precedents set that would require a change in our procedures for Internet postings of Al-Anon materials.

Registration of our trademarks was completed with the European Economic Community (EEC). This will result in substantial savings to the individual GSOs and insure uniform protection in all EEC member countries.

## **GROUP SERVICES**

*Sandra F., Director*

### **COMMITTEE**

*Felix M./Cecelia L., Chairpersons  
Sandra F., Director*

Two meetings were held during the 1998 WSC, as well as teleconference meetings in March and October. The committee agreed to discontinue the following items: the Alateen table tent card (S-26), Lois W. & The Pioneers audiocassettes (A-4); Alateen Tells It Like It Is audiocassettes (A-8); *Anne's Story* (P-66). They also recommended recognizing Group Records and Adult Children Coordinators.

Other committee considerations included: whether groups holding multiple meetings should register as separate groups; should groups register immediately or wait until they are considered viable; review of an Alateen sponsor addendum form and a determination on the minimum age and length of time in the Al-Anon program for Alateen sponsors.

**New Group Binder (S-51):** A questionnaire evaluating the binder was completed and sent to new groups after three months. A final report is in progress.

**Guidelines:** The following guidelines were revised: Cooperation Between Al-Anon and AA (G-3) was updated; Alateen Meetings in Schools (G-5) was substantially revised; a temporary update of Al-Anon/Alateen Public Information Service (G-10) was completed with input from Public Outreach; Group Representative guideline (G-11) that formerly contained wording directly from the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* now contains new material that was developed in conjunction with Membership Outreach; How to Start an Al-Anon Group (G-12) was completely revised by the Group Services Committee; and District Meetings (G-15) was updated. A new guideline titled "Safety for Alateen Members and Sponsors" is under consideration. After input from the Alateen Advisory Committee, Group Services Committee, and area Alateen Coordinators, the Executive Committee offered editing changes. They were subsequently reviewed by an attorney. After his suggestions were incorporated regarding risk to Al-Anon, prior to final approval, the draft was forwarded to the Executive Committee.

**Service Sponsorship Tool:** Following Executive Committee approval of a project proposal, the committee then determined the contents. They agreed the service tool should motivate the fellowship to become and/or get a service sponsor and to take the fear out of service work by illustrating "you don't have to do it yourself."

**AFG Service Plan:** The creation of the plan was delegated to Group Services. The Executive Committee agreed that the 1999 Plan be focused on reaching out to newcomers and maintain continuity with the 1998 Plan (The Healthy Group). As a result, the working theme of the 1999 Plan is

"Stay Healthy - Stretch your Outreach." Although the plan previously was introduced at the beginning of the year, it will now be presented in April to the Conference. In July 1999, all volunteers and Conference staff members will meet to develop one theme that will be used for the Conference and the AFG Service Plan in the year 2000.

**Adult Children Service Tool:** The committee recommended a service tool be developed to replace the discontinued reprint of the 1986 special issue of *Inside Al-Anon* for and about adult children of alcoholics. In determining its use, the Executive Committee subsequently agreed that rather than one specific service tool, three sheets could be added to the new group binder. These sheets were developed and reviewed by the Group Services Committee. They include: a question and answer sheet about adult children of alcoholic groups, an addition to the welcome, and various suggested literature orders containing material especially for adult children of alcoholics. In addition, a separate sheet containing the 1984 WSC statement regarding adult children of alcoholics and the resolution passed by the 1986 WSC will be retained in the Group Services Department for archival purposes. The question and answer sheet will be placed in newcomer packets for adult children of alcoholics and used in response to questions that often arise.

## MEMBER SERVICES

**Al-Anon Adult Children:** Many requests for registration information have come from former ACOA and ACA groups who now wish to register with Al-Anon Family Groups. The Al-Anon adult children new group binder insert sheets are now included in all Al-Anon adult children group binders for newly registered groups. The inserts are also available to established groups by request. There are eight area Al-Anon adult children coordinators.

**1998-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual:** Following the 1998 WSC, Conference motions were integrated and *The Manual* mailed to all groups in early September. It included all motions from the 1996, 1997, and 1998 Conferences relative to the Policy Digest, World Service Handbook, and Concepts sections. The Groups at Work section was reviewed within the WSO, updating changes that resulted from revisions to the other sections and eliminating many duplications. Based on members' suggestions, other changes include: the preface describes each section of the book; the name of the section appears in the shaded portion of each page, and the cover was redesigned so that Al-Anon and Alateen each have a separate letter rather than a combined letter "A."

**Al-Anon Information Services/Intergroups (AIS) Literature Distribution Centers (LDC):** Group Services provides service to AISs and handles registration *only* for AIS/LDCs, since many information service offices and literature distribution centers are combined.

Based on a decision by the Board of Trustees, new LDCs and AIS/LDCs seeking registration are required to provide two signatures either from the area delegate, AIS chairperson, or two district representatives.

Several area delegates have questioned why the AIS/LDC listings do not appear on the printout as they did in the past. They were informed that AIS/LDCs are in the "contact section" of Members Only, not the group section.

Preparations began for an AIS/LDC workshop scheduled for August 27, 1999 in Des Moines, IA with a registration fee set at \$35.

Communication with AIS/LDCs covered a wide variety of subjects but mainly centered on fund-raising, safeguarding the treasury, and the financial benefits of incorporation.

**Getting In Touch With Al-Anon/Alateen (S-23):** The July - December 1998 edition was mailed in July; the January - June 1999 edition is scheduled for delivery in January. Web site editing on *Getting In Touch* will also

be completed in January. There are seven AIS/LDC web sites listed: West Hartford, CT; San Francisco, CA; Knoxville, TN; Houston, TX; London, ON; Toronto, ON; and Saskatoon, SK. To update *Getting In Touch*, an individual printout was sent to each AIS showing how the office is listed in our database along with a "Frequently Asked Questions" sheet. Several LDCs questioned why their service didn't appear in the publication; they were advised that only AISs and LDCs that were combined with an AIS were listed.

Four international AISs were registered from Austria, Panama, Russia, and the Virgin Islands.

**Services For The Disabled:** Verification of information on the *Materials For the Visually Impaired* (S-14) is complete. The 1999 edition of S-14 is scheduled for completion in February 1999. Over 140 regional and subregional libraries are carrying a variety of our Conference Approved Literature for the blind and physically disabled. Members who are US citizens living in foreign lands are also eligible for cassette and Braille services via the Library Of Congress. A list of hearing impaired meetings is now available.

**Lone Member Service:** There are 526 members participating as follows: Lone Members, 234; Alateen Lone Members, 20; Lone Member Contacts, 272. Lone Members are no longer included in the group area printouts. Lone Member directories have been updated and now include e-mail addresses. One of three issues of the *Lone Member Letter Box* featured a special request to elicit sharings from Lone Members and the other two were based on Conference Approved Literature. The next series of requests for sharing will focus on the *1998 - 2000 Service Manual*.

**Inmate Correspondence Service:** The service is composed of 145 members: female inmates, 35; female contacts, 39; male inmates, 41, and male contacts, 30. Requests for complimentary literature are rising. Area Institutions Coordinators are now informed of such requests. Concern was expressed from one area and from several contacts regarding taking a Fifth Step from inmates who have completed their inventory. Members were urged to share their experience so the WSO can share them with others.

**On-Line Meetings:** There are 20 meetings listed. With 17 of the 20 meetings reporting membership count, there are 2166 members participating in the service. A request for listing an Al-Anon on-line information service in *Getting In Touch* was forwarded to the Policy Committee.

**Institutions:** One of the facets of Group Services yet to be addressed in terms of guidelines and focus has been the institutions service. This will be considered during the 1999 WSC Group Services Committee meeting. Plans are underway to determine the number of institutions groups. Currently many regular groups meeting in hospitals are listed as *institutions* groups. The contents of the institutions packet that is added to the new group binder has been updated. Improved data entry changes have made the institution groups easier to identify.

**General Correspondence/Calls/E-mail:** We continue to receive requests from members wanting guidance on developing an informed group conscience. These calls and letters are often generated as a result of a group reading and discussing outside literature at meetings, crosstalk, the closing prayer, distribution of group contributions to Al-Anon's service arms, and the role of dual members in the group and above the group level. The greatest number of telephone calls, letters, and e-mails were from concerned family members seeking information and help for the drinker. Instituting e-mail communication has dramatically increased the interaction between our fellowship and the WSO. Group Services has responded to approximately 726 e-mails as compared with 100 letters over the same period of time.

**GROUP RECORDS**

	1998	1997
Information Services & GSOs	303	308
Literature Distribution Centers	186	211
Lone Members	264	147

Al-Anon Groups Worldwide	28,020	28,488
Alateen Groups Worldwide	2,928	3,179
Total	30,948	31,667

1998	US	CANADA	OVERSEAS
Al-Anon	15,340	1,875	10,805
Alateen	1,782	183	963
Information Services & GSOs	179	21	103
Literature Depots	173	13	0
Lone Members	185	20	59

**New Group Binders:** New Alateen groups that registered beginning February 1, 1998 received the new Alateen Group Binder. Along with the Al-Anon groups, the Alateen groups received a letter acknowledging their three-month anniversary.

**Anniversary Certificate:** A festive one-year anniversary certificate was designed and is being sent to all groups that have been registered with the WSO for one year. The certificate is being sent along with a history form and group update sheet reminding groups to "remember its history and to keep its records current."

**Area Printouts:** The Group Services Committee determined that areas will receive printouts up to two times a year. Along with the printouts, a "How To" process the printouts form is included. Previously, some areas were sent printouts up to four times a year, and experience has shown that often Group Records was sending a new printout before the area had the opportunity to complete its work on the previous printout, resulting in many duplications of effort. Also, areas are now given a choice of whether to receive their printout on a disc or on a hard copy.

**Individual Group Printouts:** A new "user-friendly" form was designed and sent to English, French and Spanish speaking registered groups in the US and Canada. This form has designated boxes to indicate changes, making it easier for staff to read and input the new data. The beginning of the year was the first time the form was sent directly to the groups since our relocation in 1996; approximately 25% of the groups are surveyed each quarter. These sheets reflect heavy numbers of disbanded groups that were not indicated on area printouts. Our estimate is that group number totals will not be accurate until the balance of the forms sent at the end of the year are processed. The WSO is also trying to obtain the number of members per group since this data was lost in the conversion to our new system in 1996. Many groups continue to omit group count information and subsequent printings of the form now highlight the request.

**Suspended Groups:** A new procedure was established to update current mailing addresses (CMA) for groups in the "suspended mail" status. A printout of a screen showing the suspended mail of the group is now sent to area delegates who have been diligent in providing updated information.

**Proposal Package:** The proposal packet has been revised to contain an informational letter, the guideline, How to Start a Group (G-12), and the registration form and instruction sheet. All the material formerly sent in the proposal packet that is now included in the new group binder was eliminated to avoid duplication.

**Toll Free Meeting Lines:** The purchase of an additional "digital voice announcer and music (and/or messages) while on hold" package enabled Group Records to implement French and Spanish messages. Some of the commands built into the system are in English; a message was included to

"disregard the English message that follows." French and Spanish callers now have the capability to leave a message on voice mail if an attendant is unable to answer their call.

**Calls:**

1998	1997
25,809	39,608

**Computerized Filing:** A program designed by our Technological Coordinator plus the purchase of a computer and scanner will enable all files held in file folders to be scanned into a database, eliminating the need for separate files. This database will have a copy of the actual registration form thereby providing the date registered that also has been lost in the conversion to our new system. Eventually when all the files are scanned, there will be much needed additional space in Group Records.

**ALATEEN****ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Larry A., Chairperson

Evalynn B., Associate Director

The committee revised its structure in January to make one of the two Al-Anon members a transitioned Alateen member. Committee composition is now four Alateen members, two Alateen sponsors, one Al-Anon member whose career is in youth services, and one transitioned Alateen member. An Alateen member of the committee attended the Group Services Committee meeting during the 1998 WSC.

The group registration form was reviewed in view of designing a sponsor questionnaire as per the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), page 50. Recommendations were made regarding sponsor age, Al-Anon program longevity, and Al-Anon membership accountability.

At the direction of the Group Services Committee, the committee began to analyze the relationship between Alateen conferences and area structures. A survey of the Alateen conferences designed to improve the connection between Alateen conference boards and area structures is in progress. Other new committee considerations include developing a plan to encourage transitioning Alateens and consideration of revising the Alateen Preamble to the Twelve Steps.

The committee recommended discontinuance of the Alateen's "Just For Today" wallet card (M-11), and the Alateen Table card (S-26), to the Group Services Committee. A recommendation was made to Fellowship Communication to seek a cartoonist to revise the booklet, *If Your Parents Drink Too Much* (P-22).

Ongoing projects include: a pamphlet for educators to be used in conjunction with the guideline Alateen Meetings in Schools (G-5); developing a plan to attract Al-Anons into sponsoring Alateen meetings and maintaining the sponsors we have; and to develop a definitive job description for AA sponsor assistants.

**Alateen Talk:** Topics for the 1998 production year included: The Action of Silence that focused on Traditions Five and Eleven and Steps Eleven and Twelve. Although production lagged because of preparation for the 1998 International Convention, by the end of the year, production accelerated with a goal of getting back on schedule during 1999. Sharings continue to arrive at the WSO in batches from groups indicating that Alateen sponsors are using *Alateen Talk* in meetings. A new CAL game was developed called "Cal's CAL Treasure Hunt." Highlighted in each issue are sharings from transitioning/transitioned Alateens. The Spring 1998 issue challenged the Alateen groups to write their group history in preparation for the 50th Anniversary celebration and to consider signing up as a group contact for the Lone Member service. The Summer 1998 issue encouraged Alateen groups to respond to the quarterly appeal and to conduct a Public Outreach project by placing posters in the guidance offices of all the schools represented in their group.



**Area Alateen Coordinators and Sponsors:** Mailings were sent in February and September to coordinators and to delegates in areas without coordinators. Each coordinator mailing includes news from each department at the WSO. To avoid duplication, Conference members were sent a coordinator mailing checklist, coordinator cover letter and feedback sheets, along with a note asking Conference members to request material mailed to the coordinators. There were two requests. The mailings contained feedback sheets on Alateen Advisory Committee projects and eliciting topics for committee consideration. As a result, an increased number of coordinators are now providing feedback to the committee. Many of the coordinators are gaining input at assemblies and conferences. Several coordinators have expressed appreciation for the comprehensive mailings.

Some questions and concerns received from coordinators and sponsors include: appropriate behavior of married Alateen sponsors in the presence of Alateens; district and AIS Alateen coordinators needing guidance on how to do their job; what to do with disbanded Alateen group money and literature; how to get Alateens more connected to Al-Anon and vice versa; how long must an Alateen sponsor wait for a parent to pick up an Alateen member after a meeting; and how to encourage the older Alateens to begin the transitioning process. Numerous calls and letters were received asking for guidance to set up district and/or area Alateen behavior guidelines and sponsor screening procedures. Many of the new sponsors had questions about how an Al-Anon group "sponsors" or interacts with an Alateen group.

**Completed Projects:** Project 3000, where each area was challenged to supply each Alateen group in their area with *Courage To Be Me - Living with Alcoholism* (B-23), resulted in 131 books pledged.

All Alateen kits and packets, K-6, K-7, K-16, and K-18, were reviewed and updated.

The timeline in *Alateen: Hope for Children of Alcoholics* (B-3) was reviewed and updated from 1987 through 1998.

**Alateen Correspondence/Calls/E-mail:** Numerous inquiries from the professional community wanting to start Alateen groups were processed. In each instance, the information was forwarded to area Alateen Coordinators and copied to area delegates. Some professionals still think that Alateen is for younger-aged drinkers. After professionals, the largest number of inquiries to start an Alateen group came from AA members. People who want to sponsor, not necessarily start, an Alateen group are encouraged to ask their Al-Anon group representative how to get in touch with their district representative. The AA General Service Office asked for suggestions to help AA establish "sponsors" for a younger-aged AA group in an institution.

**1998 International:** Each of the six Alateen workshops was filled to capacity with over 100 participants in each session and over 150 attendees at the closing session. The Al-Anon workshop about Alateen sponsorship had an attendance of approximately 60. Average Alateen count per workshop was 65. The last forty-five minutes of each session consisted of a writing workshop. Several sharings were gathered for future issues of *Alateen Talk* and for the new daily reader *ALATEEN EVERY DAY*. The workshop topics were based on the Four Primary Ideas of the Twelve Steps; Alateen - What's in it for you?; and *Dear Mom & Dad* (P-67).

**Alateen Conferences/Travel:** Questions about Alateen conferences continue to increase. Most often asked questions/concerns are: how to maintain Al-Anon guidance and/or connection to the area structure on the conference boards; finances and liability; Al-Anon groups using group funds to send Alateen members to conferences; behavior guidelines; dual members and AA members serving on conference boards; and WSO endorsement of Alateen conferences.

The Associate Director of Group Services attended conferences in PA and WA and spoke at the AL and WI Area Assemblies. Alateen workshops were presented as well.

## ARCHIVES

### COMMITTEE

Catherine J./Skip A., Chairpersons  
Sandra F., Director of Group Services  
Barbara M., Archives Coordinator

The committee completed its work on *Al-Anon's Co-Founders: The Extraordinary Work of Two Ordinary Women* (P-87). An Historical Overview of Al-Anon was produced following review by the Board of Trustees. This document will be used when historical dates of our fellowship are requested. Other work of the committee included consideration of the archival nature of our audio holdings. In conjunction with the Regional Service Seminar Committee, it was determined that RSS cassettes will be maintained for one year. All the cassettes from 1982 - 1996 were returned to the regional trustee upon request. The committee recommended that all World Service Conference tapes be transferred to compact discs. Committee members also volunteered to review other tapes, before or after meetings if possible, and then make recommendations regarding retention/disposal. An archival display was produced based on recommendations of the committee. It appeared at the WSC and the International Convention.

**Pioneer Luncheon:** The new co-founders pamphlet was distributed at the International Convention to all attendees. During the luncheon, a photograph was taken of six members who attended "family group meetings" before Al-Anon started. A copy of the photograph was subsequently sent to each one.

**Scanning:** Board of Trustees minutes from January 1980 through July 1998 are now contained on optical disc. Executive Committee minutes for 1988 through 1998 and Policy Committee minutes for 1991 through 1998 have also been copied/scanned onto optical disc. WSC summaries from 1961 - 1998 have been scanned and are on optical disc.

**Training:** The former Archivist, Margaret O'B., spent two weeks working with the Archives Coordinator. Since Margaret originated many of the systems in our current archives, she was able to determine priorities in accessioning material that had been brought from New York. She also suggested the implementation of a Research Request Form that has aided in conducting research.

**Notable Acquisitions:** The five millionth copy of the *ODAT* presented at the International Convention; a pristine copy of the July 1955 *Saturday Evening Post* featuring an article on Al-Anon; a long-time friend, Clearing House volunteer, and traveling companion of Lois sent us her personal *ODAT* and *First Steps*, along with handmade Christmas cards from Lois and photos of them together.

**Lobby Display Case:** The Archives display has featured two displays this year, the first was the new co-founders pamphlet along with background information that aided in its development. A second display was developed based on the *ODAT* featuring the one-millionth and five-millionth copies, a first edition signed by Lois, and various other items relating to Alice B. and the development of the *ODAT*. An early letter sent to a friend poses the question, "I wonder how the book will be received by the fellowship?"

**Coordinators:** Two mailings were sent to the area coordinators along with samples of new material.

**Outside Storage:** There were 45 boxes in an outside storage facility in upstate New York that were shipped to the WSO. The majority of the holdings consisted of audio-visual material (old WSC tapes and miscellaneous talks from AA and Al-Anon functions including AA International Conventions). The voices of our co-founders, pioneers, and early members are contained on these and represent a valuable piece of our history.

The latest printings of books were added to the existing book collection and forwarded to the new storage facility in Norfolk. Braille items were



returned to the company that originated the material. Since our current archives is temperature controlled, we are able to retain some material here so that there are only two boxes in storage. As we determine the audio-visual material we plan to retain, we will add duplicates in our outside storage facility.

**Research Requests:** The majority of requests (over 100) from the membership continue to surround group starting dates. Other requests included: copies of the AFG Service Plans; a request for a copy of an old-timer's talk from the 1980 International in New Orleans; information for a member trying to "break the buck barrier" by illustrating the price increase in the *ODAT* since its publication 30 years ago; information about the *Three Little Books* published by *Forum* services; a history of the *Al-Anon Family Groups* book; origin of the Conference Committee on Trustees; the Al-Anon logo (on which side of the triangle should "recovery, unity and service" be placed?); using *One Day At A Time in Al-Anon* and *Alateen - A Day At A Time* for personal use; and origin of the Three Obstacles, Preamble, and Unity Statement.

**Other:** In addition to ongoing accessioning (including all new printed material), Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, and Institutions files transferred from New York were accessioned into our new system. Work is underway to complete accessioning of the former Executive Director's files. The Archives Coordinator spoke at a workshop hosted by the district concerning their history. Two separate files are now being maintained: a file of all guidelines and their revisions and a drawer of research requests.

## FELLOWSHIP COMMUNICATION

Caryn J., Director

### STATUS OF PROJECTS

**Literature Inventory:** Prior to the January committee meetings, the chairpersons of Literature I and II and WSO staff met to further develop the inventory process and established the following time line:

Phase I	1997 - 1998	Inventory most recovery CAL pamphlets/booklets
Phase II	1998 - 1999	Inventory service CAL/remaining recovery CAL pamphlets (Literature Committees: Analysis of Phase I)
Phase III	1999 - 2000	Inventory CAL books (Literature Committees: Analysis of Phase II; Assess possible combining of literature/major revisions)
Phase IV	2000 - 2001	(Literature Committees/WSC: Analysis of Phase III)

#### Phase I

In 1998, the Literature Committees began the process of analyzing the feedback from the areas on the 49 pieces of Conference Approved Literature that were reviewed in 1997. A goal was set by the chairpersons of the committees and WSO staff to review five pieces of literature per committee on a quarterly basis for the next five quarters. Tabulation of the data is time consuming; thus, the goal may extend one or two quarters.

Throughout the year, both Literature Committees continued their analyses of feedback from the areas on Phase I of the inventory. As of mid-December, 22 titles have been submitted to the committees for review.

Each tabulation includes consolidating the feedback from two to five areas and then compiling the extensive comments for committee review. Each committee member is asked to grade each comment on its importance and

to make a recommendation for either a major, minor, or routine change. Any major changes will be held until the completion of the entire inventory (Phase IV).

#### Phase II

In 1998, service materials and remaining recovery CAL pamphlets/booklets were inventoried in Phase II. Delegates were given their 1998 assignments at the World Service Conference with a requested due date of November 1, 1998.

#### Phase III

Both committees are working on establishing a process for review of our books (Phase III, to be conducted in 1999), as the review process will need to be different from the review of pamphlets and booklets. Brainstorming sessions were held at the July and October committee meetings, and the full committees have been asked for feedback.

#### Phase IV

The final phase of the literature inventory will begin in 2000. Final review of committee member recommendations will be analyzed. A process for Phase IV will be developed in 1999.

**Consideration of Discontinuance of *Forum Favorites*:** Based on a recommendation from the Forum Editorial Advisory Committee, both Literature Committees were polled and recommended discontinuance of these four volumes. The recommendation was based on minimal use by the fellowship and consensus that the content is adequately covered in other Conference Approved materials. A recommendation to notify the fellowship of discontinuance in one year was submitted to the Board.

**Coordinator Mailings:** Extensive mailings to Literature Coordinators were completed in March and September. In June, coordinators were sent complimentary copies of *Having Had A Spiritual Awakening...* to share with the members in their areas.

### LITERATURE COMMITTEE I

Howdy R., Chairperson

Mary Lou M., Associate Director

**Revision of *Al-Anon IS for Men (P-1)* and *Does She Drink Too Much? (P-62)*:** Several drafts of the revisions were reviewed by the committee as well as additional male Al-Anon members of an advisory ad hoc committee. Committee comments were sent to the writer for additional revisions. The committee, Policy reviewers, and the Executive Director have completed their reviews of the final drafts of these rewrites. Both manuscripts received CAL approval. The rewritten *Does She Drink Too Much?* was released in fourth quarter 1998; *Al-Anon IS for Men* required additional editing and will appear in early 1999.

**Revision of *Sponsorship—What It's All About (P-31)*:** After several rounds of committee review, a near-final draft of the proposed revisions was returned to the committee. At the April meeting, a committee member raised the question as to whether the proposed revisions were extensive enough to warrant a Conference motion to proceed. The changes were determined to be within the charge of the committee. The final draft received CAL approval from the committee, Policy reviewers, and Executive Director. After final editing, the new text will be put into production and available sometime in 1999.

**Revision of *Why Conference Approved Literature?* (P-35):** After committee review, it was evident that a major rewrite of this service tool was warranted. Two drafts were reviewed by the committee; release is expected in the first quarter of 1999.

**ALATEEN EVERY DAY (working title):** A free-lance writer/editor (Al-Anon member) has been contracted to edit the sharings; she visited the WSO in January and met with staff for a thorough understanding of the project. The second sharing sheet with a coordinated "writing workshop" generated continued sharings. Over 400 sharings have been received from Alateen members around the world.

The committee has reviewed the first 150 edited sharings and the response was generally that they are excellent. The writer/editor resubmitted those sharings requiring extensive re-editing after committee review.

### ADDITIONAL PROJECTS LITERATURE COMMITTEE I

**Alateen's "Just For Today":** Inventory results on this leaflet were reviewed for possible revision. The results indicate that only minor revisions are called for.

**Suggested Revision to *How Al-Anon Works...*:** A member requested that his story be removed from *How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics*. The committee reviewed an edited version of the member's original sharing for possible use as a replacement. The committee made the decision to remove the story with the next printing. The decision was to review other sharings in Fellowship Communication files for substitution.

**Paths To Recovery... Proposed Change:** A group requested a change to one of the Step Four questions in the book; after extensive review and discussion, it was the committee's decision to leave the text as it appears in the first printing.

**Definitions of Types of Revisions to CAL:** After discussion of the charge of the Literature Committees, it was felt that our definitions for literature revisions needed reworking. The committee held a brainstorming session in April and both Literature Committees were asked to review the revised definitions. The final document was sent to the Executive Committee for approval. Both committees are using the approved guide for reference in reviewing the literature inventory.

### LITERATURE II

Blanche M., Chairperson  
Caryn J., Director

**Having Had a Spiritual Awakening...:** The international spirituality manuscript was approved by the Policy reviewers and Executive Director. The titling committee selected the title, *Having Had a Spiritual Awakening...*, during the January committee meetings. After completion of a final copy edit, the book was submitted for in-house design in March 1998, one month ahead of schedule. In the final design phase, photographs submitted by members to the WSO for use in *The Forum* or this book were selected. All but two photographs in the book are from members. WSO staff prepared the index in-house.

The book was completed on schedule and introduced at the International Convention in Salt Lake City. Reception of the book has been extremely positive with initial sales exceeding expectations.

A review form was designed for the fellowship to provide us with their comments on the book. Numerous wonderful personal sharings on the power of the book have been submitted.

All files pertaining to the development of the book were cleaned and organized with pertinent documentation sent to the WSO archives.

**RECOVERY TODAY (working title - 1997 WSC Motion to Conceptually Approve an Al-Anon Adult Children Daily Reader):** Proposals for the writer/editor contract were mailed to 24 potential Al-Anon writer/editors. Twelve proposals were received and analyzed for eligibility by the staff. Three additional staff members from other WSO teams and our two committee chairpersons assisted in selecting the finalist. At all times the anonymity of candidates was maintained, judging each proposal on the talent of the writer. A contract was submitted to the selected writer and she met with WSO staff in Virginia Beach in March to extensively discuss the project.

The writer/editor submitted the first and second group of 50 sharings on schedule and the committee has completed their review. Minimal editing is

needed and all but one of the sharings passed through the first approval process.

**Revision of *This is Al-Anon*:** The revisions were approved by the Policy reviewers and Executive Director. The revised CAL manuscript was utilized with the printing of the pamphlet in late 1998. The revision files were cleaned and appropriate documentation sent to archives.

**Al-Anon Family Groups:** The first edition of the book (published in 1955) was re-typed and submitted to the members of the committee for review and comments. Committee members affirmed a desire to publish the original manuscript updating footnotes as needed, wanted, or necessary. The 1998 World Service Conference approved the committee's recommendation to return to the text of the first edition at the next printing. The Executive Director, Director, and Associate Director of Fellowship Communication met and established a timetable for the project.

The draft manuscript has been completed with initial short footnotes noted in the body of the text with more significant changes located in Appendix II. The entire revision will be sent to the committee for review in early 1999.

Target completion of this project is 2000, with an expected introduction at the AA International Convention in July of that year.

**PROFESSIONALS BOOKLET (working title):** The 1998 World Service Conference conceptually approved the development of a booklet for professionals. The Directors and Associate Directors of Public Outreach and Fellowship Communication held a planning session to strategize on the development of the booklet. A timetable was developed. An outline of topics to cover and proposed format were agreed upon.

A request for proposals was mailed to potential writers (13) in mid-July with proposals due in August. Three proposals were received; two did not qualify. Contract negotiations with the qualifying writer were completed by early October and the writer/editor commenced writing soon thereafter. The final manuscript is scheduled to be completed by late 1999.

**Welcome to Al-Anon - What Every Newcomer Wants to Know:** The Titling Committee selected this title for the newcomer's pamphlet during the January committee meetings. The final draft of the manuscript was approved by Policy reviewers in January. After reviewing a memo from the Executive Director, it was the committee's decision to put this project on hold until completion of the literature inventory.

### ADDITIONAL PROJECTS LITERATURE COMMITTEE II

**Softcover Printing of *Courage to Change*:** In early 1998, a memo sent to all delegates requested information on the fellowship's needs for a possible printing of a softcover edition for institutional outreach. From the results of the survey, there appeared to be some need. An additional survey was sent to the delegate members of the committee resulting in a recommendation forwarded to the Budget and Executive Committees to print a limited number of the books in softcover. Prior Board approval was pending Executive Committee approval. The Executive Committee denied the recommendation and asked for additional feedback from the fellowship on the desirability of this action. Another survey was sent to the fellowship in late 1998 with more specific questions. A final decision will be made in 1999.

**Audiotape survey:** In April, almost all areas responded to the audiotape survey that began in November 1997. The Production Department was asked to tabulate financial estimates on costs and availability of production resources in the Virginia Beach area. An extensive report was sent to the Budget and Executive Committees for their review and guidance. After careful analysis of the financial estimates, their decision was to not produce audio tapes of any CAL books at this time.

**THE FORUM**

Marion W./Wilma K., *Forum Editorial Advisory Committee Chairpersons*  
Caryn J., *Director*  
Mary Lou M., *Associate Director*  
Pat Q., *WSO Forum Coordinator*

**COMMITTEE**

The Forum Editorial Advisory Committee completed review of 200 manuscripts at each of its quarterly meetings. Volunteer committee members were from Alberta, Canada; Arizona; Arkansas; Georgia; New Jersey; and Ohio. All committee members attended the International Convention in Salt Lake City.

**The Forum Magazine:** The "Talk To Each Other" page continues to generate quality reader responses. Members' letters regarding numerous "hot topics" were presented with Al-Anon and Alateen members responding from around the world. All responses are forwarded to the writers with some selected for printing in subsequent issues.

Numerous sharings, photos, and new word puzzles have been submitted from members worldwide for consideration. The staff sorted many quality photos and filed them for future use. There is a one- to two-year backlog of sharings in the file waiting for review by the committee.

The positive response from members for the 1997 holiday gift subscription program temporarily reversed a downward trend in subscriptions. A "Bakers Dozen" offer (13 for the price of 12) was offered to new and renewing subscribers in the first quarter. Total subscriptions for 1998 decreased by 1800.

**Area Forum Coordinator Guidelines (G-32):** The revision was completed and printed in cooperation with the Group Services and Business Services Departments.

**Area Challenge:** Five areas challenged each other to increase *Forum* subscriptions in 1997 - 1998. When figures were obtained comparing May and December subscription counts, the vast majority of the 67 areas showed a decline. The winner of the challenge was declared to be Delaware, who maintained its subscription rate through the seven-month period.

**Subscription Renewal Program:** For a trial period of three months, March, April, and May, expiring subscribers received a separate mailing with a letter from the WSO Forum Coordinator and a return envelope inviting them to renew. Renewal results were analyzed to determine if this method of subscription reminders is more effective than including the renewal information with the mailing of the monthly magazine. Based on the success of such mailings, it was decided that we will use this method of notification for the second renewal notice.

A humorous renewal/survey card and a letter from the WSO Forum Coordinator were mailed to expired subscribers from August, September, and October 1997. The mailing was completed in March and results were determined to be minimal.

To plan promotions and renewal mailings, based on past performance, the WSO Forum Coordinator prepared an extensive "On-Off Report" outline which was sent to the WSO computer programmer for preparation. With this report we will be able to track the impact of promotions and renewals on a timely basis. By the end of the year, the report was available for analysis. Strategic planning of renewal notices and other communication efforts with subscribers will be easier to plan in the future.

**Forum Business Committee:** This committee consists of Fellowship Communication staff, the Executive Director, and the Director of Business Services. Three meetings were held in 1998 to discuss marketing strategies and in-house procedures. The committee concurred on a "warehouse" sale of extra 1996 - 1997 *Forums* in warehouse storage. With this offer, members, groups, and districts could order 100 copies of back issues for \$10 to

cover shipping and handling costs. Promotional material was prepared in the second quarter and mailed to Institutions, Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, and Forum Coordinators. By the end of the year, all back issues for 1996 and 1997 and most of 1998 had been distributed.

**International Convention Activities:** The Forum Editorial Advisory Committee members provided attendees with stickers to promote *The Forum* during the convention. Sharing sheets and subscription envelopes were also made available. Extra issues from the May and June 1998 printings were shipped to Utah for distribution.

**Inside Al-Anon:** Topics in 1998 covered a wide gamut of WSO-related information including: how mail is processed at the WSO; what is a group conscience; the purpose of a World Service Conference as well as Conference highlights; what a "home group" is; Al-Anon's logos and copyright guidelines; highlights on the International Convention; the history of on-line meetings and the WSO Publications Department. A topic schedule for 1999 was drafted and submitted to the chairperson of the Executive Committee for review.

**Forum Favorites:** The Forum Editorial Advisory Committee considered poor sales of the four books (Volumes 1-4) and voted with substantial unanimity to recommend to the Literature Committees the discontinuance of these books. A memo was subsequently sent to the Literature Committees for their recommendation.

**Printer/Mailer:** The change to Virginia Beach-based service providers completed in the second quarter was smooth and appears to be satisfactory to the fellowship as well as to the WSO staff. The change resulted in a substantial savings and improved the production time line.

**Coordinator Mailing:** Mailings to coordinators were sent in March and September.

**Survey:** An inventory survey was sent to all areas asking for feedback on *The Forum*. The Editorial and Business Committees will use the data gathered to specifically target the fellowship's needs, interests, concerns, or problems.

**Additional Highlights:**

The Ohio Area purchased 200 gift subscriptions for physicians in their area as a public outreach activity.

Coordinators were informed of a new department in *The Forum* beginning in 1999, featuring sharings from "Lifetime Members" of Al-Anon. The department will be called "Keep Coming Back."

The DC/Maryland Area announced they are purchasing 140 gift subscriptions for doctors' offices with plans to do the same for other professions in the future.

**CARRYING THE MESSAGE - A MARKETING PLAN FOR FELLOWSHIP COMMUNICATION**

Caryn J., *Director*  
Mary Lou M., *Associate Director*  
Pat Q., *WSO Forum Coordinator*

The 1998 plan was drafted by staff with a focus on highlighting Al-Anon's books. *Al-Anon Family Groups* was featured on the back flap of the January *Forum*. In February, *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* was featured with new promotional text emphasizing that the book can be used for all relationships. In March, the feature was our co-founder Lois W., *Lois Remembers*; May presented *Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions*; and June celebrated the 30th anniversary of *One Day At A Time in Al-Anon*. *From Survival to Recovery, Courage To Be Me; ...In All Our Affairs: Making Crises Work for You; How Al-Anon Works* and *Paths to Recovery* were also featured. Our newest book, *Having Had a Spiritual Awakening...*

was introduced in July and highlighted in December.

**Al-Anon's Co-Founders: The Extraordinary Work of Two Ordinary Women (P-87):** Flyers for LDC advance notice and for the fellowship were developed and a plan for their distribution established.

**Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions:** A new bookmark order form was created for this classic in conjunction with the May Forum flap.

**Alateen Talks Back On...:** A series of six workshops was developed utilizing the concept of making a recovery scrapbook based on the booklets. A flier was also produced for future mailings with *Alateen Talk* and to Alateen and Literature Coordinators.

Because the warehouse had an excessive number of *Alateen Talks Back On Sponsoring an Alateen Group* (P-68), a special promotion offering the booklet for \$1.00 for a limited time was approved and mailed with *Alateen Talk* and *Area Highlights*. *Alateen Talks Back on Slogans* and *Detachment* were printed with redesigned covers.

**Courage To Be Me:** Continued advertising in various student counselor publications resulted in requests for additional information on this specific book and general Alateen information. In reading area newsletters, many areas are in the process of providing copies of this book to school and institution libraries as a part of the Alateen Project 3000. These activities are the result of earlier Literature and Alateen Coordinator mailings and suggested activities.

**From Survival to Recovery:** In January, a new bookmark was created and mailed to the fellowship in *Inside Al-Anon Xtra* and *Area Highlights*. A substantial increase in orders for this book was noted in March.

**Getting Started (S-15R):** The introductory order form included in newcomer kits was revised and updated.

**Having Had a Spiritual Awakening...:** Flyers for the new book were created and designed for distribution in numerous upcoming Al-Anon newsletters to LDCs and for use by area coordinators. A commemorative bookplate using the book cover and a selected quote from Lois W. was designed for distribution at the International Convention. A bookmark was created and distributed in the fourth quarter 1998 WSO newsletters.

An ad placed with Publishers Marketing Association (PMA) appeared in the August 10 issue. Distribution is to over 100,000 publishing professionals. Additionally, a targeted mailing to bookstores and book reviewers featuring self-help books was mailed by PMA. Several book reviewers requested and were sent complimentary copies of the book and supporting annotations for possible review publication.

**One Day At A Time in Al-Anon (ODAT):** A new bookmark was designed and was mailed to the fellowship in the third quarter. A commemorative cover was designed for the five-millionth copy of the book for presentation at the International Convention.

**Paths to Recovery - Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions and Concepts:** As a direct result of a marketing campaign to libraries, bookstores, and book reviewers, *Paths to Recovery* was given a five-star index rating from a nationally well reputed news media agency.

**Recovery Collections:** New flyers for both the Al-Anon and Alateen Recovery Collections (RC-1, RC-2) were designed and mailed with WSO newsletters and coordinator mailings. These new flyers were necessary due to pricing changes.

**Order Statistics:** With the assistance of the Technological Services Coordinator, a new computer query has been designed to provide detailed distribution information on each piece monthly. This data assists staff in strategic planning of future marketing materials.

## OTHER FELLOWSHIP COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

**"My Journey in Service":** This new service journal was distributed to WSC members in April and made available to the fellowship immediately afterward. Response has been very positive. Flyers were mailed with *Area Highlights* and *Inside Al-Anon Xtra*. A brief article in "Inside Al-Anon" concluded the introductory marketing.

**"Cal's Journal for Recovery"** was developed and submitted in late 1998 for design. This new journal will be available to the fellowship in April 1999 in English, Spanish, and French.

**Requests for Reprints:** Numerous requests to reprint from both our literature and *The Forum* were processed throughout the year. Several scholars requested permission to publish Al-Anon and Alateen materials in their books or thesis papers.

**Logo Use:** One jeweler requested the use of the Al-Anon logo for a new jewelry piece. After diligent review, authorization was given. Illegal use of the Al-Anon logo was found in a recovery catalog on a coffee mug. The publisher of the catalog was unaware of the violation, is notifying the vendor of the misuse of the logo, and promised to terminate further advertising of the product.

**Inside Al-Anon Xtra:** The purpose of this newsletter is to keep groups informed about current "happenings" at the World Service Office and within the fellowship. Group representatives are encouraged to present highlights from this publication as a portion of their report and to encourage members to read the additional information. A budgetary cut resulted in a reduction in the number of issues to be prepared from bi-monthly to quarterly. Highlights of the 1998 World Service Conference was the largest issue.

**Area Highlights:** Quarterly publication was completed with mailing to approximately 2,600 trusted servants.

**Literature Catalog:** The 1999 Literature Catalog draft was completed and submitted to production for redesign and printing. The new catalog is planned for January 1999 distribution.

**Cal is for CAL!:** Requests continue for use of the "Cal" costume for meetings, assemblies, and conventions.

After the death of the Serena T. and Cal cartoonist in late 1997, a request to the fellowship for new artists was made in *Area Highlights*. Several member cartoons have been utilized.

**E-Mail Manual for Internal WSO Use:** An outline was drafted and approved for the internal e-mail manual. General policies, a delivery guide, a cross reference index, and standard response letters were prepared.

**1998 WSC Summary:** The Fellowship Communication team coordinated the writing and publishing of the *Summary* for the first time. A new Conference reporter was contracted.

**1998 International Convention:** Workshop leaders and panel members were selected and asked to participate for workshops pertaining to *The Forum*, literature, and literature distribution centers. Thank you notes were sent to all invited panelists and presenters for the literature and *Forum* workshops.

**Gift Certificates:** A project approval was secured to produce and market to the fellowship gift certificates for the upcoming holidays. A flyer announcing the certificates was sent with the November and December issues of *The Forum*, as well as with *Inside Al-Anon Xtra* and *Area Highlights*. Business Services notified LDCs on how certificate redemption will work.

**Letters/Phone calls:** Several inquiries were received immediately following the International Convention regarding the history of the *One Day At A Time* (ODAT) daily reader and the ODAT article in the July Forum. Numerous sharings were submitted by members remembering how they acquired their first ODAT.

Inquiries continue about the Alcoholic Anonymous "Big Book" and whether it can be approved as CAL. Members continue to be referred to the pamphlet *Why CAL?* and appropriate excerpts from the 1999-2000 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual.

With the implementation of e-mail, there has been a decrease in "snail" mail. E-mail inquiries have been varied, from submission of sharings for *The Forum* and daily readers to initiating requests for reprint or brief easy-to-answer queries.

**Your World Service Office (S-30):** The brochure on the WSO was rewritten after discussion with the Executive Committee and based on further input from a WSO team meeting of the Executive Director, directors, associate directors, and departmental managers. A mock-up was prepared for the Executive Committee review in mid-September and approved. The revised brochure will be printed in January 1999.

**Retyping of Existing Literature:** In cooperation with the Publications Department, several long-time existing books and pamphlets had to be retyped for redesign and printing. The manuscripts for *As We Understood...* (B-11), *Living With Sobriety* (P-49), and *Alateen: Hope for Children of Alcoholics* (B-3) were photocopied, scanned onto disk, and proofed by the team secretary. The director and associate director did additional proofing before submitting the book for redesign. The books were in a plate format which was no longer usable by production.

Several memos have been sent to the Associate Director of Membership Outreach, International regarding minor, previously noted, typographical errors or changes made in reprinted pamphlets and books. This is done so she can notify GSOs of changes for their translated publications.

Routine housekeeping changes were made in numerous reprinted pieces such as changing the identified location of the World Service Office from New York to Virginia.

**Design Strategy:** A marketing/design professional met with Fellowship Communication, Publications, and Public Outreach staff in September to review all WSO-produced publications. New presentation ideas resulted in the identification of "families" of literature such as the "recovery," "service," "professional," "Alateen," "leaflet," and "newcomer" families. As each piece is reprinted, the existing colors of the piece will be retained whenever possible and new "family" designs implemented. The first of these new pieces was printed late in 1998. The new designs will be implemented, as there is a need for reprinting/redesign. Existing stock will be distributed before new designs are released.

Cost-saving measures include standardizing the sizes of pamphlets, the use of standard ink colors, and more significantly, the use of technology as mentioned with the retyping of literature.

**Travel:** In conjunction with the trip to NYC to meet with AA and NCADD, the Director met with the senior editor of the AA *Grapevine* and discussed a myriad of topics. A separate report has been prepared on this visit for review by the Forum Editorial Advisory Committee. The Director also had a brief meeting with the AA Literature Coordinator. Complimentary copies of *Having Had a Spiritual Awakening...* were given to both.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

Phyllis M., Director

### COMMITTEE

Doris S./Marjorie S., Chairpersons,

Public Outreach Committee

Marjorie S./Margaret G., Chairpersons,

Outreach to the Professionals Advisory Committee

Phyllis M., Director

Claire R., Associate Director

### STATUS OF PROJECTS

**1999 Al-Anon/Alateen Membership Survey Questionnaires:** A new vendor was selected as a cost-effective measure for Al-Anon's sixth membership survey. With statistical baselines well established from the previous surveys and vendor's analysis, it was an opportune time to update the questionnaires and to elicit new information from the fellowship. Substantial revisions were recommended by the committee with health-related questions and participation in service.

A list of questions related to members' satisfaction with the program and literature, leaving and staying in Al-Anon were proposed by the vendor. This information would be valuable in understanding why members do not return to Al-Anon and their needs, and help evaluate member satisfaction with WSO produced literature. This questionnaire is being attached to the Al-Anon and Alateen Sponsor Surveys as an Al-Anon Membership Assessment.

**US Air Force, Military Outreach Project:** A letter was sent to General Richard E. Hawley, Commander Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Hampton, VA. This encompasses 19 Air Force Bases. Our letter was referred to the Superintendent of Behavioral Sciences. This department develops the curriculum for the Air Force substance abuse programs. The Director and Assistant to the Director met with Master Sergeant Guillermina Estevez, Superintendent of Behavioral Sciences, Langley Air Force Base, Hampton, VA to discuss Al-Anon cooperation with the Air Force. A second meeting is being arranged.

**US Public Service Announcements:** The recycled 1994 "Cocktail/Birthday Parties" TV PSA outreach was completed. A total of 5,504 airplays were tracked with Sigma encoding. Two additional sets of PSAs were distributed to preselected 1500 radio and 550 TV stations at six-month intervals. This included the rerelease of the 1991 "Fear and Anger" and the new "Tornado" PSAs.

Comparative data of airplays of new and recycled TV PSAs is as follows:

Title	Date	Total Airplays	Estimated Value
"Ask Yourself"	Oct. 1996 -	10,441	\$7,022,345
(new PSA)	June 1997		
"Cocktail/Birthday Parties"	Sept. 1997 -	5,504	\$3,197,824
(recycled PSA)	April 1998		
"Fear and Anger"	March 1998-	5,129	\$1,897,265
(recycled PSA)	Sept. 1998		

These figures provided a preliminary baseline for determining and comparing the return on the investment for new and recycled PSAs.

A recap of 2,843 "Fear and Anger" time of broadcasts for an 18-week period was provided as follows:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Number Airplays</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
12:01 AM - 6:00 AM	1,098	39%
6:01 AM - 12:00 PM	705	25%
12:01 PM - 6:00 PM	720	25%
6:01 PM - 12:00 AM	323	11%

With the exception of 16% airplays between the hours of 6:01 PM to 12 AM, the breakdown of "Cocktail/Birthday Parties" broadcasts were similar to "Fear and Anger" for an 18-week period. The vendor cited the following factors involved in a station's decision to air PSAs during specific time slots: the amount of available PSA air time; personal preference of PSAs based upon production quality and community relevance; and the number of significant events such as the Winter Olympics or introductory airings of new TV shows ("Sweeps Month") which feature paid advertising.

Eighteen-week qualitative analysis evaluations were conducted by the vendor for each PSA campaign. An equal number of stations broadcasting the PSAs and those who did not air the PSAs were interviewed. Three conclusions were reported:

- recycling the earlier-produced PSAs which have lower production quality resulted in fewer airplays;
- producing and distributing a new PSA will result in increased broadcasts without adding to the cost of a PSA outreach project; and
- newly produced PSAs will have greater impact and reach more viewers.

The "Tornado" radio and TV PSAs were produced in English, Spanish, and French. Radio distribution to 1500 (1400 US and 100 Canada) stations occurred in July in conjunction with the 1998 International Convention. A 15-second PSA was digitized for the WSO web site. In September, 550 (505 US and 45 Canadian) TV stations received the PSA. A recap of broadcasts available for three months is as follows:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Total Airplays</u>
September	1,124
October	2,317
November	2,706

Based upon the vendor's analysis for three PSA distributions, it was decided not to conduct additional recycling of PSAs; instead, a second distribution of the "Tornado" PSA will be sent to 1500 radio and 550 TV stations in early 1999. Stations who did not receive the PSA in 1998 will be selected.

The vendor is now able to provide Sigma Reports for all national as well as local affiliate airplays on CBS, NBC, ABC, and Fox TV stations. NBC requested that two "Tornado" TV PSAs be sent to their video tape libraries in NYC, NY and Burbank, CA so that the PSA will be available to their affiliates as well as to NBC for broadcast. For the second consecutive year, QVC requested PSAs for their December 24th holiday TV show. This broadcast reaches more than 65 million cable and satellite households.

Advance order forms for radio and TV PSAs were created and distributed to the fellowship in an effort to reduce excess inventory and yet have sufficient quantities of stock available for purchase.

To generate membership enthusiasm and involvement in contacting local stations, the PSAs were shown during the International Convention at the Saturday night "All In The Family" big meeting. Members continued to return "Be Our Eyes and Ears" coupons to report seeing or hearing the radio or TV PSAs in their community.

English, French, and Spanish four-color posters and Table Displays for the Tornado PSA were produced. A delegate committee member suggested producing Table Displays which tied in with each new PSA release so that the membership will have a low cost service item in place of posters or literature displays. Black and white "ad slicks" of the poster were offered to coordinators to make available to facilities and organizations for publication in their newsletters. In the Fall *Al-Anon Speaks Out* issue, professionals received a similar complimentary offer for use in their membership newsletters.

The art work for the poster was offered on a disk to districts, information services, and areas interested in working with transit companies to create poster signs for buses.

**1999 PSA Development:** A new vendor was selected as a cost-saving measure and also in an effort to increase national network broadcasts. A concept and script were developed and approved by the committee. Filming of the PSA was begun. In keeping with the vendor's analysis of recycled PSAs in comparison to newly produced PSAs, a second distribution of the new radio and TV PSA is planned.

**Corporate Outreach Project:** A letter of invitation was sent to 100 CEOs of the top Fortune 500 companies to develop a cooperative effort to reach out to family members of alcoholics in the work place. As a result of this mailing, 17 EAPs contacted the WSO which served as a positive indication that the CEOs did pass our mailing on to the appropriate department. Seven of the respondents requested further information, five indicated they are already making referrals to Al-Anon, and three indicated they have an alternative program in place. Phillip Morris Company, which includes Kraft, Inc. as a subsidiary, expressed interest in meeting with Public Outreach staff to coordinate a major national outreach to its 150,000 employees. As a result of the success of this first mailing, additional mailings to the remaining 400 Fortune 500 CEOs are being planned.

**Proposed EAP Workplace Leaflet:** A request for an EAP leaflet from the Executive Director of the American Self Help Clearinghouse, Denville, NJ was received. Discontinued Al-Anon reprints and current service materials were reviewed by staff and presented to the committee. It was determined that although items previously distributed were no longer timely, literature to encourage EAP referrals to Al-Anon is vital. A recommendation to develop text for a new EAP service leaflet received approval from the Public Outreach Committee and from the Executive Committee.

**Professional Booklet Outline:** After receiving conceptual approval from the WSC, the staff met with Fellowship Communication to review the recommended contents outline developed by the Public Outreach Committee. The Public Outreach staff is being asked to provide additional information so that the writer can begin development of a draft.

**Revised Media Kit:** A design and text for a revised format was completed and the kits were made available for distribution in US and Canadian versions.

**Pebble In The Pond Booklet:** Due to the number of revisions required, it was the consensus of the committee to discontinue its efforts to update the service materials included in the booklet. A recommendation to discontinue publication was submitted and approved by the Board of Trustees. The committee concurred that a service-related booklet with a "how to" format of members' sharings and motivational support would be an effective replacement.

**Proposed "How To" Booklet:** Brainstorming sessions were held by the committee so that a content outline could be developed.

**Service Materials Review:** The committee recommended consolidation of the two *Al-Anon Can Help* mental health (P-79 and P-80) and correctional facilities (P-83 and P-84) pamphlets. Revised text for the sections and titles were developed and approved by the committee as follows: *Doubting*

*Your Sanity and Whether You Are On The Inside Or The Outside.* The recommendations will be submitted to the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees for approval in early 1999.

Because of the large number of posters available, the timeliness, appeal, and distribution quantities for each poster were reviewed. The following posters were approved by the committee for discontinuance: Is Alcohol A Problem In Your Family? (M-41); the Door (M-48); Flower (M-49) and Giraffe (M-51). The Outreach to Professionals Advisory Committee is continuing to review the Open Letter Series. Its goal is to consolidate the seven letters wherever possible. The staff is continuing its review of service materials and making reportbacks to the committee.

**The Sky's The Limit In Service Order Form:** Due to complications with LDC orders and internal shipping and data entry problems, *The Sky's The Limit In Service* order form (PO/51) was discontinued.

**PI, Institutions, and CPC Service Kits (K-3, K-5 and K-15):** Contents for interim service kits were developed by the Public Outreach team and made available for distribution in a US and Canadian format. A new design to complement the new format of the Media Kit is planned.

### NEWSLETTERS

**Al-Anon Speaks Out:** The winter and fall issues were compiled and distributed. Texts were edited for on-line versions and placed on the Resources For Professionals section of the WSO web site. Articles responding to the 1997 readership survey results were developed accordingly: the benefits of group level service, types of group service positions, service positions beyond the group level, and a list of questions for professionals to ask their clients about their participation in Al-Anon. An on-line format was created and posted to the WSO web site.

### COMMUNICATIONS

**Professional Inquiries:** Daily calls on the Public Outreach 800 number accounted for 51% of the packets mailed to professionals. Data for the first, second, and fourth quarters indicated that the *Fact Sheet For Professionals* postage-paid response card and electronic postcard from the WSO web site comprised 31% and 18% respectively of the professional inquiries. The mid-year availability of e-mail increased the number of inquiries from professionals and students who were referred to the Professional Resources section of the WSO web site. For the fourth quarter, one-third of the professional inquiries currently received were from the Professionals Resource section of the WSO web site and e-mail. This trend will be monitored in the future.

**Daily Toll-Free Number Call Log:** Working cooperatively with Group Services, the following is a sample of how professionals and newcomers located Al-Anon's 800 and 888-4-AL-ANON numbers:

	Radio PSAs	TV PSAs	Internet	Professional Referrals	Phone Directory	Magazine/ Source Books
Public Outreach	7	13	49	66	55	346
Group Services	<u>146</u>	<u>144</u>	<u>876</u>	<u>1,089</u>	<u>1,085</u>	<u>652</u>
Total	153	157	974	1,155	1,140	988

**Al-Anon/Alateen World Wide Web Site:** The WSO web site was accessed 72,451 times, bringing the total number of visitors to 119,060. 1998 visits represent a 58% increase in comparison to the 42,599 visitors in 1997. A breakdown of the most site traffic is as follows: 94% United States; 3 % Canada; and 3% international. Countries comprising the primary portion of the 3% international site traffic are the United Kingdom, Australia, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Mexico, Japan, and Sweden. A comparison of 1997 and 1998 site traffic is as follows:

Region/Country	1997	1998	Summary
United States	85%	94%	+9%
Canada	3%	3%	Same
International	12%	3%	-7%

This data supports several factors: the Internet is primarily a US phenomenon; and more US citizens have access to the World Wide Web at home or at work.

In July, e-mail was added to the site along with an autoresponder message to acknowledge receiving the message and to reiterate the availability of the 888-4AL-ANON toll-free meeting information number. Autoresponder messages were also configured for customers following placement of literature and *Forum* subscription orders.

Publicity for the site increased as a result of the following actions: the addition of e-mail; insertion of the WSO web site and e-mail address on letterhead immediately following the International Convention; WSO newsletter articles; hyperlinks from area, AIS, and on-line meetings; and member and related organization web sites. With the help of Howdy R., at-large trustee, the WSO site <www.al-anon.alateen.org> was registered with 327 search engines. This was done as an update to the original registration of the site with seventeen major search engines when the site was launched in 1996. Meta tags (key words such as alcoholism, wellness, recovery, Twelve Step recovery program, substance abuse, mental health, and depression) were added to increase the number of search engine referrals. Review of completed first drafts of the new French and expanded Spanish sections of the web site was delayed due to departmental assignments.

### PARTICIPATION AT CONFERENCES AND EXHIBITS

As a cost-saving measure, national and regional exhibits at professional conferences and conventions were canceled. However, the WI PI Coordinator and TX(E) CPC Coordinator set up displays manned by local volunteers at the National Wellness Conference and National Social Workers Association in their respective areas.

**1999 Exhibits:** Pending approval of the 1999 Public Outreach budget, registration and background was gathered. Based upon a recommendation of a consultant, service materials for professionals were produced in a uniform color scheme to create a cohesive image on display tables.

### COOPERATION WITH OUTSIDE ENTITIES

**Presentations:** The Associate Director of Fellowship Communication presented five workshops and told her personal recovery story at the University of Utah School of Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies, Salt Lake City, UT. The workshops were in the following sections: Introductory, Family, Nursing, Criminal Justice and Current Issues.

A presentation was made by the Director at the Association For Research and Enlightenment (ARE), Virginia Beach, VA. The Director gave a presentation about the WSO's purpose, structure, and status as a not-for-profit organization to a Career and Business Management class at Ocean Lakes High School, Virginia Beach, VA.

**Meetings With Staff:** The Assistant to Director of Public Outreach attended the regular quarterly meetings of the National Institute Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and Human Services, Bethesda, MD. Basic information about Al-Anon/Alateen was given and the "Tornado" PSA was shown to council members.

**Complimentary Literature and Materials:** Rutgers Summer School of Alcohol Studies and the University of Utah School of Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies received materials for their student brochures and "take one" tables. Copies of *Courage To Be Me*, *How Al-Anon Works For Families & Friends of Alcoholics*, and introductory information were provided to the Director of Affiliate Relations, Congress of National Black



Churches, Inc. The Volunteer Peer Assistance for Alcohol, Prescription Drugs and Other Drugs of Delta Airlines was sent a copy of *How Al-Anon Works For Families & Friends of Alcoholics* along with CPC packets and photocopies of text for the revised Media Kit for a newsletter article. Twenty-five copies of *Are You Troubled By Someone's Drinking?*, *Al-Anon Is For You* (S-17) were sent to fourteen area Fashion Bug stores for inclusion in their national "Community Center" pilot project.

**Resource and Agency Directories and Magazines:** Information about Al-Anon was printed in the following directories: America's Crisis Pregnancy Helpline, Dallas, TX; National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health Organization, Arlington, VA; Neline Referral Agency, NY, NY; K-III Reference Corporation, Mahwah, NJ; United Way of Central Florida, Highland City, FL; Mile High United Way Helpline, Denver, CO; Boys and Girls Club of America, Atlanta, GA; Adult Basic Education, University of NM, Las Lunas, NM; Family Support Center, Keesler Air Force Base, MS; MA Behavioral Health Partnership; *Complete Practitioner* newsletter, CT.

Articles mentioning Al-Anon and Alateen appeared in the following magazines: *Parade Magazine*, February 15, 1998; *Current Health*, February 1998; *Good Housekeeping* and *YM* (Young and Modern) magazines in March 1998.

### COOPERATION WITH THE MEDIA

**Publications:** Notable inquiries and requests for interviews were received from the following magazines: *Parent Magazine*, *Glamour*, *Vanity Fair*, *Scholastic Choices*, *McCall's Magazine*, *NY Times Magazine*, and *Knights of Columbus Magazine*. A cartoon drawn by a child recommending Al-Anon was featured in the book, *My Dad Loves Me, My Dad Has A Disease* and included in the National Association of Children of Alcoholics (NaCOA) newsletter. Information and interviews with members were requested by a writer researching a book about minority adult children of alcoholics.

**Television:** A producer for *Prime Time* requested information about Alateen for inclusion in a segment about teen drinking. WTKR, a VA CBS affiliate station, was referred to the delegate for an Al-Anon segment on its *Morning Break* show. The MN(N) delegate reported a Town Hall Meeting was held in conjunction with the *Movers On Addiction* series. The producer working with US Vice President Albert Gore sought information about Al-Anon for inclusion in a health related TV segment. Clarification of Al-Anon's purpose was given to a representative of *The Rikki Lake Show*. *The Sally Jesse Raphael Show* cited Al-Anon as a resource.

**Radio:** A member provided information about a referral to Al-Anon by Dr. Laura Schlesinger, a WI psychiatrist who has a syndicated radio talk show based upon audience telephone inquiries. KZOW Radio, IA interviewed the Associate Director of Group Services/Alateen.

**Newspapers:** The following newspapers sought information about Al-Anon/Alateen for articles: *NY Daily News*, *Miami Herald*, Miami, FL, *Globe Communications*, Boynton Beach, FL, *Tomorrow's Leaders Today*, MS, and the *Virginian Pilot*, Norfolk, VA. Clippings from members using the "Tornado" PSA press release theme ("Alcoholism, The Storm Within The Family") were received. Other clippings included the following feature articles: information about Alateen and an interview with the Associate Director of Group Services/Alateen from the *Oak Brook Press*, Oak Brook, IL newspaper, and "Reflected in the Family," from the *Virginian Pilot*, Norfolk, VA.

**Internet:** Various commercial and not-for-profit organizations requested permission to hyperlink to the WSO web site or sought permission to include Al-Anon/Alateen information on their sites: Betty Ford Family Services, Palm Springs, CA; Community Drug Board, Akron, OH; "What's Driving You," a Driving Under the Influence (DUI) educational web site; Teen Team Rescue Page; Home Recovery, and National Domestic Violence Hotline. To avoid confusion with other organizations, Al-Anon's purpose and 888-4AL-ANON number are provided.

**Members' Requests:** Clarifications were sought regarding the following subjects: attraction vs. promotion in relationship to broadcasting of PSAs, posting posters in public places and newspaper articles with meeting information; a newspaper's use of former Al-Anon members for interviews; duplication of TV PSAs, suggestions for literature to distribute at an open meeting and mailings to doctors; items to post on AIS, district, and area web sites; application of the Traditions regarding the acceptance of complimentary web site hosting and free listings in community agency web sites; use of the Al-Anon name on the Internet; copyright policies regarding photocopying of posters and literature for open meetings; and criteria for WSO permission to produce an AIS or area PI piece.

### COORDINATORS

**Biannual Mailings:** Two mailings were distributed in February and July. Included in the mailings are motivational projects, press releases, samples of members' or the WSO's outreach efforts, and informational updates.

### NATIONAL PUBLIC INFORMATION CANADA (NPIC)

Margaret M./Catherine J., Chairpersons  
Carole P., Public Outreach Service Manager for Canada  
Phyllis M., Director

### OFFICE

A one-year lease renewal at the present location was authorized. Research for moving the office to an industrial park with convenient access to major roadways or closer to the downtown area is being continued.

**Committee, Annual Trustee Visit:** The committee approved the idea of rotating the regional trustee's visit each year so that within a three-year period, all of the Canadian RTs will see the office. The trustee visit will occur at the same time as a WSO staff member. Catherine J., chairperson and Canada East RT, visited the office and had the opportunity to familiarize herself with Ottawa.

### STATUS OF PROJECTS

**Military Outreach Project:** There was a 17% response rate to a mailing to 70 military professionals who counsel family members across Canada. The professional list included chaplains, social worker officers, community health nurses, wing surgeons, and counselors. Area CPC and Institutions Coordinators were given contact information for the professionals located in their province and asked to mail a cover letter and feedback sheet templates to district representatives for encouragement of local member follow-up for client referrals to the military professionals on their contact list. Because many military facilities are located in British Columbia and Newfoundland, the BC/Yukon and Newfoundland/Labrador membership was very responsive to the project.

**1997 Public Information in Canada Questionnaire:** Responses submitted by delegates were compiled. Although NPIC is already providing many of the requested services, including those envisioned for the next five or ten years, continued clarification of NPIC's national public outreach purpose to the members is essential.

**CRTC Regulation, Public Service Announcements (PSAs):** It is anticipated that interest in our PSAs will continue because of the 1996 Canadian Radio and Television Commission (CRTC) regulation. Stations that air alcohol advertising are also required to balance their broadcasts by airing educational messages and public service announcements about the negative effects of alcoholism. Delegates and PI Coordinators received a special memo and copies of the Winter 1998 English and French *Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) Bulletin* to make them aware of the CRTC alcoholism educational initiatives ruling.

**"Fear and Anger" Public Service Announcements:** Fifty French and 50 English radio and 30 English and 15 French TV stations were sent complimentary PSAs. As a result of an article announcing the availability of the PSAs in the Winter 1998 *CAB Bulletin*, complimentary copies of the

English "Fear and Anger" PSAs were requested by an additional 27 English radio stations, one English TV station, and three French TV stations.

After reviewing statistics for the distribution of the PSAs, it was noted that some provinces/territories are not included in the WSO distribution. A recommendation was approved by the committee to have every province/territory receive at least one radio and TV PSA.

**"Tornado" Public Service Announcements:** Six English and six French radio station response cards were received. The summer issue of the *CAB Bulletin* announced the availability of the new PSA to its subscribers (402 radio and 78 television stations). As a result, the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) Public Relations Director requested "Tornado" PSAs for eight French CBC affiliate radio stations. Complimentary PSAs were sent to four English radio and nine TV stations along with one French radio station (not a CBC affiliate), also resulting from the *CAB Bulletin* article. These stations were in addition to the stations selected for the WSO's distribution.

**"Tornado" Table Display and Are You Concerned About Someone's Drinking? Leaflet, NPIC Address:** NPIC contact information was added to the leaflet in conjunction with the "Tornado" PSA distribution.

**"Be Our Eyes and Ears" PSA Coupon: Public Service Announcements:** Thirty-nine per cent of the "Be Our Eyes and Ears" coupons returned to the WSO were from Canadian members who saw or heard the "Cocktail/Birthday Parties" PSAs. A generic French version of the coupon was created for use with current and future PSA projects to encourage feedback from French speaking members. The coupon was distributed with the Executive Director's quarterly letter to the French groups.

**External and Internal Public Relations, Purpose, and Development of New Fact Sheet:** After reviewing the results of the 1997 Public Information in Canada Questionnaire, the committee developed a plan to inform groups about NPIC and its national service role through a series of newsletter articles. Because the existing NPIC Fact Sheet is outdated, the committee concurred that it needs to be discontinued and replaced with a new fact sheet in the format of a pamphlet. The English text was developed and readied for translation. The fact sheet will be distributed within the fellowship, to professionals, the media, and general public.

**Corporate Outreach Project, Employee Assistance Programs:** Because large corporations frequently contract with independently operated national EAP Programs on a confidential basis, a mailing to the Canadian CEOs of the top 100 corporations would not be productive. To adapt the Corporate Outreach Project to Canada, the alternative strategy of reaching out to EAPs was developed. The project was launched by contacting Warren Shepell Consultants and Family Services Employee Assistance Programs. Although Warren Shepell Consultants Corporation declined a mailing or an explanatory session at its staff development meetings of its 100 substance abuse counselors, its decision was based on the fact that its counselors are already making client referrals to Al-Anon. Family Services Employee Assistance Program, Canada's largest EAP provider offering counseling to more than 500 companies and 400,000 employees, responded favorably. NPIC received 70 address labels from Family Services and approval to do a mailing to its local Family Services EAP offices. Two additional EAP providers will be selected.

**Al-Anon Speaks Out, Canadian Bulletin:** The 1998 issue was compiled and distributed. It featured the "Help Us To Support You" Readership Survey from the 1997 *Al-Anon Speaks Out*. Eight per cent of the 384 readers responded. While one-third of the respondents were from Ontario, overall survey participation encompassed seven provinces. The results were tallied and comparable to the 1997 US *Al-Anon Speaks Out* readership requests. In order of priority, these were: more local meeting schedules (90%); a sample list of topics discussed at meetings (78%); more statistics about members and groups (70%); members' articles relating the benefits of

service work (66%); and copies of Al-Anon guidelines and the *Service Manual* (68%).

The committee also reviewed the overall distribution of the newsletter and noted that the largest concentration of professional subscribers are located in Ontario and Quebec. It was agreed that area CPC and Institutions Coordinators need to be asked to help increase the number of subscribers in their area.

Articles for the 1999 issue were selected and submitted for translation into French.

#### Cooperation With The Media, Outside Entities, and Conferences/Conventions

**Television and Radio:** The Canadian Association of Broadcasters continues to request updated PSA articles for its *CAB Bulletin*. Teletoon, a national station specializing in children's programming (equivalent to MTV in the US), selected the Alateen "Tornado" PSA for public service announcement airplay.

As a result of airing the "Tornado" PSA, CFRB radio station requested an interview with an Al-Anon member and was referred to the Toronto AIS.

**Magazines:** *Canadian Living Magazine* is listing Al-Anon/Alateen as a resource in a three-part series about children affected by alcoholism in its January 1999 issue.

**Outside Entities:** A Human Resource Specialist from Wrigley Canada Inc., Toronto, ON contacted NPIC to inquire about donating money to Al-Anon. The professional was informed about the Seventh Tradition and provided with a literature order form of suggested items to make available for employee reference. The Ottawa AA Central Service Office referred "Operation Go Home," a national program for runaway youth, to Al-Anon. This request was for members to set up a take-one table at an information day which was then referred to the district.

**Presentations:** The Public Outreach Services Manager for Canada provided an explanation of Al-Anon to the Canadian International Development Agency, (Federal government), Ottawa, ON.

#### COMMUNICATION

**Toll-Free Number Calls:** A total of 290 calls were received representing a seven percent increase in calls in comparison to 1997. Eighty-two percent of the calls were from newcomers primarily seeking meeting information. However, the number of newcomer and meeting information calls received from the PSAs declined as anticipated because the "Fear and Anger" and "Tornado" PSAs used the WSO toll-free meeting information number. Professionals and the media continue to use the number as a result of literature and PSA airplay.

**Business Telephone Number:** A total of 276 calls were received from newcomers, professionals, media, and members. With the addition of the Ottawa AIS listing in the telephone directory, the number of calls for Ottawa meeting information declined as anticipated. Ten percent of the calls were requests from radio and TV stations for the PSAs as a result of the *CAB Bulletin* articles.

# MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH

Mary Ann K., Director

## CONFERENCE

### COMMITTEE

Pat S., Chairperson

Doris S./Marion W., Assistant Chairpersons

Susan A., Associate Director, Conference

The committee held one full staff (March), one interim (June), and three full committee meetings (January, July, and October).

### MAILINGS TO CONFERENCE MEMBERS

Conference members received regular mailings bimonthly. During the first quarter, they received the Conference Communication Kit containing registration and other pertinent materials. Second-year delegates were asked to sponsor new Conference members. Conference members also received the Preliminary Budget, Auditor's Report, Regional Trustee Resumes for the regions electing trustees, 1997 Annual Report, Policy motions, and Admissions/ Handbook motions for insertion in the Conference Notebook.

Subsequent mailings included material related to the 1999 World Service Conference as well as the IAGSM Summary, newsletters, public service announcements, copies of letters to coordinators, departmental memos, new books, revised guidelines, and pamphlets.

### MEMBERS ONLY

The database was reviewed and delegate, past delegate, district representative, area chairperson, and newsletter editor changes were made as they were received. A general purging of the listings of service members' roles was completed for consistency of roles in the database.

### CONFERENCE PREPARATION

From January through May, activities focused on coordinating and wrapping up the 1998 World Service Conference. Staff compiled material for World Service Conference members and finalized arrangements with the Holiday Inn Executive Center. The remainder of the year involved negotiations with the Sheraton Stamford Hotel and preparations for the 1999 WSC.

### CONFERENCE CALL

On February 21, the Conference Chairperson, Assistant Conference Chairperson, and Associate Director, Conference hosted a one-hour conference call in which 23 new Conference members participated.

### 1998 CONFERENCE SUMMARY

The 1998 *Conference Summary* was published and 222 individual copies were mailed to delegates, trustees, and GSOs. A total of 519 past delegates, past staff, and past trustees each received a copy. The 2,539 bulk orders to delegates were mailed. Individual orders were filled. The Executive Director, Director of Fellowship Communication, and Associate Director, Conference met to review the schedule and project a reasonable mail target date for the 1999 *Conference Summary*.

### REGIONAL TRUSTEE (RT) PROCEDURES

A cover letter, voting procedures, and resumes of RT candidates from US Northeast, US Southeast, and US North Central regions were sent to all voting and non-voting Conference members prior to the RT nomination session at the 1998 World Service Conference.

Thomas (Skip) A., US Southeast; Larry A., US North Central; and Cecilia L., US Northeast, were elected as regional trustees.

Area delegates in the US South Central, US Northwest, and US Southwest regions received material at the 1998 World Service Conference, as these regions will submit candidates' names for nomination at the 1999 World Service Conference.

Candidates for regional trustee elections at the 1999 WSC are:

US South Central: Ruby W., Louisiana; Carolyn W., Missouri; and Blanche M., Texas (E).

US Southwest: Arthur B., California (N); Kary L., California (S); and Nancy B., Colorado.

US Northwest: Shirley T., Oregon; and Ann H. and Penny R. (alternate), Washington.

Areas not listed did not submit candidates this year.

Hospitality Room Volunteers: As a token of appreciation, *Courage To Be Me* was given to the hospitality room volunteers.

### 1999 WSC

**Theme:** Carrying the Message – Our Primary Purpose

**Dates:** April 25-29, 1999.

**Equalized Expense Fund:** The Executive Committee designated the 1999 Equalized Expense at \$900 US with subsequent Board approval. Full cost of attending the Conference is \$1,450. As of December 31, 1998, payments have been received from 65 areas.

**Election Assemblies/Panel 39 (1999-2001):** Outgoing delegates received AWSC forms to complete at their election assemblies and mail to the WSO. Twenty-two areas elected Panel 39 delegates in the fall of 1998. Each new delegate received a welcome letter with pertinent material including a 1998 *Conference Summary*, 1998-2000 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, and information regarding the trial service structure.

**Delegate Committee Appointments:** A questionnaire mailed to Panel 39 delegates requested their committee preference. Following the return of the questionnaires, assignments to delegate committees commenced. Factors which determined each new delegate's committee assignment included committee assigned to the past delegate from that area, number of delegates from the same region on the committee, new delegate's preference, and timeliness of the form's return.

**Opening Session:** Pat S., Conference Chairperson, will open the Conference on Sunday, April 25 at 8:30 AM in the International Ballroom of the Sheraton Stamford Hotel, Stamford, CT.

**Visit to Stepping Stones:** On Sunday, April 25, buses will depart for the planned icebreaker at Stepping Stones.

**Three-Minute Talk Theme:** Outgoing delegates received an invitation to present a three-minute talk on the Conference theme, "Carrying the Message – Our Primary Purpose."

**WSC Chosen Agenda Items:** Conference members submitted their questions to the WSO by December 1 to be sorted in preparation for discussion at the Conference. Through a vote, Conference members will select four topics for open discussion. Remaining topics will either be addressed in workshops and reported back to the Conference, or included in the Ask-It-Basket.

**Taping:** Bud Smith of Convention Audio Tapes was chosen to record the World Service Conference. The three-minute and spiritual speakers will receive complimentary tapes of their talks. Conference members may purchase audio tapes of the three-minute and spiritual speakers' talks.

**New Conference Member Orientation:** A conference call for new members is planned for February 1999. An orientation meeting is scheduled for Saturday evening, April 24, 1999.

**Overseas Representation:** All GSOs received an invitation to the World Service Conference. UK & Eire, France, Mexico, Italy, and Germany indicated their intentions to send a representative.

**Reportbacks:** WSC Chosen Agenda Items and Special Workshop reportbacks will be brought to the WSO, compiled, and mailed to members following the World Service Conference.

**Conference Notebook:** Printing of the notebook will take place immediately following January 1999 Board week. Material mailed from the WSO prior to the Conference will not be duplicated in the notebook. This material stamped "FOR WSC NOTEBOOK" is to be brought by the Conference members to the World Service Conference for inclusion in the notebook.

**Meals:** Menus have been planned in consultation with the Associate Director, Conference, WSO's Meeting Planner, and the chef at the Sheraton Stamford to assure that all the dietary needs of the Conference Members are met.

**2000 WSC Site:** Possible sites for the 2000 WSC include 12 hotels in the Hampton Roads, VA area.

### AREA HIGHLIGHTS

Delegates, trustees, DRs, area coordinators, newsletter editors, and area chairpersons receive *Area Highlights*. Area newsletters are read and articles are excerpted for compilation in the newsletter. Sharings from past delegates, a compilation of area coordinators' reports, and articles from WSO staff and delegates are included. A cover article related to the Conference is written for each issue.

### SUBCOMMITTEE: ADMISSIONS/HANDBOOK

Mary A-T, Chairperson

Susan A., Associate Director, Membership Outreach

Committee members met in January, July, and October. The full standing committee met twice in April. A memo was sent to the Board to approve the seating of non-voting members at the 1998 Conference. With delegate input, the committee approved the new *Joy of Service* leaflet and the *Links of Service* poster for service-minded members. Some revisions of the *Handbook* were drafted for approval by the Conference.

### OFFICE COMMUNICATION

Individual letters, telephone inquiries, faxes, and e-mail messages are answered as they are received.

### 1998 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Ric B., Chairperson

Mary Ann K., Convention Coordinator

Susan A., Co-Coordinator

Carole K., Volunteer Convention Consultant

Richard Keilly, Business Manager

**Attendance:** 4,552 registered for the convention; 63 were Alateens, 567 AA members, and 242 both Al-Anon and AA members. Included in these numbers were 194 Spanish; 51 French; 42 German; 17 Italian. Countries outside the US/Canada and Puerto Rico represented were: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Costa Rica, Ecuador, England, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Scotland, Spain, Sweden,

Switzerland, Venezuela, and the Virgin Islands. 64% of attendees were in the program between 5 years and 20 years. 65% of the attendees were between 40 and 65 years old. 56% were attending an international convention for the first time. 500 members registered on site.

**Program:** The program was printed in English, Spanish, and French. Workshops took place at the Salt Palace in German, Italian, and Portuguese, along with English, French, and Spanish. Over 330 members took part in the program as speakers or leaders. Big Meetings took place at the Delta Center with 13 speakers total in the three meetings. Sign language interpreters were present, but the registered members never came to the section to utilize this service. A slide presentation was shown prior to each meeting, and a final slide was used as a backdrop for the event as each meeting took place. This concept replaced the creation of one cloth banner to be used for all Big Meetings. Press escorts, WSO volunteers, staff, and host committee members accompanied the press at all times while they attended the convention. The media were given special invitations to the Big Meetings. For the first time, our new Public Service Announcement, "Tornado," was shown in English, Spanish, and French just prior to the meeting on Saturday night. Parade signs, which indicated the language members spoke, followed by signs from the countries, states, and provinces, were carried by a variety of members in costume, and 1500 marched in the parade.

**AA Meetings:** AA held all their daytime meetings at the Doubletree Hotel. AA's Convention Coordinator reported positive results from the randomly chosen speakers and leaders. Some additional on-site help was needed at the Convention Center to answer AA questions. Notification of the Al-Anon International Convention was detailed in an article in *Box 459*, AA's newsletter that goes to all their groups.

**Accommodations:** Twenty-five hotels were under contract to Al-Anon for this event. Al-Anon only picked up 29% of the room block which decreased our complimentary room projections. Two-hundred-ninety members stayed at the dorms and used the shuttle bus service. Fifty members rode shuttle from the VIP campsite.

**Host Committee:** A gratitude luncheon was hosted by WSO on Sunday, July 5 in honor of the Host Committee members who worked long and hard to make the welcome to Salt Lake so warm and wonderful. Over 70 members attended, and the new "Service Journal" was given as a small token of WSO's gratitude. The Host Committee returned a substantial contribution to the WSO which was a result of their fund-raising efforts and the fellowship's generous response. Members were on the street corners for directions, at the airport as early as Tuesday to welcome travelers, and throughout the Convention Center giving assistance to those in need. The core committee had printed a 20-page handbook for those who needed written instructions. Some members chaired and shared at the workshops held on Thursday from 7:00 to 8:00 PM for those who needed a meeting before the official start of the Convention. The local members were delighted with their own efforts and believe that holding the International Convention in their city was beneficial to strengthening all the local groups. All their activities were recorded in a huge loose-leaf book 4-1/2-inches thick, which was sent to the WSO for future use.

**WSO Staff and Volunteers:** After the WSO pre-conference dinner meeting on Thursday night, the 40 WSO staff and volunteers worked at a variety of locations to ensure the smooth coordination of workshops, backing up leaders, selling books, and leading spontaneous sharings. Several made certain the Press Room was covered, and some were asked to be interviewed by the media.

**Luncheons:** Ninety members attended the GSO luncheon, and while the focus was originally for service workers in other structures, when registrations indicated there weren't enough service members to attend, all overseas members were invited with the hope that they would then become involved in service.

Over 1,128 members attended the Pioneer Luncheon, listening to a presentation of our history in spoken word and song. Originally scheduled for the Convention Center, this had to be moved to the Marriott to accommodate the smaller-than-anticipated numbers at the overall convention.

Two hundred twenty-six members listened to speakers and reminisced with other Conference members at the Conference Reunion Luncheon, chaired for the first time by the Host Committee Chair and Co-chair and coordinated by WSO.

**Sales Booth:** The sales booth was open at the same time as the registration. 5,000 books were sold on site and 2,000 ordered.

**Shuttle:** Sample Salt Lake handled our shuttle bus needs.

**Tours:** Eleven tours were offered to those pre-registered, and six additional tours were added on site because of increased demand. 1,306 tours were sold.

**Evaluations:** Forms were sent to all those who participated in the on-site activities of the Convention with a thank you letter and a copy of the new *Joy of Service* leaflet. Evaluations returned indicated that the Convention was a social success, and while the parade and Big Meeting Friday night were the highlight, a minority felt it could have been shorter. A second evaluation form was sent to 10% of those attending, and the majority of those felt it was a wonderful experience and enough information was sent ahead of time.

#### **50TH ANNIVERSARY**

*Mary Ann K., Chairperson  
Margaret G., Board Liason*

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Once the Board of Trustees approved the objectives of the celebration of Al-Anon's Anniversary, concrete plans began. Keeping in mind the objectives, "to foster growth and unity with Al-Anon and to include in the celebrations as many members as possible," the World Service Conference of 1999 will be given a plan entitled, "The Framework of the Celebration." This written plan lists all the activities of the WSO and how the members can be part of each event or activity. The focus of the "Framework" is to celebrate our history on the local level, stimulate members' creativity, and encourage them to add to and adapt the suggested ideas. The second objective of the anniversary is to use this milestone in our history to make the public aware that Al-Anon has been a credible and viable resource for 50 years. A letter-writing activity to the local press is one suggested activity. Obtaining written statements from members around the world on their feelings about the program should fill up many loose-leaf binders. Details on when, where, and how to participate in these projects will be given to the 1999 WSC.

#### **PLAN**

The Board of Trustees approved the conceptual ideas written in the "Framework of Celebration," and each department at the WSO will participate in the activities listed. A calendar for 2001, which will be a saleable item and introduced at the 2000 WSC, will help to coordinate all the activities.

#### **THEME**

Creation of a symbol for the anniversary will reflect the theme, "Fifty Years of Passing it On."

#### **2000 AA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION**

*Ric B., Chairperson  
Susan A., Associate Director, Conference, Convention Coordinator  
Marsha W., Associate Director, International, Co-Coordinator*

**Dates:** June 29 - July 3, 2000

**Theme:** Hope@Al-Anon.Alateen.Everywhere

**Where:** Minneapolis, MN

The Executive Director and Associate Director, Conference met with the AA Convention Coordinator at the AA General Service Office in August to discuss Al-Anon's participation with AA at this Convention. Al-Anon's participation was estimated to be 7,000 participants in order to facilitate planning.

**Program:** Topics from previous conventions will be used for the workshops. Workshop speakers will be chosen by randomly selecting their names from a list of registered participants rather than through a second mailing. This will reduce costs and time and insure that everyone who registers has an equal chance to participate. A smaller number of staff and volunteers will attend the convention to facilitate the workshops in order to help AA keep costs in line.

Al-Anon workshops and meetings will take place only during the day. Al-Anon members and guests are invited to join with AA for all big meetings.

**Saleable Item:** Two items are being considered, *Al-Anon Family Groups - Classic Edition* and/or the 50th Anniversary Calendar.

**GSO Reception:** A reception is being planned that will be open to all participants from countries outside the US and Canada in order to encourage service. No other gatherings are planned in order to parallel AA's participation in Salt Lake.

**Host Committee:** New host committee guidelines were developed, and at AA's request, the Host Committee will not do fundraising for this convention.

**Public Information:** Al-Anon will have a press room separate from, but located near, the AA press room.

**Trips:** Three trips have been scheduled with the goal of establishing and maintaining a relationship with the Host Committee and obtaining information regarding planning the workshops. The first trip (Coordinator and Co-coordinator) will take place in April 1999 to meet with the Host Committee, select a chairperson, and prepare a report for the 1999 World Service Conference.

#### **INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION**

*Margaret G./Mary C., Chairpersons  
Mary C./Peggy S., Assistant Chairpersons  
Marsha W., Associate Director, International*

#### **INTERNATIONAL AL-ANON GENERAL SERVICES MEETING (IAGSM)**

The evaluations received from all participants of the Ninth IAGSM in Virginia Beach, VA, indicated an overall positive experience. The Summary of the 1997 IAGSM was sent to the GSOs and IAGSM Delegates in April. Responses received concerning the content of this publication were also very positive.

The International Coordination Committee (ICC) members did a presentation during the 1998 Conference to relay the "voice" of the IAGSM Delegates to Conference members. A slide presentation gave all the oppor-

Plans are underway for the Tenth International Al-Anon General Services Meeting that will take place in Essen, Germany in 2000. A letter has been sent to the GSO (Host Committee) to assist in planning, giving background information, and criteria used by the WSO for the 1997 IAGSM. Tentative dates are the end of September or the beginning of October in 2000.

An article written by a Russian member in the April edition of *The Forum* caused a resurgence of interest and continued support for this program in 1998. Group registrations to date total 107. Some areas report they are in contact with members of their adopted group and appreciate the opportunity given to share their experience, strength, and hope.

**Translations:** The following were sent to reviewers: Germany (German) - *When I Got Busy I Got Better*, (P-78), *Homeward Bound* (P-8); Lithuania (Lithuanian) - *One Day at a Time* (B-6); Italy (Italian) - *From Survival to Recovery: Growing Up in an Alcoholic Home* (B-21); Norway (Norwegian) - *Paths to Recovery* (B-24); Sweden - (Swedish) *Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions* (B-8).

**Literature Requests:** Requests and correspondence were received from the following locations: Argentina; Australia; Belgium Flemish-speaking; Belgium French-speaking; Commonwealth of Independent States; Estonia; India; Israel; Mexico City; Norway; Philippines; Republic of Mauritius; Samoa; Korea; Romania; Spain; Sweden; Tanzania, East Africa; Ukraine; Turkey; Accra-Ghana, West Africa.

**Mailings to GSOs and Delegates:** Ten different mailings were sent with information about WSO publications, and the 1998 International Convention.

*A Guide to Sponsoring Alateen*  
*Forum Reprint - Men In Al-Anon*  
*Blueprint for Progress: Fourth Step Inventory*  
*Al-Anon/Alateen Is and Is Not (bookmark)*  
*Daily Checklist of Myself*  
*Why CAL?*  
*Alateen Do's and Don'ts, Wallet Card*  
*Facts About Alateen*  
*Operation Alateen*  
*It's a Teenaged Affair*  
*Al-Anon Basic Program, Wallet Card*  
*Purpose and Suggestions*  
*1996-1998 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*  
*Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism*  
*Courage to Change*  
*Alcoholism, The Family Disease*  
*Homeward Bound*  
*How Can I Help My Children?*  
*Sponsorship, What It's All About*  
*Did You Grow Up with a Problem Drinker?*  
*Al-Anon, You, and the Alcoholic*  
*Alcoholism, A Merry-Go-Round Named Denial*  
*One Day At A Time in Al-Anon*  
*This is Al-Anon*

### Questionnaire for the Step Four Al-Anon Daily Checklist for Myself

*Fact Sheet for Professionals*  
*Tornado (poster)*  
*Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage*  
*Guide for the Family of the Alcoholic*  
*Youth and the Alcoholic Parent*  
*Guide for Sponsors of Alateen Groups*  
*Alateen: Hope for Children of Alcoholics*  
*Alateen 4th Step Inventory*  
*Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions*  
*1998-2000 Service Manual*

Mexico  
Mexico  
Poland, Lithuania  
Poland  
Poland  
Poland  
Poland  
Sweden  
Sweden

**South Africa:** The GSO reported that an Archives display depicting the IAGSM delegates' participation during the 1997 IAGSM was shown at their convention in April and again at the National Conference held June 5 - 7. A representative also asked if WSO had guidelines that address copyrights and trademarks. WSO sent a WSO-created handout that assists members in understanding what can and cannot be copied or reprinted from Al-Anon publications.

India: The Calcutta Al-Anon Information Service advised they held their General Assembly meeting on April 5, 1998 and elected officers.

**Japan:** The GSO is working to comply with the request from WSO on revising the Al-Anon/Alateen trademark registration in their country.

**Australia:** The GSO requested permission to include the Responsibility Statement as guidelines for distribution to Alateen sponsors with the Guidelines for Alateen Conferences, G-16; Alateen Sponsor, G-17; and Area Alateen Coordinators, G-24. Permission was granted, and they were advised that the Responsibility Statement is under review for possible revisions.

New Zealand: The General Secretary questioned the distribution of the *Lone Member Letterbox*. Copies of this publication are sent to Lone Members and the Lone Member contacts. The GSO also wanted to know if the videos, *Walk this Path of Hope* and *Alateen Tells It Like It Is*, were still available and if replacements were scheduled for either. Both are still available and no replacements are scheduled for either of these videos at this time. As an expression of their enthusiasm for Twelfth Step work, a letter sent to the GSO from Cuba was translated by a member in New Zealand and sent to the WSO.

**Austria:** A new Al-Anon information service has formed in this country. They asked to be included in the 1999 publication of *Getting In Touch With Al-Anon/Alateen*.

Commonwealth or Independent States: The Russian Al-Anon Service Committee for Russian- speaking Al-Anon Family Groups registered with the WSO. The AIS decided not to hold a service meeting this year and will schedule a meeting for 2000. The Executive Director and Associate Director, International are planning to attend. On November 21, the AIS reported that a forum was held in Moscow celebrating 10 years of Al-Anon in Russia.

**Denmark:** The GSO reported that a number of adult children of alcoholics who attend Al-Anon meetings are benefiting from the Danish translation of *Alateen: Hope for Children of Alcoholics*.

Estonia: An Al-Anon group celebrated its fifth anniversary and a second Al-Anon group has formed in that country.

Finland: The IAGSM delegate wrote and advised they are pleased with the pamphlet *Joy of Service*, and their structure wants to translate this pamphlet into Finnish.

**France:** The General Secretary reported how the Al-Anon service structure is growing at the GSO. Two years ago they had one committee, the Conference Committee. As the result of the hard work and dedication of members, including their new Board of Trustees, there are five new committees: Alateen, PI, Literature, AIS, and Budget.

**Germany:** The GSO expressed their gratitude for how they benefit from their close contact with the WSO in clarifying questions about the Al-Anon structure and the Al-Anon program. They state this close contact is helpful in solving problems within their structure.

**Italy:** The GSO asked if the delegate to Conference votes in assembly meetings. In sharing the WSO experience, WSO advised that delegates vote at the area world service committee meetings but not in the area assembly, which is where the group representative votes.

**Netherlands:** The GSO wrote indicating some in their structure would like to change the voting procedure from two-thirds majority to 50% +1 at their Conference. In relating the WSO experience, a decision is made every year on what number of Conference members it takes to pass a motion. A two-thirds vote is not mandatory.

**Norway:** The GSO advised that at their General Service Conference in March, they elected a new service representative to run the office and voted to move their office from Bergen to Sandnes. The GSO advised they are working on translating *Paths to Recovery - Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions and Concepts*.

**Spain:** The GSO asked if the regional trustees have legal power in their regions? The WSO responded advising legal power as described in Concept Seven which refers to the Board as a whole transacting business effecting the structure. The intent of Concept Seven is not to give individual regional trustees legal power in a region.

**Sweden:** The IAGSM delegate advised that during their eighth Service Conference held in April, committees for Archives and the Internet were formed and the Handbook Ad Hoc Committee became a permanent part of their structure.

**Switzerland (French-speaking):** A representative from the GSO asked whether the WSO would include a name for a contact on the Internet. The WSO advised we would not, as this would be in violation of the Traditions, specifically Tradition Twelve.

**UK & Eire:** The GSO sent sharings for the new book, working title, RECOVERY TODAY. The GSO requested a copy of the Al-Anon/Alateen list for service materials approved by the WSO Board of Trustees and Policy Committee for publication on the Internet.

### **North America**

**Mexico:** The GSO wrote and asked for the WSO to share experience in supporting another country, as they have adopted Cuba. The WSO responded that their ultimate goal should be to allow Cuba to "grow" toward becoming self-supporting. A letter was sent from the GSO questioning WSO's process in translating literature to Spanish.

### **South America**

**Argentina:** The IAGSM delegate advised major changes occurred in their current structure to include the addition of regional seminars and regional trustees. There will be a service conference in 1999, and all Spanish-speaking structures are invited to attend. WSO is planning to send a representative.

**Brazil:** The GSO advised their web site is complete. They also reported that their 20th Conference was a success and that a representative from Argentina participated.

**Colombia:** The GSO sent the WSO a publication from a center called United Families that indicates they lean on the program of the AA and Al-Anon Twelve Steps, Traditions, Concepts of Service, and slogans. The WSO wrote to United Families and advised their use of our name gives the impression of affiliation and asked that they not indicate our name in their publications.

**Costa Rica:** The GSO reported they had their first national conference in April. A representative from the GSO asked for clarity in determining the proper voting ratio between staff, volunteers, and delegates. WSO suggested using the two-thirds model — two-thirds elected delegates to one-third staff and volunteers — as a way to insure a democratic balance.

**Venezuela:** The GSO reports that Al-Anon has been present in their country 29 years. The first national conference took place in November 1997. The GSO advises they have completed the necessary steps for registration of the Al-Anon/Alateen logo.

## **SPANISH SERVICES**

*Raquel K., Translation Services Manager*

### **STAFF**

Raquel K. was invited as the guest of the Mexican GSO National Conference from February 16 - 22, 1998. During this week-long conference, much of the WSO experience was shared, questions answered and two presentations given.

### **NEW MATERIAL COMPLETED**

Web site material for upgrade; Be our Eyes and Ears flyer "Tornado"; flyer for the "Tornado" table display with pocket (P-62); Membership Outreach presentation to all delegates at WSC; 1998 Convention Program; permission to tape workshops at 1998 Convention; a parade letter to members attending the International Convention; invitation to WSC delegates for the Spanish Luncheon; ...*In All Our Affairs: Making Crises Work For You*; (SB-15); *Joy of Service* (SS-57); thank you letter to members who participated at 1998 Convention and an evaluation about it; three appeal letters were translated, one with GR and DR attachments; group annual update sheet; correspondence sent/received from eleven Spanish-speaking GSOs and also to individuals regarding business and program issues.

### **UPDATE MATERIAL - MINOR REVISIONS**

*Homeward Bound* (SP-8); Catalog: Reading for Recovery (SS-15R); *Why CAL?* (SP-35); Daily Checklist of Myself (SS-6); *Dear Mom & Dad* (SP-67); *Information For The Newcomer* (SS-4); *A Guide for the Family of the Alcoholic* (SP-7); Just For Today Al-Anon Bookmark (SM-12); *Are You Concerned About Someone's Drinking?* (SM-1); *Are you Troubled by Someone's Drinking?* (SS-17); *Detachment* (SS-19); *Alcoholism, A Merry Go-Round Named Denial* (SP-3); *Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism* (SP-48).

### **NEWSLETTERS**

Three issues of *Al-Anon y Alateen en accion*; *Al-Anon Speaks Out*; and *Inside Al-Anon Xtra* 1998 World Service Conference Highlights were mailed to groups, individuals, delegates, coordinators and GSOs.

### **SPANISH PROFESSIONALS**

*Al-Anon Speaks Out* was mailed to groups in the US and to delegates with Spanish-speaking groups with a request to help the WSO expand its list of Spanish professionals by sending names and addresses.



## PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

The translation of the book *Paths to Recovery* was done by a freelance translator; the Translation Manager has done the revision, index, and proofing in order to produce the books; 1999 Catalog; *The Concepts: Al-Anon's Best Kept Secret* (SS-57); Links of Service (SS-28); update the guidelines: G-1; G-2; G-4; G-5; G-13; G-30; G-31; send the printout of the groups in Venezuela; Membership Survey; instructions for the group representatives' letter and Al-Anon groups; new PSA "Make the Connection."

## FRENCH SERVICES

### STAFF

In March, the Director of Membership Outreach and three French Canadian members conducted interviews for the French Language Coordinator position. In advance of meeting with the candidates, translations were sent to assess their French skill levels. The committee felt that the pool of candidates was so small that another round of resume-seeking from the groups should be held before a commitment is made. Delegates from Quebec (E) and (W) helped in obtaining resumes. In November, the entire testing and interview process was repeated. At year end, the member selected is working with the WSO and an immigration attorney to obtain the paperwork necessary for her move to this country. During the interim, she will be working by phone and fax with Alberte C., our longtime former employee, who has agreed to assist in her training. During the time we have been without a French Language Coordinator, all projects have been sent out and completed by freelance translators with Alberte's revision and approval.

## TRANSITION MEETING FOR FRENCH SERVICES

The Executive Committee Chairperson, the Canada East Regional Trustee, delegates from Quebec (E) and (W) and the Director of Membership Outreach comprise the transition team. The Vice Chairperson of the Board, a Canadian, sat in at this meeting, since the Canada East Regional Trustee was not able to attend the conference. The Translation Services Manager and the Group Records Coordinator participated, since they have direct contact with some of the issues discussed: registration of French-speaking groups, the telephone messages on the WSO phones, Al-Anon information services, the French Revision Committee, and the disappointment of the delegates at the discontinuance of *The Forum* in French and their possible appeal to the Board of Trustees. The delegates gave the committee a prototype of an envelope for contributions printed in three languages that WSO may use, therefore reducing the need for Spanish and French envelopes and at the same time increasing the awareness of the diverse nature of our membership. The WSO plans to adopt this idea. Since this meeting, close contact has been maintained between the delegates and the Director of Membership Outreach. A committee has been set up in Quebec (E) to look into the benefits of forming their own General Service Office. There is no process for an area within our structure to form a separate GSO.

## NEW MATERIAL COMPLETED

*How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (FB22); Flyer for Alert "Tornado" (FPA-2) and Eyes and Ears flyer; Table top display (FM-62); Tornado Poster (FM-61), Tornado PSA script (FAV30), and letters; 1998 International Convention Program and letters; three appeal letters with one to group representatives and district representatives; letter to groups from the Executive Director; letter about *The Forum* to 110 subscribers about its discontinuance; Canada East Regional Service Seminar registration form and invitation letter, Conference issue of *Inside Al-Anon Xtra*. *The Forum* for July 1997 to February 1998 has been translated, printed, and mailed.

## PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

*Facts about Alateen* (FP-41); 1998-2000 Service Manual (FP-24-27); *Joy of Service* (FS-57); Links of Service (FS-28); TV and Radio script for "Connections" PSA; guidelines G-1; G-2; G-4; G-7; G-9; G-11; G-13; French catalogue and price list; *Forum* issues March 1998 to June 1998; new newsletter, *Le lien*, with excerpts from *The Forum*; web site material.

## UPDATE MATERIAL - MINOR REVISIONS

*So You Love an Alcoholic* (FP-14); *Guide for Alateen Sponsors* (FP-51); *Are You Concerned About...* (FM-1); *Detachment* (FM-19); *Just for Today* (FM-12); *Freedom from Despair* (FP-6); *Homeward Bound* (FP-8).

## REGIONAL SERVICE SEMINARS (RSS)

### COMMITTEE

Ann H., Chairperson  
Mary Ann K., Director

As recommended by the RSS ad hoc, committee members agreed that the site selected at the RSS breakout meeting at the Conference will be called the "tentative site" until the regional trustee makes a visit and the contract is signed. Beginning with the RSSs in 2000, the bids will go through the delegates before coming to the WSO.

Because there were no RSSs this year, the registration chairpersons and host committee chairpersons or co-chairpersons of the US North Central and US Southwest will be invited to the Canada East RSS, and the registration chairpersons and host committee chairpersons or co-chairpersons of the US Northeast and US South Central will be invited to the US North Central RSS. Having two host committees attend an RSS will somewhat distort the WSO costs of these particular RSSs; however, the committee agreed that the WSO paying for their room and registration is a worthwhile expense to allow the host committee this valuable experience.

Regional trustees chairing an RSS in 1999 were asked to consider having some activity on Alateen sponsorship when building their individual RSS agendas. Attending trustees and staff were assigned to a seminar and the AIS/LDC workshop will be held at the US North Central RSS:

**Canada East RSS:** Canada East Regional Trustee, RSS Chairperson; Associate Director/International, RSS Coordinator; Chairperson of the Board; US Northeast Regional Trustee; Executive Director; Associate Director, Literature; Associate Director of Public Outreach, and Public Outreach Service Manager for Canada.

**US North Central RSS:** US North Central Regional Trustee, RSS Chairperson; Associate Director/Conference, RSS Coordinator; Chairperson of the Board; Canada West Regional Trustee; Executive Director; Director of Group Services; Director of Fellowship Communication, and Accounting/Circulation Manager.

**US Southwest RSS:** US Southwest Regional Trustee, RSS Chairperson; Director of Membership Outreach, RSS Coordinator; Chairperson of the Board; US South Central Regional Trustee; Executive Director; Director of Public Outreach, and Associate Director Group Services.

The committee held a special meeting on January 28, 1998 and voted to make changes to the RSS guidelines. The major changes include: referring to the \$500 as an advance rather than "seed money," making it clear any excess funds, either from the advance or money raised, are returned to the WSO; indicating that the RSSs are a valuable tool but they have never been self-supporting.

Regional trustee election material was distributed during the 1998 WSC RSS breakouts.

Packets containing agendas, RSS guidelines, bid forms, and other materials were distributed to US Northeast, US South Central, and Canada West area delegates at the 1998 World Service Conference in anticipation of the 2000 Regional Service Seminars.

The committee discussed the history of simultaneous translation. The decision to have an RSS translated and how to go about orchestrating it is up to

the regional trustee. The WSO will only pay the room and board for four volunteer translators.

Credit card payments will be accepted for registration beginning with the 1999 regional service seminars.

The US Southwest RSS will be the first seminar to be translated into Spanish and will be done on a trial basis; \$10.00 will be added to the registration fee for a total registration of \$25.00.

The committee was reminded that beginning with the year 2000, when RSSs are translated, the registration fee will be \$35.00.

After reviewing RSS-1, the committee revised the leaflet, which will be ready for use in January 1999.

To support Membership Outreach with staffing issues relating to the events in the year 2000 (Conference, three RSSs, Al-Anon participation at the AA Convention, and the IAGSM), one staff member from each of the following departments will assist with the coordination of the RSSs: Group Services, Fellowship Communication, and Public Outreach. The Director of Membership Outreach and the Meeting Planner will continue to work with the regional trustee overseeing the hotel site inspection, negotiation, and signing of the contract. They will also manage the production and mailing of the reservation/registration forms. After these tasks are complete, the regional trustee will work directly with the RSS Coordinator on the agenda and coordination with the Host Committee. The overall RSS responsibilities remain in the Membership Outreach Department.

The committee discussed the possibility of ranking the bid sites as opposed to voting on a tentative site and a backup site.

Incorporating some of the long range ideas into the RSS was considered. The consensus was to take risks, let go of some old patterns, and not to fear doing something new at an RSS.

### 1998 REGIONAL SERVICE SEMINARS

No regional service seminars were held this year due to Al-Anon's 1998 International Convention in Salt Lake City.

### 1999 REGIONAL SERVICE SEMINARS

#### **Canada East**

Catherine J., Chairperson

Marsha W., Coordinator

Dates: May 14 - 16, 1999

Site: Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland

Theme: Service - The Beacon of Hope

Single: \$114.75 Double: \$98.65

Meals only package: \$41.15

All prices in Canadian Funds.

"Simultaneous" was taken out of the term "Simultaneous Translation;" whisper translation in French will be offered at General Sessions only. The General Sessions will be taped. Reservation/registration forms were mailed in November.

#### **US North Central**

Larry A., Chairperson

Susan A., Coordinator

Dates: August 27 - 29, 1999

Site: Savery Hotel and Spa, Des Moines, Iowa

Theme: Harvest the Benefits of Service

Economy Single: \$169.00 Single: \$245.00 Double: \$161.00

Triple: \$135.00 Quad: \$120.00

Meals only package: \$57.00

A letter was sent in November to all delegates announcing the RSS. The reservation/registration packet materials will be mailed in January.

#### **US Southwest**

Nancy B., Chairperson

Mary Ann K., Coordinator

Dates: November 5 - 7, 1999

Site: Holiday Inn City Center, Tucson, Arizona

Theme: To be decided

Single: \$227.07 Double: \$142.07 Triple: \$113.74 Quad: \$99.57

Meals only package: \$57.07

Consideration of translation of the General Sessions into Spanish is being reviewed. A letter was sent to delegates announcing this event.

## **BUSINESS SERVICES**

*Richard Keilly, non-member,  
Director of Business Services*

### BUDGET

#### **COMMITTEE**

*Don C., Chairperson*

*Richard Keilly, non-member, Director of Business Services*

All projects involving money or additions charged to the budget originate in the Budget Committee. Those actions are detailed in the Board and Executive portions of this report. Minutes of the Budget Committee meetings are reported to the Executive Committee. The Budget report becomes part of the Executive Committee minutes, and in this way the Board of Trustees is kept advised. Any Budget Committee motion is reviewed by the Executive Committee and is either approved or denied. Recommendations made by the Budget Committee that do not deal with day-to-day operations are sent directly to the Board of Trustees for consideration at its next quarterly meeting.

The Budget Committee presented the 1998 Preliminary Budget to the Board of Trustees. With Board input and consideration, the proposed 1998 budget was adopted. At a special Board meeting prior to the 1998 World Service Conference, the Board revised the proposed budget for presentation to the Conference.

There were monthly reviews of the financial statements. Appeal letters, letters to GRs, DRs, and the first letter to area treasurers were all reviewed. Recommendations and suggestions were made and some were incorporated prior to printing.

In July, the committee revised the 1998 Budget based on the first six months' revenue and expense figures. Projected income from contributions, as well as the sale of literature, were adjusted downward and expenses were adjusted accordingly.

Two full days in November and one in December were taken to develop the Preliminary 1999 Budget. As needed, directors and/or associate directors of each service met with the Budget Committee to discuss various aspects of their departmental budget requests.

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

*Jayne D., Customer Service Manager*

#### **ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**

On February 1, the LDC payment terms were changed from 45 days to 30 days. A penalty of 1.5% will be added to all unpaid invoices over thirty days. The majority of LDCs are now up-to-date with payments. For those

few accounts that are delinquent, Customer Service is continuing its efforts to collect past due receivables from members and outside institutions.

Notices were sent to all LDCs that as of June 1, the WSO will contact the LDC chairperson and area delegate when an account is 60 days past due.

### **MAILINGS**

Customer Service will now update literature distribution centers with information from the World Service Office. Our initial updates included information on discontinued items, price increases, and shipping information. Priority notices were also mailed for the new service tool, "My Journey In Service," and the new Tornado PSA.

Customer Service receives many telephone calls and letters from LDCs looking for information regarding inventory control, literature sales, and accounting systems. In the August Customer Service update, all LDCs were invited to participate in creating a service link. We received an overwhelming response. The list of participating LDCs was included with the September update.

### **CONSIGNMENT**

A special consignment offer for the new book, *Having Had A Spiritual Awakening...* (B-25), was mailed to the LDCs. The selling price was \$10.00. More than 100 LDCs accepted the special consignment offer. The books were received at the WSO on July 2 and shipped the same day.

### **THE FORUM**

A new record is being created for those subscribers not receiving their monthly issue of *The Forum*. The record is tracked by Customer Service and the Technological Service Coordinator. If a subscriber continues to have delivery problems, Customer Service informs the customer to contact their local post office. Hopefully, this will resolve a problem that has occurred with several subscribers: the record exists, the information is correct, the tape sent to the mailer contains the correct information, but the issue is not received.

### **SHIPPING**

Customer Service advised LDCs to allow three weeks for delivery due to staffing changes in the Shipping Department in mid year. The Shipping Department is back to full staff.

### **CONTRIBUTIONS**

The Customer Service Department receives many contributions from members who request their contribution be allocated to their group. They assume that their group is registered with the World Service Office. Many times we cannot locate the group - it is either not registered or the information provided by the donor is erroneous or insufficient. We search the system in several ways in an attempt to locate the group (by city, state, group name, or ID number provided). We know that the donation is from an Al-Anon member because they attend a group meeting. If we have enough information to put the individual in the system, we will enter the contribution under their name and send a note that we cannot locate the group based on the information provided.

Failing that, and to ensure the timely processing of contributions, when a group or the individual's information cannot be located, the contribution is posted to the appropriate state card. For those contributions posted to the state card, we now send the delegate a copy of the information we received on a packing slip.

The delegate will help locate the group and have them provide us with the information to either locate the group or, if necessary, register the group. This will assist us in updating our database. This will also enable all the groups to receive all the benefits of being registered at the WSO.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

*Betsy Trost, non-member, Human Resources Manager*

### **SALARY INCREASES**

Cost of living increases were paid to new employees on their one-year anniversary date. The remainder of the staff received their increases on June 1. Merit increases for employees were based on an employee's work performance during the preceding year.

### **PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

A revised copy was distributed to all staff, the Executive Committee, and the Board of Trustees.

### **MEMORANDUM SERIES**

We continue to use the memorandum series to keep all employees apprised of job vacancies, new staff, holiday schedules, special events, co-worker information, and changes in office procedures. E-mail is used for routine memos to cut down on paper and distribution time.

### **HOLIDAYS/OFFICE EVENTS**

On March 17th, the staff participated in a multi-cultural celebration during the lunch hour. All employees shared in a celebration of diversity of our staff at the WSO.

The staff enjoyed fun, games, and food at our staff picnic which was held on June 19th. We also enjoyed good food and company during our fall staff picnic held on September 25th.

The staff pitched in and contributed their culinary specialties for our Thanksgiving celebration. A final holiday party was held in mid December with the WSO providing the meal. The staff participated in karaoke and showcased their singing abilities.

### **BENEFITS**

Employees are getting healthy on a used Lifecycle bicycle that was purchased for the Fitness Center as well as a donated treadmill. Staff are welcome to use the equipment during lunch breaks or after work.

We have made some exciting changes to our employee health care coverage. We changed life insurance carriers from Phoenix to First Unum. This covers all employees as well as providing employees the option of purchasing supplemental life insurance for themselves and their families. In addition, we have increased our short term and long term disability benefits to match inflationary increases in wages.

Two financial service seminars were held during the second quarter for employees to learn about budgeting, investing, and savings. Over 45 staff members attended.

The Sunshine Club is now celebrating employee birthdays once a month by inviting all members to join during the afternoon break to sing Happy Birthday and enjoy cake and ice cream.

### **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The staff attended a variety of educational seminars including ASAE Educational Development, ASAE Writing Workshop, The Excellent Assistant, How to Manage Multiple Projects and Deadlines, Internet, How to Become a Great Communicator, How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service, and Conflict Management and Confrontational Skills.

We also offer training videos to the staff on such subjects as Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, Powerpoint, and Internet usage, as well as a series of videos addressing customer service skills.

## OFFICE OPERATIONS

**Reception:** The Virginia Beach area continues to bring many visitors to the WSO, and this year saw over 200 guest visitors. Tours are offered at 2:00 PM daily by the receptionist. In keeping with a long-standing tradition, all visitors are asked to sign the WSO guest book.

**Volunteers:** Volunteers assist with assembling our Newcomer Kits and special mailings. Summer vacationers provide an increase in participation from our volunteer force.

## PUBLICATIONS

*Steve Raiford, non-member, Publications Manager*

By the end of 1998, four of the five members of Publishing Operations had begun their third year at the WSO; the fifth member had begun her second year at the WSO.

The graphic design area was upgraded to increase processing speed, enhance the visual quality of proofs, and allow for the backing up of computer files. Software upgrades also enabled the designers to work with foreign language titles. Training commenced on the design and maintenance of the Al-Anon/Alateen web page.

The first book designed in-house, *Having had a Spiritual Awakening...* (B-25), was delivered in July. Books due for reprinting are being converted to computer disc in order to produce high quality books without using old artboard mechanicals.

In-house graphic design of *The Forum* continued during 1998. The transition from out-of-house designers for *The Forum* to our in-house graphic designer has gone extremely well. Other graphic design accomplishments during 1998 include the development of logos and letterhead, updating the look of our recovery pamphlets and guidelines, and making our order blanks more user-friendly and easier to read.

The weekly production report was expanded several times to give WSO service departments more information about the specifications and status of their projects.

A reconditioned paper cutter and duplicator press was added to the equipment in the press room which allowed for more pamphlets to be printed in-house.

## TECHNOLOGY

*Edward Corona, non-member, Technological Services Coordinator*

## COMPUTER

Virus scanning was purchased for the network. New printers were purchased for the controller and for Group Records. An existing printer was transferred to the office of the Director of Business Services and that printer was transferred to the Business Operations Coordinator.

New computers were purchased and installed for the Technological Services Coordinator and the Director of Business Services. Additional RAM (random access memory) was purchased for existing computers. The network operating system has been upgraded to Netware 4.11 and Windows 95 has been installed.

An additional feature has been installed in the Members Only module, which allows the Accounting/Circulation Manager the option of charging interest to outstanding accounts. The Members Only query program has been modified so that random numbers of records can be accessed. Numerous versions of the Members Only executable program have been installed to update and correct various items ranging from error codes that were being generated by the program to updates (changing the area code in the packing slips). We have installed the first version of the on/off *Forum* subscription tracking module. A duplicate checker has been installed to

find names that were entered into the system twice.

The MacIntosh computers have been updated and equipped with a modem which allows for access to the Internet. New software has been obtained in preparation for the Publications Department being able to work on the home page.

All directors and associate directors have been connected to the Internet and have Internet accessibility. The WSO can now receive and transmit e-mail messages over the Internet. The internal e-mail system, called MHS VER 1.0, has been replaced by Pegasus E-Mail. Tracking the number of e-mails received was begun only in the middle of August. A variety of messages are being received, the majority of which are for Group Services. Meeting information requested was referred to our toll-free number.

### E-Mail Messages Received:

August 18 - 31, 1998	129
September 1998	344
October 1998	419
November 1998	455
December 1998	334

## TELEPHONE SYSTEM

The system crashed in February for approximately 24 hours. A new card was installed rectifying the problem. We also discussed the possibility with Claricom (Executone) of a beta test site for IVR versus buying an IVR software system currently on the market. Further research is required.

Four telephone mailboxes were updated to avoid confusion when dialing in last names beginning with the same first two letters.

# APPENDIX

## STAFF

**Ric B.**, Executive Director  
**Fran T.**, Administrative Coordinator  
**Sandra F.**, Director Group Services  
**Evalynn B.**, Associate Director, Alateen  
**Joe T.**, Assistant Director, Institutions, Lone Members  
**Michele R./Cynthia H.**, Assistant Director, Alateen, Adult Children  
**Barbara M.**, Archives Coordinator  
**\*Sheylah Alcide**, Group Records Coordinator  
**Caryn J.**, Director Fellowship Communication  
**Mary Lou M.**, Associate Director, Literature  
**Pat Q.**, *Forum* Coordinator  
**Phyllis M.**, Director Public Outreach  
**Claire R.**, Associate Director, Public Outreach  
**Julie M.**, Assistant Director, Public Outreach  
**Carole P.**, Public Outreach Service Manager for Canada  
**Mary Ann K.**, Director Membership Outreach  
**Susan A.**, Associate Director, Conference  
**Marsha W.**, Associate Director, International  
**Raquel K.**, Translation Services Manager  
**Suzanne W.**, Meeting Planning Coordinator  
**\*Richard Keilly**, Director Business Services  
**\*Cathy Broyles**, Controller  
**Jayne D.**, Customer Service Manager  
**\*Betsy Trost**, Human Resources Manager  
**\*Camille Peters**, Business Coordinator  
**\*Edward Corona**, Technology Coordinator  
**\*Carlos Delgado**, Warehouse Manager  
**\*Steve Raiford**, Publications Manager

\*non-member

## 1998-99 VOLUNTEER CHAIRS AND STAFF SUPPORT

**Board of Trustees** - Helen R., Chairperson; Ric B., Executive Director  
**Executive** - Doris S., Chairperson; Ric B., Executive Director  
**Policy** - Margaret M., Chairperson; Ric B., Executive Director  
**Nominating** - Catherine J., Chairperson; Ric B., Executive Director  
**Budget** - Don C., Chairperson; \*Richard Keilly, Director Business Services  
**Long Range Study Panel** - Nancy B., Chairperson; Phyllis M., Secretary  
**Group Services** - Cecelia L., Chairperson; Sandra F., Director, Group Services  
**Alateen** - Larry A., Chairperson; Evalynn B., Associate Director, Alateen  
**Archives Advisory** - Skip A., Chairperson; Sandra F., Director, Group Services; Barbara M., Archives Coordinator  
**Literature I** - Howland R., Chairperson; Mary Lou M., Associate Director, Literature  
**Literature II** - Blanche M., Chairperson; Caryn J., Director, Fellowship Communication  
**The Forum Editorial Advisory** - Wilma K., Chairperson; Caryn J., Director, Fellowship Communication; Mary Lou M., Associate Director, Literature; Pat Q., *Forum* Coordinator  
**Conference** - Pat S., Chairperson; Susan A., Associate Director, Conference  
**Admissions/Handbook Subcommittee** - Mary A-T., Chairperson; Susan A., Associate Director, Conference  
**1998 International Convention** - Ric B., Chairperson; Mary Ann K., Coordinator  
**50th Anniversary** - Mary Ann K., Director of Membership Outreach, Chairperson  
**2000 International** - Ric B., Chairperson; Susan A., Associate Director, Conference, Convention Coordinator; Marsha W., Associate Director, International, Co-Coordinator  
**International Coordination** - Mary C., Chairperson; Peggy S., Assistant Chairperson; Marsha W., Associate Director, International  
**Regional Service Seminars** - Ann H., Chairperson; Mary Ann K., Director, Membership Outreach  
**Public Outreach** - Marjorie S., Chairperson; Phyllis M., Director, Public Outreach; Claire R., Associate Director, Public Outreach  
**Outreach to Professionals Advisory** - Margaret G., Chairperson; Phyllis M., Director, Public Outreach; Julie M., Assistant Director, Public Outreach  
**National Public Information Canada (NPIC)** - Catherine J., Chairperson; Phyllis M., Director, Public Outreach; Claire R., Associate Director, Public Outreach; Carole P., Public Outreach Service Manager for Canada

\*non-member

# Trial WSO Restructuring Chart

